

therefore proposed the election of his brother Ferdinand as coadjutor with him in administering the affairs of Germany. Ferdinand, who had recently united to the Austrian territories the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia, was consequently chosen, on the 5th of January, 1531, King of the Romans. Charles was determined to enforce his decrees, and both parties now prepared for war.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHARLES V. AND THE REFORMATION.

FROM 1531 TO 1552.

DETERMINATION TO CRUSH PROTESTANTISM.—INCURSION OF THE TURKS.—VALOR OF THE PROTESTANTS.—PREPARATIONS FOR RENEWED HOSTILITIES.—AUGMENTATION OF THE PROTESTANT FORCES.—THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.—MUTUAL CONSTERNATION.—DEFEAT OF THE PROTESTANT ARMY.—UNLOOKED FOR SUCCOR.—REVOLT IN THE EMPEROR'S ARMY.—THE FLUCTUATIONS OF FORTUNE.—IGNOBLE REVENGE.—CAPTURE OF WITTEMBERG.—PROTESTANTISM APPARENTLY CRUSHED.—PLOT AGAINST CHARLES.—MAURICE OF SAXONY.—A CHANGE OF SCENE.—THE BITER BIT.—THE EMPEROR HUMBLD.—HIS FLIGHT.—HIS DETERMINED WILL.

THE intolerant decrees of the diet of Augsburg, and the evident determination of the emperor unrelentingly to enforce them, spread the greatest alarm among the Protestants. They immediately assembled at Smalkalde in December, 1530, and entered into a league for mutual protection. The emperor was resolved to crush the Protestants. The Protestants were resolved not to be crushed. The sword of the Catholics was drawn for the assault—the sword of the reformers for defense. Civil war was just bursting forth in all its horrors, when the Turks, with an army three hundred thousand strong, like ravening wolves rushed into Hungary. This danger was appalling. The Turks in their bloody march had, as yet, encountered no effectual resistance; though they had experienced temporary checks, their progress had been on the whole resistless, and wherever they had planted their feet they had established themselves firmly. Originating as a small tribe on the shores of the Caspian, they had spread over all Asia Minor, had crossed the Bosphorus, captured Constantinople, and had brought all Greece under their sway. They were still pressing on, flushed with victory. Christian

Europe was trembling before them. And now an army of three hundred thousand had crossed the Danube, sweeping all opposition before them, and were spreading terror and destruction through Hungary. The capture of that immense kingdom seemed to leave all Europe defenseless.

The emperor and his Catholic friends were fearfully alarmed. Here was a danger more to be dreaded than even the doctrines of Luther. All the energies of Christendom were requisite to repel this invasion. The emperor was compelled to appeal to the Protestant princes to coöperate in this great emergence. But they had more to fear from the fiery persecution of the papal church than from the cimeter of the infidel, and they refused any coöperation with the emperor so long as the menaces of the Augsburg decrees were suspended over them. The emperor wished the Protestants to help him drive out the Turks, that then, relieved from that danger, he might turn all his energies against the Protestants.

After various negotiations it was agreed, as a temporary arrangement, that there should be a truce of the Catholic persecution until another general council should be called, and that until then the Protestants should be allowed freedom of conscience and of worship. The German States now turned their whole force against the Turks. The Protestants contributed to the war with energy which amazed the Catholics. They even trebled the contingents which they had agreed to furnish, and marched to the assault with the greatest intrepidity. The Turks were driven from Hungary, and then the emperor, in violation of his pledge, recommenced proceeding against the Protestants. But it was the worst moment the infatuated emperor could have selected. The Protestants, already armed and marshaled, were not at all disposed to lie down to be trodden upon by their foes. They renewed their confederacy, drove the emperor's Austrian troops out of the territories of Wirtemberg, which they had seized, and restored the duchy to the Protestant duke, Ulric. Civil war had now

commenced. But the Protestants were strong, determined, and had proved their valor in the recent war with the Turks. The more moderate of the papal party, foreseeing a strife which might be interminable, interposed, and succeeded in effecting a compromise which again secured transient peace.

Charles, however, had not yet abandoned his design to compel the Protestants to return to the papal church. He was merely temporizing till he could bring such an array of the papal powers against the reformers that they could present no successful resistance. With this intention he entered into a secret treaty with the powerful King of France, in which Francis agreed to concentrate all the forces of his kingdom to crush the Lutheran doctrines. He then succeeded in concluding a truce with the Turks for five years. He was now prepared to act with decision against the reformed religion.

But while Charles had been marshaling his party the Protestants had been rapidly increasing. Eloquent preachers, able writers, had everywhere proclaimed the corruptions of the papacy and urged a pure gospel. These corruptions were so palpable that they could not bear the light. The most intelligent and conscientious, all over Europe, were rapidly embracing the new doctrines. These new doctrines embraced and involved principles of civil as well as religious liberty. The Bible is the most formidable book which was ever penned against aristocratic usurpation. God is the universal Father. All men are brothers. The despots of that day regarded the controversy as one which, in the end, involved the stability of their thrones. "Give us light," the Protestants said. "Give us darkness," responded the papacy, "or the submissive masses will rise and overthrow despotic thrones as well as idolatrous altars."

Several of the ablest and most powerful of the bishops who, in that day of darkness, had been groping in the dark, now that light had come into the world, rejoiced in that light, and enthusiastically espoused the truth. The emperor was

quite appalled when he learned that the Archbishop of Cologne, who was also one of the electors of the empire, had joined the reformers; for, in addition to the vast influence of his name, this conversion gave the Protestants a majority in the electoral diet, so many of the German princes had already adopted the opinions of Luther. The Protestants, encouraged by the rapidity with which their doctrines were spreading, were not at all disposed to humble themselves before their opponents, but with their hands upon the hilts of their swords, declared that they would not bow their necks to intolerance.

It was indeed a formidable power which the emperor was now about to marshal against the Protestants. He had France, Spain, all the roused energies of the pope and his extended dominions, and all the Catholic States of the empire. But Protestantism, which had overrun Germany, had pervaded Switzerland and France, and was daily on the increase. The pope and the more zealous papists were impatient and indignant that the emperor did not press his measures with more vigor. But the sagacious Charles more clearly saw the difficulties to be surmounted than they did, and while no less determined in his resolves, was more prudent and wary in his measures.

With the consent of the pope he summoned a general council to meet at Trent on the confines of his own Austrian territories, where he could easily have every thing under his own control. He did every thing in his power, in the meantime to promote division among the Protestants, by trying to enter into private negotiations with the Protestant princes. He had the effrontery to urge the Protestants to send their livings to the council of Trent, and agreed to abide by its decisions, even when that council was summoned by the pope, and was to be so organized as to secure an overwhelming majority to the papists. The Protestants, of course, rejected so silly a proposition, and refused to recognize the decrees of such a council as of any binding authority.

In preparation for enforcing the decrees which he intended to have enacted by the council of Trent, Charles obtained from the pope thirteen thousand troops, and five hundred thousand ducats (one million one hundred thousand dollars). He raised one army in the Low Countries to march upon Germany. He gathered another army in his hereditary States of Austria. His brother Ferdinand, as King of Hungary and Bohemia, raised a large army in each of those dominions. The King of France mustered his legions, and boasted of the condign punishment to which he would consign the heretics. The pope issued a decree offering the entire pardon of all sins to those who should engage in this holy war for the extirpation of the doctrines of the reformers.

The Protestants were for a moment in consternation in view of the gatherings of so portentous a storm. The emperor, by false professions and affected clemency, had so deceived them that they were quite unprepared for so formidable an attack. They soon, however, saw that their only salvation depended upon a vigorous defense, and they marshaled their forces for war. With promptness and energy which even astonished themselves, they speedily raised an army which, on the junction of its several corps, amounted to eighty thousand men. In its intelligence, valor, discipline and equipments, it was probably the best army which had ever been assembled in the States of Germany. Resolutely they marched under Schartlin, one of the most experienced generals of the age, toward Ratisbon, where the emperor was holding a diet.

Charles V. was as much alarmed by this unexpected apparition, as the Protestants had been alarmed by the preparations of the emperor. He had supposed that his force was so resistless that the Protestants would see at once the hopelessness of resistance, and would yield without a struggle. The emperor had a guard of but eight thousand troops at Ratisbon. The Duke of Bavaria, in whose dominions he was, was wavering, and the papal troops had not commenced their

march. But there was not a moment to be lost. The emperor himself might be surrounded and taken captive. He retired precipitately about thirty miles south to the strong fortress of Landshut, where he could hold out until he received succor from his Austrian territories, which were very near, and also from the pope.

Charles soon received powerful reinforcements from Austria, from the pope, and from his Spanish kingdom. With these he marched some forty miles west to Ingolstadt and intrenched himself beneath its massive walls. Here he waited for further reinforcements, and then commencing the offensive, marched up the Danube, taking possession of the cities on either bank. And now the marshaled forces of the emperor began to crowd the Protestants on all sides. The army became bewildered, and instead of keeping together, separated to repel the attack at different points. This caused the ruin of the Protestant army. The dissevered fragments were speedily dispersed. The emperor triumphantly entered the Protestant cities of Ulm and Augsburg, Strasbourg and Frankfurt, compelled them to accept humiliating conditions, to surrender their artillery and military stores, and to pay enormous fines. The Archbishop of Cologne was deposed from his dignities. The emperor had thrown his foes upon the ground and bound them.

All the Protestant princes but two were vanquished, the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse. It was evident that they must soon yield to the overwhelming force of the emperor. It was a day of disaster, in which no gleam of light seemed to dawn upon the Protestant cause. But in that gloomy hour we see again the illustration of that sentiment, that "the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong." Unthinking infidelity says sarcastically, "Providence always helps the heavy battalions." But Providence often brings to the discomfited, in their despair, reinforcements all unlooked for.

There were in the army of Ferdinand, gathered from the Austrian territories by the force of military conscription, many troops more or less influenced by the reformed religion. They were dissatisfied with this warfare against their brothers, and their dissatisfaction increased to murmurs and then to revolt. Thus encouraged, the Protestant nobles in Bohemia rose against Ferdinand their king, and the victorious Ferdinand suddenly found his strong battalions melting away, and his banners on the retreat.

The other powers of Europe began to look with alarm upon the vast ascendancy which Charles V. was attaining over Europe. His exacting and aggressive spirit assumed a more menacing aspect than the doctrines of Luther. The King of France, Francis I., with the characteristic perfidy of the times, meeting cunning with cunning, formed a secret league against his ally, combining, in that league, the English ministry who governed during the minority of Edward VI., and also the coöperation of the illustrious Gustavus Vasa, the powerful King of Sweden, who was then strongly inclined to that faith of the reformers which he afterwards openly avowed. Even the pope, who had always felt a little jealous of the power of the emperor, thought that as the Protestants were now put down it might be well to check the ambition of Charles V. a little, and he accordingly ordered all his troops to return to Italy. The holy father, Paul III., even sent money to the Protestant Elector of Saxony, to enable him to resist the emperor, and sent ambassadors to the Turks, to induce them to break the truce and make war upon Christendom, that the emperor might be thus embarrassed.

Charles thus found himself, in the midst of his victories, suddenly at a stand. He could no longer carry on offensive operations, but was compelled to prepare for defense against the attacks with which he was threatened on every side.

Again, the kaleidoscope of political combination received

a jar, and all was changed. The King of France died. This so embarrassed the affairs of the confederation which Francis had organized with so much toil and care, that Charles availed himself of it to make a sudden and vigorous march against the Elector of Saxony. He entered his territories with an army of thirty-three thousand men, and swept all opposition before him. In a final and desperate battle the troops of the elector were cut to pieces, and the elector himself, surrounded on all sides, sorely wounded in the face and covered with blood, was taken prisoner. Charles disgraced his character by the exhibition of a very ignoble spirit of revenge. The captive elector, as he was led into the presence of his conqueror, said—

“Most powerful and gracious emperor, the fortune of war has now rendered me your prisoner, and I hope to be treated—”

Here the emperor indignantly interrupted him, saying—

“I am *now* your gracious emperor! Lately you could only vouchsafe me the title of Charles of Ghent!”

Then turning abruptly upon his heel, he consigned his prisoner to the custody of one of the Spanish generals. The emperor marched immediately to Wittenberg, which was distant but a few miles. It was a well fortified town, and was resolutely defended by Isabella, the wife of the elector. The emperor, maddened by the resistance, summoned a court martial, and sentenced the elector to instant death unless he ordered the surrender of the fortress. He at first refused, and prepared to die. But the tears of his wife and his family conquered his resolution, and the city was surrendered. The emperor took from his captive the electoral dignity, and extorted from him the most cruel concessions as the ransom for his life. Without a murmur he surrendered wealth, power and rank, but neither entreaties nor menaces could induce him in a single point to abjure his Christian faith.

Charles now entered Wittenberg in triumph. The great

reformer had just died. The emperor visited the grave of Luther, and when urged to dishonor his remains, replied—

“I war not with the dead, but with the living. Let him repose in peace; he is already before his Judge.”

The Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, now the only member of the Protestant league remaining in arms, was in a condition utterly hopeless, and was compelled to make an unconditional submission.

The landgrave, ruined in fortune, and crushed in spirit, was led a captive into the imperial camp at Halle, in Saxony, the 19th of June, 1547. He knelt before the throne, and made an humble confession of his crime in resisting the emperor; he resigned himself and all his dominions to the clemency of his sovereign. As he rose to kiss the hand of the emperor, Charles turned contemptuously from him and ordered him to be conveyed to one of the apartments of the palace as a prisoner. Most ignobly the emperor led his two illustrious captives, the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, as captives from city to city, exhibiting them as proofs of his triumph, and as a warning to all others to avoid their fate. Very strong jealousies had now sprung up between the emperor and the pope, and they could not cooperate. The emperor, consequently, undertook to settle the religious differences himself. He caused twenty-six articles to be drawn up as the basis of pacification, which he wished both the Catholics and the Protestants to sign. The pope was indignant, and the Catholics were disgusted with this interference of the emperor in the faith of the Church, a matter which in their view belonged exclusively to the pope and the councils which he might convene.

The emperor, however, resolutely persevered in the endeavor to compel the Protestants to subscribe to his articles, and punished severely those who refused to do so. In his Burgundian provinces he endeavored to establish the inquisition, that all heresy might be nipped in the bud. In his zeal he