

away as he would brush a fly from his face. He sent his advance guard to demolish the impudent obstacle; then, surprised by the resistance, he pushed forward a few more battalions; then, enraged at the unexpected strength developed he ordered to the attack what he deemed an overwhelming force; and then, in astonishment and fury, impelled against the fortress the combined strength of his whole army. But the little crag stood, like a rock opposing the flooding tide. The waves of war rolled on and dashed against impenetrable and immovable granite, and were scattered back in bloody spray. The fortress commanded the pass, and swept it clean with an unintermitted storm of shot and balls. For twenty-eight days the fortress resisted the whole force of the Turkish army, and prevented it from advancing a mile. This check gave the terrified inhabitants of Vienna, and of the surrounding region, time to unite for the defense of the capital. The Protestants and the Catholics having settled their difficulties by the pacification of Ratisbon, as we have before narrated, combined all their energies; the pope sent his choicest troops; all the ardent young men of the German empire, from the ocean to the Alps, rushed to the banners of the cross, and one hundred and thirty thousand men, including thirty thousand mounted horsemen, were speedily gathered within and around the walls of Vienna.

Thus thwarted in his plans, Solyman found himself compelled to retreat ingloriously, by the same path through which he had advanced. Thus Christendom was relieved of this terrible menace. Though the Turks were still in possession of Hungary, the allied troops of the empire strangely dispersed without attempting to regain the kingdom from their domination.

## CHAPTER X.

### FERDINAND I.—HIS WARS AND INTRIGUES.

FROM 1555 TO 1562.

JOHN OF TAPOLI.—THE INSTABILITY OF COMPACTS.—THE SULTAN'S DEMANDS.—A REIGN OF WAR.—POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE MONARCHS OF BOHEMIA.—THE DIET.—THE KING'S DESIRE TO CRUSH PROTESTANTISM.—THE ENTRANCE TO PRAGUE.—TERROR OF THE INHABITANTS.—THE KING'S CONDITIONS.—THE BLOODY DIET.—DISCIPLINARY MEASURES.—THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ORDER OF JESUITS.—ABDICATION OF CHARLES V. IN FAVOR OF FERDINAND.—POWER OF THE POPE.—PAUL IV.—A QUIET BUT POWERFUL BLOW.—THE PROGRESS OF THE REFORMERS.—ATTEMPTS TO RECONCILE THE PROTESTANTS.—THE UNSUCCESSFUL ASSEMBLY.

DURING all the wars with the Turks, a Transylvanian count, John of Tapoli, was disputing Ferdinand's right to the throne of Hungary and claiming it for himself. He even entered into negotiations with the Turks, and coöperated with Solyman in his invasion of Hungary, having the promise of the sultan that he should be appointed king of the realm as soon as it was brought in subjection to Turkey. The Turks had now possession of Hungary, and the sultan invested John of Tapoli with the sovereignty of the kingdom, in the presence of a brilliant assemblage of the officers of his army and of the Hungarian nobles.

The last discomfiture and retreat of Solyman encouraged Ferdinand to redoubled exertions to reconquer Hungary from the combined forces of the Turks and his Transylvanian rival. Several years passed away in desultory, indecisive warfare, while John held his throne as tributary king to the sultan. At last Ferdinand, finding that he could not resist their united strength, and John becoming annoyed by the exactions of his Turkish master, they agreed to a compromise, by which John, who was aged, childless and infirm, was to remain king of all

that part of Hungary which he held until he died; and the whole kingdom was then to revert to Ferdinand and his heirs. But it was agreed that should John marry and have a son, that son should be viceroy, or, as the title then was, *univode*, of his father's hereditary domain of *Transylvania*, having no control over any portion of Hungary proper.

Somewhat to the disappointment of Ferdinand, the old monarch immediately married a young bride. A son was born to them, and in fourteen days after his birth the father died of a stroke of apoplexy. The child was entitled to the viceroyship of Transylvania, while all the rest of Hungary was to pass unincumbered to Ferdinand. But Isabella, the ambitious young mother, who had married the decrepit monarch that she might enjoy wealth and station, had no intention that her babe should be less of a king than his father was. She was the daughter of Sigismond, King of Poland, and relying upon the support of her regal father she claimed the crown of Hungary for her boy, in defiance of the solemn compact. In that age of chivalry a young and beautiful woman could easily find defenders whatever might be her claims. Isabella soon rallied around her banner many Hungarian nobles, and a large number of adventurous knights from Poland.

Under her influence a large party of nobles met, chose the babe their king, and crowned him, under the name of Stephen, with a great display of military and religious pomp. They then conveyed him and his mother to the strong castle of Buda and dispatched an embassy to the sultan at Constantinople, avowing homage to him, as their feudal lord, and imploring his immediate and vigorous support.

Ferdinand, thus defrauded, and conscious of his inability to rescue the crown from the united forces of the Hungarian partisans of Stephen, and from the Turks, condescended also to send a message to the sultan, offering to hold the crown as his fief and to pay to the Porte the same tribute which John had paid, if the sultan would support his claim. The imperious

Turk, knowing that he could depose the baby king at his pleasure, insultingly rejected the proposals which Ferdinand had humiliated himself in advancing. He returned in answer, that he demanded, as the price of peace, not only that Ferdinand should renounce all claim whatever to the crown of Hungary, but that he should also acknowledge the Austrian territories as under vassalage to the Turkish empire, and pay tribute accordingly.

Ferdinand, at the same time that he sent his embassy to Constantinople, without waiting for a reply dispatched an army into Hungary, which reached Buda and besieged Isabella and her son in the citadel.

He pressed the siege with such vigor that Isabella must have surrendered had not an army of Turks come to her rescue. The Austrian troops were defeated and dispersed. The sultan himself soon followed with a still larger army, took possession of the city, secured the person of the queen and the infant prince, and placed a garrison of ten thousand janissaries in the citadel. The Turkish troops spread in all directions, establishing themselves in towns, castles, fortresses, and setting at defiance all Ferdinand's efforts to dislodge them. These events occurred during the reign of the Emperor Charles V. The resources of Ferdinand had become so exhausted that he was compelled, while affairs were in this state, in the year 1545, ten years before the abdication of the emperor, to implore of Solyman a suspension of arms.

The haughty sultan reluctantly consented to a truce of five years upon condition that Ferdinand would pay him an annua' tribute of about sixty thousand dollars, and become feudatory of the Porte. To these humiliating conditions Ferdinand felt compelled to assent. Solyman, thus relieved from any trouble on the part of Ferdinand, compelled the queen to renounce to himself all right which either she or her son had to the throne. And now for many years we have nothing but a weary record of intrigues, assassinations, wars and woes

Miserable Hungary was but a field of blood. There were three parties, Ferdinand, Stephen and Solyman, all alike ready to be guilty of any inhumanity or to perpetrate any perfidy in the accomplishment of their plans. Ferdinand with his armies held one portion of Hungary, Solyman another, and Stephen, with his strong partisans another. Bombardment succeeded bombardment; cities and provinces were now overrun by one set of troops and now by another; the billows of war surged to and fro incessantly, and the wail of the widow and the cry of the orphan ascended by day and by night to the ear of God.

In 1556 the Turks again invested Stephen with the government of that large portion of Hungary which they held, including Transylvania. Ferdinand still was in possession of several important fortresses, and of several of the western districts of Hungary bordering on the Austrian States. Isabella, annoyed by her subjection to the Turks, made propositions to Ferdinand for a reconciliation, and a truce was agreed upon which gave the land rest for a few years.

While these storms were sweeping over Hungary, events of scarcely less importance were transpiring in Bohemia. This kingdom was an elective monarchy, and usually upon the death of a king the fiercest strife ensued as to who should be his successor. The elected monarch, on receiving the crown, was obliged to recognize the sovereignty of the people as having chosen him for their ruler, and he promised to govern according to the ancient constitution of the kingdom. The monarch, however, generally found no difficulty in surrounding himself with such strong supporters as to secure the election of his son or heir, and frequently he had his successor chosen before his death. Thus the monarchy, though nominally elective, was in its practical operation essentially hereditary.

The authority of the crown was quite limited. The monarch was only intrusted with so much power as the proud nobles were willing to surrender to one of their number whom

they appointed chief, whose superiority they reluctantly acknowledged, and against whom they were very frequently involved in wars. In those days the *people* had hardly a recognized existence. The nobles met in a congress called a diet, and authorized their elected chief, the king, to impose taxes, raise troops, declare war and institute laws according to their will. These diets were differently composed under different reigns, and privileged cities were sometimes authorized to send deputies whom they selected from the most illustrious of their citizens. The king usually convoked the diets; but in those stormy times of feuds, conspiracies and wars, there was hardly any general rule. The nobles, displeased at some act of the king, would themselves, through some one or more of their number, summon a diet and organize resistance. The numbers attending such an irregular body were of course very various. There appear to have been diets of the empire composed of not more than half a dozen individuals, and others where as many hundreds were assembled. Sometimes the meetings were peaceful, and again tumultuous with the clashing of arms.

In Bohemia the conflict between the Catholics and the reformers had raged with peculiar acrimony, and the reformers in that kingdom had become a very numerous and influential body. Ferdinand was anxious to check the progress of the Reformation, and he exerted all the power he could command to defend and maintain Catholic supremacy. For ten years Ferdinand was absent from Bohemia, all his energies being absorbed by the Hungarian war. He was anxious to weaken the power of the nobles in Bohemia. There was ever, in those days, either an open or a smothered conflict between the king and the nobles, the monarch striving to grasp more power, the nobles striving to keep him in subjection to them. Ferdinand attempted to disarm the nobles by sending for all the artillery of the kingdom, professing that he needed it to carry on his war with the Turks. But the wary nobles held on to

their artillery. He then was guilty of the folly of hunting up some old exploded compacts, in virtue of which he declared that Bohemia was not an elective but a hereditary monarchy, and that he, as hereditary sovereign, held the throne for himself and his heirs.

This announcement spread a flame of indignation through all the castles of Bohemia. The nobles rallied, called a diet, passed strong resolutions, organized an army, and adopted measures for vigorous resistance. But Ferdinand was prepared for all these demonstrations. His Hungarian truce enabled him to march a strong army on Bohemia. The party in power has always numerous supporters from those who, being in office, will lose their dignities by revolution. The king summoned all the well affected to repair to his standards, threatening condign punishment to all who did not give this proof of loyalty. Nobles and knights in great numbers flocked to his encampment. With menacing steps his battalions strode on, and triumphantly entered Prague, the capital city, situated in the very heart of the kingdom.

The indignation in the city was great, but the king was too strong to be resisted, and he speedily quelled all movements of tumult. Prague, situated upon the steep and craggy banks of the Moldau, spanning the stream, and with its antique dwellings rising tier above tier upon the heights, is one of the most grand and imposing capitals of Europe. About one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants crowd its narrow streets and massive edifices. Castles, fortresses, somber convents and the Gothic palaces of the old Bohemian monarchs, occupying every picturesque locality, as gray with age as the eternal crags upon which they stand, and exhibiting every fantastic variety of architecture, present an almost unrivaled aspect of beauty and of grandeur. The Palace on the Hill alone is larger than the imperial palace at Vienna, containing over four hundred apartments, some of them being rooms of magnificent dimensions. The cathedral within the precincts of this

palace occupied more than one hundred and fifty years in its erection.

Ferdinand, with the iron energy and determined will of an enraged, successful despot, stationed his troops at the gates, the bridges and at every commanding position, and thus took military possession of the city. The inhabitants, overawed and helpless, were in a state of terror. The emperor summoned six hundred of the most influential of the citizens to his palace, including all who possessed rank or office or wealth. Tremblingly they came. As soon as they had entered, the gates were closed and guarded, and they were all made prisoners. The king then, seated upon his throne, in his royal robes, and with his armed officers around him, ordered the captives like culprits to be led before him. Sternly he charged them with treason, and demanded what excuse they had to offer. They were powerless, and their only hope was in self-abasement. One, speaking in the name of the rest, said :

“We will not presume to enter into any defense of our conduct with our king and master. We cast ourselves upon his royal mercy.”

They then all simultaneously threw themselves upon their knees, imploring his pardon. The king allowed them to remain for some time in that posture, that he might enjoy their humiliation. He then ordered his officers to conduct them into the hall of justice, and detain them there until he had decided respecting their punishment. For some hours they were kept in this state of suspense. He then informed them, that out of his great clemency he had decided to pardon them on the following conditions.

They were to surrender all their constitutional privileges, whatever they were, into the hands of the king, and be satisfied with whatever privileges he might condescend to confer upon them. They were to bring all their artillery, muskets and ammunition to the palace, and surrender them to his officers ; all the revenues of the city, together with a tax upon

malt and beer, were to be paid into his hands for his disposal, and all their vassals, and their property of every kind, they were to resign to the king and to his heirs, whom they were to acknowledge as the *hereditary* successors to the throne of Bohemia. Upon these conditions the king promised to spare the rebellious city, and to pardon all the offenders, excepting a few of the most prominent, whom he was determined to punish with such severity as to prove an effectual warning to all others.

The prisoners were terrified into the immediate ratification of these hard terms. They were then all released, excepting forty, who were reserved for more rigorous punishment. In the same manner the king sent a summons to all the towns of the kingdom; and by the same terrors the same terms were extorted. All the rural nobles, who had manifested a spirit of resistance, were also summoned before a court of justice for trial. Some fled the kingdom. Their estates were confiscated to Ferdinand, and they were sentenced to death should they ever return. Many others were deprived of their possessions. Twenty-six were thrown into prison, and two condemned to public execution.

The king, having thus struck all the discontented with terror, summoned a diet to meet in his palace at Prague. They met the 22d of August, 1547. A vast assemblage was convened, as no one who was summoned dared to stay away. The king, wishing to give an intimation to the diet of what they were to expect should they oppose his wishes, commenced the session by publicly hanging four of the most illustrious of his captives. One of these, high judge of the kingdom, was in the seventieth year of his age. The Bloody Diet, as it has since been called, was opened, and Ferdinand found all as pliant as he could wish. The royal discipline had effected wonders. The slightest intimation of Ferdinand was accepted with eagerness.

The execrable tyrant wished to impress the whole king-

dom with a salutary dread of incurring his paternal displeasure. He brought out the forty prisoners who still remained in their dungeons. Eight of the most distinguished men of the kingdom were led to three of the principal cities, in each of which, in the public square, they were ignominiously and cruelly whipped on the bare back. Before each flagellation the executioner proclaimed—

“These men are punished because they are traitors, and because they excited the people against their *hereditary* master.”

They then, with eight others, their property being confiscated, in utter beggary, were driven as vagabonds from the kingdom. The rest, after being impoverished by fines, were restored to liberty. Ferdinand adopted vigorous measures to establish his despotic power. Considering the Protestant religion as peculiarly hostile to despotism, in the encouragement it afforded to education, to the elevation of the masses, and to the diffusion of those principles of fraternal equality which Christ enjoined; and considering the Catholic religion as the great bulwark of kingly power, by the intolerance of the Church teaching the benighted multitudes subjection to civil intolerance, Ferdinand, with unceasing vigilance, and with melancholy success, endeavored to eradicate the Lutheran doctrines from the kingdom. He established the most rigorous censorship of the press, and would allow no foreign work, unexamined, to enter the realm. He established in Bohemia the fanatic order of the Jesuits, and intrusted to them the education of the young.

It is often impossible to reconcile the inconsistencies of the human heart. Ferdinand, while guilty of such atrocities, affected, on some points, the most scrupulous punctilios of honor. The clearly-defined privileges which had been promised the Protestants, he would not infringe in the least. They were permitted to give their children Protestant teachers, and to conduct worship in their own way. He effected his object of

changing Bohemia from an elective to a hereditary monarchy, and thus there was established in Bohemia the renowned doctrine of regal legitimacy; of the *divine right* of kings to govern. With such a bloody hand was the doctrine of the sovereignty, not of the *people*, but of the *nobles*, overthrown in Bohemia. The nobles are not much to be commiserated, for they trampled upon the people as mercilessly as the king did upon them. It is merely another illustration of the old and melancholy story of the strong devouring the weak: the owl takes the wren; the eagle the owl.

Bohemia, thus brought in subjection to a single mind, and shackled in its spirit of free enterprise, began rapidly to exhibit symptoms of decline and decay. It was a great revolution, accomplished by cunning and energy, and maintained by the terrors of confiscation, exile and death.

The Emperor Charles V., it will be remembered, had attempted in vain to obtain the reversion of the imperial crown for his son Philip at his own death. The crown of Spain was his hereditary possession, and that he could transmit to his son. But the crown of the empire was elective. Charles V. was so anxious to secure the imperial dignity for his son, that he retained the crown of the empire for some months after abdicating that of Spain, still hoping to influence the electors in their choice. But there were so many obstacles in the way of the recognition of the young Philip as emperor, that Charles, anxious to retain the dignity in the family, reluctantly yielded to the intrigues of his brother Ferdinand, who had now become so powerful that he could perhaps triumph over any little irregularity in the succession and silence murmurs.

Consequently, Charles, nine months after the abdication of the thrones of the Low Countries and of Spain, tried the experiment of abdicating the *elective* crown of the empire in favor of Ferdinand. It was in many respects such an act as if the President of the United States should abdicate in favor of some one of his own choice. The emperor had, however,

a semblance of right to place the scepter in the hands of whom he would during his lifetime. But, upon the death of the emperor, would his appointee still hold his power, or would the crown at that moment be considered as falling from his brow? It was the 7th of August, 1556, when the emperor abdicated the throne of the empire in behalf of his brother Ferdinand. It was a new event in history, without a precedent, and the matter was long and earnestly discussed throughout the German States. Notwithstanding all Ferdinand's energy, sagacity and despotic power, two years elapsed before he could secure the acknowledgment of his title, by the German States, and obtain a proclamation of his imperial state.

The pope had thus far had such an amazing control over the conscience, or rather the superstition of Europe, that the choice of the electors was ever subject to the ratification of the holy father. It was necessary for the emperor elect to journey to Rome, and be personally crowned by the hands of the pope, before he could be considered in legal possession of the imperial title and of a right to the occupancy of the throne. Julius II., under peculiar circumstances, allowed Maximilian to assume the title of *emperor elect* while he postponed his visit to Rome for coronation; but the want of the papal sanction, by the imposition of the crown upon his brow by those *sacred hands*, thwarted Maximilian in some of his most fondly-cherished measures.

Paul IV. was now pontiff, an old man, jealous of his prerogatives, intolerant in the extreme, and cherishing the most exorbitant sense of his spiritual power. He execrated the Protestants, and was indignant with Ferdinand that he had shown them any mercy at all. But Ferdinand, conscious of the importance of a papal coronation, sent a very obsequious embassy to Rome, announcing his appointment as emperor, and imploring the benediction of the holy father and the reception of the crown from his hands. The haughty and dis

dainful reply of the pope was characteristic of the times and of the man. It was in brief, as follows:

"The Emperor Charles has behaved like a madman; and his acts are no more to be respected than the ravings of insanity. Charles V. received the imperial crown from the head of the Church; in abdicating, that crown could only return to the sacred hands which conferred it. The nomination of Ferdinand as his successor we pronounce to be null and void. The alleged ratification of the electors is a mockery, dishonored and vitiated as it is by the votes of electors polluted with heresy. We therefore command Ferdinand to relinquish all claim to the imperial crown."

The irascible old pontiff, buried beneath the senseless pomps of the Vatican, was not at all aware of the change which Protestant preaching and writing had effected in the public mind of Germany. Italy was still slumbering in the gloom of the dark ages; but light was beginning to dawn upon the hills of the empire. One half of the population of the German empire would rally only the more enthusiastically around Ferdinand, if he would repel all papal assumptions with defiance and contempt. Ferdinand was the wiser and the better informed man of the two. He conducted with dignity and firmness which make us almost forget his crimes. A diet was summoned, and it was quietly decreed that a *papal coronation was no longer necessary*. That one short line was the heaviest blow the papal throne had yet received. From it, it never recovered and never can recover.

Paul IV. was astounded at such effrontery, and as soon as he had recovered a little from his astonishment, alarmed in view of such a declaration of independence, he took counsel of discretion, and humiliating as it was, made advances for a reconciliation. Ferdinand was also anxious to be on good terms with the pope. While negotiations were pending, Paul died, his death being perhaps hastened by chagrin. Pius IV. succeeded him, and pressed still more earnestly overtures for rec-

onciliation. Ferdinand, through his ambassador, expressed his willingness to pledge the accustomed *devotion* and *reverence* to the head of the Church, omitting the word *obedience*. But the pope was anxious, above all things, to have that emphatic word *obey* introduced into the ritual of subjection, and after employing all the arts of diplomacy and cajolery, carried his point. Ferdinand, with duplicity which was not honorable, let the word remain, saying that it was not his act, but that of his ambassador. The pope affected satisfaction with the formal acknowledgment of his power, while Ferdinand ever after refused to recognize his authority. Thus terminated the long dependence, running through ages of darkness and delusion, of the German emperors upon the Roman see.

Ferdinand did not trouble himself to receive the crown from the pope, and since his day the emperors of Germany have no longer been exposed to the expense and the trouble of a journey to Rome for their coronation. Though Ferdinand was strongly attached to the tenets of the papal church, and would gladly have eradicated Protestantism from his domains, he was compelled to treat the Protestants with some degree of consideration, as he needed the aid of their arms in the wars in which he was incessantly involved with the Turks. He even made great efforts to introduce some measure of conciliation which should reconcile the two parties, and thus reunite his realms under one system of doctrine and of worship.

Still Protestantism was making rapid strides all over Europe. It had become the dominant religion in Denmark and Sweden, and, by the accession of Elizabeth to the throne of England, was firmly established in that important kingdom. In France also the reformed religion had made extensive inroads, gathering to its defense many of the noblest spirits, in rank and intellect, in the realm. The terrors of the inquisition had thus far prevented the truth from making much progress in Spain and Portugal.

With the idea of promoting reconciliation, Ferdinand

adopted a measure which contributed greatly to his popularity with the Protestants. He united with France and Spain in urging Pius IV., a mild and pliant pontiff, to convene a council in Germany to heal the religious feud. He drew up a memorial, which was published and widely scattered, declaring that the Protestants had become far too powerful to be treated with outrage or contempt; that there were undeniable wrongs in the Church which needed to be reformed; and that no harm could accrue from permitting the clergy to marry, and to administer both bread and wine to the communicants in the Lord's Supper. It was a doctrine of the Church of Rome, that the laity could receive the bread only; the wine was reserved for the officiating priest.

This memorial of Ferdinand, drawn up with much distinctness and great force of argument, was very grateful to the Protestants, but very displeasing to the court of Rome. These conflicts raged for several years without any decisive results. The efforts of Ferdinand to please both parties, as usual, pleased neither. By the Protestants he was regarded as a persecutor and intolerant; while the Catholics accused him of lukewarmness, of conniving at heresy and of dishonoring the Church by demanding of her concessions derogatory to her authority and her dignity.

Ferdinand, finding that the Church clung with deathly tenacity to its corruptions, assumed himself quite the attitude of a reformer. A memorable council had been assembled at Trent on the 15th of January, 1562. Ferdinand urged the council to exhort the pope to examine if there was not room for some reform in his own person, state or court. "Because," said he, "the only true method to obtain authority for the reformation of others, is to begin by amending oneself." He commented upon the manifest impropriety of scandalous indulgences; of selling the sacred offices of the Church to the highest bidder, regardless of character; of extorting fees for the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; of

offering prayers and performing the services of public devotion in a language which the people could not understand; and other similar and most palpable abuses. Even the kings of France and Spain united with the emperor in these remonstrances.

It is difficult now to conceive of the astonishment and indignation with which the pope and his adherents received these very reasonable suggestions, coming not from the Protestants but from the most staunch advocates of the papacy. The see of Rome, corrupt to its very core, would yield nothing. The more senseless and abominable any of its corruptions were, the more tenaciously did pope and cardinals cling to them. At last the emperor, in despair of seeing any thing accomplished, requested that the assembly might be dissolved, saying, "Nothing good can be expected, even if it continues its sittings for a hundred years."