

## CHAPTER XII.

CHARACTER OF MAXIMILIAN II.—SUCCESSION OF  
RHODOLPH III.

FROM 1576 TO 1604.

CHARACTER OF MAXIMILIAN.—HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS.—HIS WIFE.—FATE OF HIS CHILDREN.—RHODOLPH III.—THE LIBERTY OF WORSHIP.—MEANS OF EMANCIPATION.—RHODOLPH'S ATTEMPTS AGAINST PROTESTANTISM.—DECLARATION OF A HIGHER LAW.—THEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES.—THE CONFEDERACY AT HEILBRUN.—THE GREGORIAN CALENDAR.—INTOLERANCE IN BOHEMIA.—THE TRAP OF THE MONKS.—INVASION OF THE TURKS.—THEIR DEFEAT.—COALITION WITH SIGISMOND.—SALE OF TRANSYLVANIA.—RULE OF BASTA.—THE EMPIRE CAPTURED AND RECAPTURED.—DEVASTATION OF THE COUNTRY.—TREATMENT OF STEPHEN BOTSOKOL.

IT is indeed refreshing, in the midst of the long list of selfish and ambitious sovereigns who have disgraced the thrones of Europe, to meet with such a prince as Maximilian, a gentleman, a philosopher, a philanthropist and a Christian. Henry of Valois, on his return from Poland to France, visited Maximilian at Vienna. Henry was considered one of the most polished men of his age. He remarked in his palace at Paris that in all his travels he had never met a more accomplished gentleman than the Emperor Maximilian. Similar is the testimony of all his contemporaries. With all alike, at all times, and under all circumstances, he was courteous and affable. His amiability shone as conspicuously at home as abroad, and he was invariably the kind husband, the tender father, the indulgent master and the faithful friend.

In early life he had vigorously prosecuted his studies, and thus possessed the invaluable blessing of a highly cultivated mind. Fond of the languages, he not only wrote and conversed in the Latin tongue with fluency and elegance, but was quite at home in all the languages of his extensive domains.

Notwithstanding the immense cares devolving upon the ruler of so extended an empire, he appropriated a portion of time every day to devotional reading and prayer; and his hours were methodically arranged for business, recreation and repose. The most humble subject found easy access to his person, and always obtained a patient hearing. When he was chosen King of Poland, some ambassadors from Bohemia voluntarily went to Poland to testify to the virtues of their king. It was a heartfelt tribute, such as few sovereigns have ever received.

"We Bohemians," said they, "are as happy under his government as if he were our father. Our privileges, laws, rights, liberties and usages are protected and defended. Not less just than wise, he confers the offices and dignities of the kingdom only on natives of rank, and is not influenced by favor or artifice. He introduces no innovations contrary to our immunities; and when the great expenses which he incurs for the good of Christendom render contributions necessary, he levies them without violence, and with the approbation of the States. But what may be almost considered a miracle is, the prudence and impartiality of his conduct toward persons of a different faith, always recommending union, concord, peace, toleration and mutual regard. He listens even to the meanest of his subjects, readily receives their petitions and renders impartial justice to all."

Not an act of injustice sullied his reign, and during his administration nearly all Germany, with the exception of Hungary, enjoyed almost uninterrupted tranquillity. Catholics and Protestants unite in his praises, and have conferred upon him the surname of the Delight of Mankind. His wife Mary was the daughter of Charles V. She was an accomplished, exemplary woman, entirely devoted to the Catholic faith. For this devotion, notwithstanding the tolerant spirit of her husband, she was warmly extolled by the Catholics. Gregory XIII. called her the firm column of the Catholic faith, and Pius V

pronounced her worthy of being worshiped. After the death of her husband she returned to Spain, to the bigoted court of her bigoted brother Philip. Upon reaching Madrid she developed the spirit which dishonored her, in expressing great joy that she was once more in a country where no heretic was tolerated. Soon after she entered a nunnery where she remained seven years until her death.

It is interesting briefly to trace out the history of the children of this royal family. It certainly will not tend to make one any more discontented to move in a humbler sphere. Maximilian left three daughters and five sons.

Anne, the eldest daughter, was engaged to her cousin, Don Carlos, only son of her uncle Philip, King of Spain. As he was consequently heir to the Spanish throne, this was a brilliant match. History thus records the person and character of Don Carlos. He was sickly and one of his legs was shorter than the other. His temper was not only violent, but furious, breaking over all restraints, and the malignant passions were those alone which governed him. He always slept with two naked swords under his pillow, two loaded pistols, and several loaded guns, with a chest of fire-arms at the side of his bed. He formed a conspiracy to murder his father. He was arrested and imprisoned. Choking with rage, he called for a fire and threw himself into the flames, hoping to suffocate himself. Being rescued, he attempted to starve himself. Failing in this, he tried to choke himself by swallowing a diamond. He threw off his clothes, and went naked and barefoot on the stone floor, hoping to engender some fatal disease. For eleven days he took no food but ice. At length the wretched man died, and thus Anne lost her lover. But Philip, the father of Don Carlos, and own uncle of Anne, concluded to take her for himself. She lived a few years as Queen of Spain, and died four years after the death of her father, Maximilian.

Elizabeth, the second daughter, was beautiful. At sixteen years of age she married Charles IX., King of France, who

was then twenty years old. Charles IX. ascended the throne when but ten years of age, under the regency of his infamous mother, Catherine de Medici, perhaps the most demoniac female earth has known. Under her tutelage, her boy, equally impotent in body and in mind, became as pitiable a creature as ever disgraced a throne. The only energy he ever showed was in shooting the Protestants from a window of the Louvre in the horrible Massacre of St. Bartholomew, which he planned at the instigation of his fiend-like mother. A few wretched years the youthful queen lived with the monster, when his death released her from that bondage. She then returned to Vienna, a young and childless widow, but twenty years of age. She built and endowed the splendid monastery of St. Mary de Angelis, and having seen enough of the pomp of the world, shut herself up from the world in the imprisonment of its cloisters, where she recanted her beads for nineteen years, until she died in 1592.

Margaret, the youngest daughter, after her father's death, accompanied her mother to Spain. Her sister Anne soon after died, and Philip II., her morose and debauched husband, having already buried four wives, and no one can tell how many guilty favorites, sought the hand of his young and fresh niece. But Margaret wisely preferred the gloom of the cloister to the Babylonish glare of the palace. She rejected the polluted and withered hand, and in solitude and silence, as a hooded nun, she remained immured in her cell for fifty-seven years. Then her pure spirit passed from a joyless life on earth, we trust, to a happy home in heaven.

Rhodolph, the eldest son, succeeded his father, and in the subsequent pages we shall record his career.

Ernest, the second son, was a mild, bashful young man, of a temperament so singularly melancholy that he was rarely known to smile. His brother Rhodolph gave him the appointment of Governor of Hungary. He passed quietly down the stream of time until he was forty-two years of age, when he

died of the stone, a disease which had long tortured him with excruciating pangs.

Matthias, the third son, became a restless, turbulent man, whose deeds we shall have occasion to record in connection with his brother Rhodolph, whom he sternly and successfully opposed.

Maximilian, the fourth son, when thirty years of age was elected King of Poland. An opposition party chose John, son of the King of Sweden. The rival candidates appealed to the cruel arbitration of the sword. In a decisive battle Maximilian's troops were defeated, and he was taken prisoner. He was only released upon his giving the pledge that he renounced all his right to the throne. He rambled about, now governing a province, and now fighting the Turks, until he died unmarried, sixty years of age.

Albert, the youngest son, was destined to the Church. He was sent to Spain, and under the patronage of his royal uncle he soon rose to exalted ecclesiastical dignities. He, however, eventually renounced these for more alluring temporal honors. Surrendering his cardinal's hat, and archiepiscopal robes, he espoused Isabella, daughter of Philip, and from the governorship of Portugal was promoted to the sovereignty of the Netherlands. Here he encountered only opposition and war. After a stormy and unsuccessful life, in which he was thwarted in all his plans, he died childless.

From this digression let us return to Rhodolph III., the heir to the titles and the sovereignties of his father the emperor. It was indeed a splendid inheritance which fell to his lot. He was the sole possessor of the archduchy of Austria, King of Bohemia and of Hungary, and Emperor of Germany. He was but twenty-five years of age when he entered upon the undisputed possession of all these dignities. His natural disposition was mild and amiable, his education had been carefully attended to, his moral character was good, a rare virtue in those days, and he had already evinced much industry, ex

ergy and talents for business. His father had left the finances and the internal administration of all his realms in good condition; his moderation had greatly mitigated the religious animosities which disturbed other portions of Europe, and all obstacles to a peaceful and prosperous reign seemed to have been removed.

But all these prospects were blighted by the religious bigotry which had gained a firm hold of the mind of the young emperor. When he was but twelve years of age he was sent to Madrid to be educated. Philip II., of Spain, Rhodolph's uncle, had an only daughter, and no son, and there seemed to be no prospect that his queen would give birth to another child. Philip consequently thought of adopting Rhodolph as his successor to the Spanish throne, and of marrying him to his daughter. In the court of Spain where the Jesuits held supreme sway, and where Rhodolph was intrusted to their guidance, the superstitious sentiments which he had imbibed from his mother were still more deeply rooted. The Jesuits found Rhodolph a docile pupil; and never on earth have there been found a set of men who, more thoroughly than the Jesuits, have understood the art of educating the mind to subjection. Rhodolph was instructed in all the petty arts of intrigue and dissimulation, and was brought into entire subserviency to the Spanish court. Thus educated, Rhodolph received the crown.

He commenced his reign with the desperate resolve to crush out Protestantism, either by force or guile, and to bring back his realms to the papal church. Even the toleration of Maximilian, in those dark days, did not allow freedom of worship to any but the nobles. The wealthy and emancipated citizens of Vienna, and other royal cities, could not establish a church of their own; they could only, under protection of the nobles, attend the churches which the nobles sustained. In other words, the people were slaves, who were hardly thought of in any state arrangements. The nobles were

merely the slaveholders. As there was not difference of color to mark the difference between the slaveholder and the slaves or vassals, many in the cities, who had in various ways achieved their emancipation, had become wealthy and instructed, and were slowly claiming some few rights. The country nobles could assemble their vassals in the churches where they had obtained toleration. In some few cases some of the citizens of the large towns, who had obtained emancipation from some feudal oppressions, had certain defined political privileges granted them. But, in general, the nobles or slaveholders, some having more, and some having less wealth and power, were all whom even Maximilian thought of including in his acts of toleration. A learned man in the universities, or a wealthy man in the walks of commerce, was compelled to find shelter under the protection of some powerful noble. There were nobles of all ranks, from the dukes, who could bring twenty thousand armed men into the field, down to the most petty, impoverished baron, who had perhaps not half a dozen vassals.

Rhodolph's first measure was to prevent the *burghers*, as they were called, who were those who had in various ways obtained emancipation from vassal service, and in the large cities had acquired energy, wealth and an air of independence, from attending Protestant worship. The nobles were very jealous of their privileges, and were prompt to combine whenever they thought them infringed. Fearful of rousing the nobles, Rhodolph issued a decree, confirming the toleration which his father had granted the nobles, but forbidding the burghers from attending Protestant worship. This was very adroitly done, as it did not interfere with the vassals of the rural nobles on their estates; and these burghers were freed men, over whom the nobles could claim no authority. At the same time Rhodolph silenced three of the most eloquent and influential of the Protestant ministers, under the plea that they assailed the Catholic church with too much viru-

lence; and he also forbade any one thenceforward to officiate as a Protestant clergyman without a license from him. These were very decisive acts, and yet very adroit ones, as they did not directly interfere with any of the immunities of the nobles.

The Protestants were, however, much alarmed by these measures, as indicative of the intolerant policy of the new king. The preachers met together to consult. They corresponded with foreign universities respecting the proper course to pursue; and the Protestant nobles met to confer upon the posture of affairs. As the result of their conferences, they issued a remonstrance, declaring that they could not yield to such an infringement of the rights of conscience, and that "they were bound to obey God rather than man."

Rhodolph was pleased with this resistance, as it afforded him some excuse for striking a still heavier blow. He declared the remonstrants guilty of rebellion. As a punishment, he banished several Protestant ministers, and utterly forbade the exercise of any Protestant worship whatever, in any of the royal towns, including Vienna itself. He communicated with the leading Catholics in the Church and in the State, urging them to act with energy, concert and unanimity. He removed the Protestants from office, and supplied their places with Catholics. He forbade any license to preach or academical degree, or professorship in the universities from being conferred upon any one who did not sign the formulary of the Catholic faith. He ordered a new catechism to be drawn up for universal use in the schools, that there should be no more Protestant education of children; he allowed no town to choose any officer without his approbation, and he refused to ratify any choice which did not fall upon a Catholic. No person was to be admitted to the rights of burghership, until he had taken an oath of submission to the Catholic priesthood. These high-handed measures led to the outbreak of a few insurrections, which the emperor crushed with iron rigor

In the course of a few years, by the vigorous and unrelenting prosecution of these measures, Rhodolph gave the Catholics the ascendancy in all his realms.

While the Catholics were all united, the Protestants were shamefully divided upon the most trivial points of discipline, or upon abstruse questions in philosophy above the reach of mortal minds. It was as true then, as in the days of our Saviour, that "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Henry IV., of France, who had not then embraced the Catholic faith, was anxious to unite the two great parties of Lutherans and Calvinists, who were as hostile to each other as they were to the Catholics. He sent an ambassador to Germany to urge their union. He entreated them to call a general synod, suggesting, that as they differed only on the single point of the Lord's Supper, it would be easy for them to form some basis of fraternal and harmonious action.

The Catholic church received the doctrine, so called, of *transubstantiation*; that is, the bread and wine, used in the Lord's Supper, is converted into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, that it is no longer bread and wine, but real flesh and blood; and none the less so, because it does not appear such to our senses. Luther renounced the doctrine of transubstantiation, and adopted, in its stead, what he called *consubstantiation*; that is, that after the consecration of the elements, the body and blood of Christ are substantially *present with* (cum et sub,) with and under, the substance of the bread and wine. Calvin taught that the bread and wine represented the real body and blood of Christ, and that the body and blood were *spiritually present* in the sacrament. It is a deplorable exhibition of the weakness of good men, that the Lutherans and the Calvinists should have wasted their energies in contending together upon such a point. But we moderns have no right to boast. Precisely the same spirit is manifested now, and denominations differ and strive together

upon questions which the human mind can never settle. The spirit which then animated the two parties may be inferred from the reply of the Lutherans.

"The partisans of Calvin," they wrote, "have accumulated such numberless errors in regard to the person of Christ, the communication of His merits and the dignity of human nature; have given such forced explanations of the Scriptures, and adopted so many blasphemies, that the question of the Lord's Supper, far from being the principal, has become the least point of difference. An outward union, merely for worldly purposes, in which each party is suffered to maintain its peculiar tenets, can neither be agreeable to God nor useful to the Church. These considerations induced us to insert into the formulary of concord a condemnation of the Calvinistical errors; and to declare our public decision that false principles should not be covered with the semblance of exterior union, and tolerated under pretense of the right of private judgment, but that all should submit to the Word of God, as the only rule to which their faith and instructions should be conformable."

They, in conclusion, very politely informed King Henry IV. himself, that if he wished to unite with them, he must sign their creed. This was sincerity, honesty, but it was the sincerity and honesty of minds but partially disenthralled from the bigotry of the dark ages. While the Protestants were thus unhappily disunited, the pope coöperated with the emperor, and wheeled all his mighty forces into the line to recover the ground which the papal church had lost. Several of the more enlightened of the Protestant princes, seeing all their efforts paralyzed by disunion, endeavored to heal the schism. But the Lutheran leaders would not listen to the Calvinists, nor the Calvinists to the Lutherans, and the masses, as usual, blindly followed their leaders.

Several of the Calvinist princes and nobles, the Lutherans refusing to meet with them, united in a confederacy at Heil-

brun, and drew up a long list of grievances, declaring that, until they were redressed, they should withhold the succors which the emperor had solicited to repel the Turks. Most of these grievances were very serious, sufficiently so to rouse men to almost any desperation of resistance. But it would be amusing, were it not humiliating, to find among them the complaint that the pope had changed the calendar from the Julian to the Gregorian.

By the Julian calendar, or Old Style as it was called, the solar year was estimated at three hundred and sixty-five days and six hours; but it exceeds this by about eleven minutes. As no allowance was made for these minutes, which amount to a day in about one hundred and thirty years, the current year had, in process of ages, advanced ten days beyond the real time. Thus the vernal equinox, which really took place on the 10th of March, was assigned in the calendar to the 21st. To rectify this important error the New Style, or Gregorian calendar, was introduced, so called from Pope Gregory XII. Ten days were dropped after the 4th of October, 1582, and the 5th was called the 15th. This reform of the calendar, correct and necessary as it was, was for a long time adopted only by the Catholic princes, so hostile were the Protestants to any thing whatever which originated from the pope. In their list of grievances they mentioned this most salutary reform as one, stating that the pope and the Jesuits presumed even to change the order of times and years.

This confederacy of the Calvinists, unaided by the Lutherans, accomplished nothing; but still, as year after year the disaffection increased, their numbers gradually increased also, until, on the 12th of February, 1603, at Heidelberg they entered into quite a formidable alliance, offensive and defensive.

Rhodolph, encouraged by success, pressed his measure of intolerance with renovated vigor. Having quite effectually abolished the Protestant worship in the States of Austria, he turned his attention to Bohemia, where, under the mild gov-

ernment of his father, the Protestants had enjoyed a degree of liberty of conscience hardly known in any other part of Europe. The realm was startled by the promulgation of a decree forbidding both Calvinists and Lutherans from holding any meetings for divine worship, and declaring them incapacitated from holding any official employment whatever. At the same time he abolished all their schools, and either closed all their churches, or placed in them Catholic preachers. These same decrees were also promulgated and these same measures adopted in Hungary. And still the Protestants, insensibly quarreling among themselves upon the most abstruse points of theological philosophy, chose rather to be devoured piecemeal by their great enemy than to combine in self-defense.

The emperor now turned from his own dominions of Austria, Hungary and Bohemia, where he reigned in undisputed sway, to other States of the empire, which were governed by their own independent rulers and laws, and where the power of the emperor was shadowy and limited. He began with the city of Aix-la-Chapelle, in a Prussian province on the Lower Rhine; sent an army there, took possession of the town, expelled the Protestants from the magistracy, driving some of them into exile, inflicting heavy fines upon others, and abolishing entirely the exercise of the Protestant religion.

He then turned to Donauworth, an important city of Bavaria, upon the Upper Danube. This was a Protestant city, having within its walls but few Catholics. There was in the city one Catholic religious establishment, a Benedictine abbey. The friars enjoyed unlimited freedom of conscience and worship within their own walls, but were not permitted to occupy the streets with their processions, performing the forms and ceremonies of the Catholic church. The Catholics, encouraged by the emperor, sent out a procession from the walls of the abbey, with torches, banners, relics and all the pageants of Catholic worship. The magistrates stopped the procession, took away their banners and sent them back to

the abbey, and then suffered the procession to proceed. Soon after the friars got up another procession on a funeral occasion. The magistrates, apprehensive that this was a trap to excite them to some opposition which would render it plausible for the emperor to interfere, suffered the procession to proceed unmolested. In a few days the monks repeated the experiment. The populace had now become excited, and there were threats of violence. The magistrates, fearful of the consequences, did every thing in their power to soothe the people, and urged them, by earnest proclamation, to abstain from all tumult. For some time the procession, displaying all the hated pomp of papal worship, paraded the streets undisturbed. But at length the populace became ungovernable, attacked the monks, demolished their pageants and pelted them with mire back into the convent.

This was enough. The emperor published the ban of the empire, and sent the Duke of Bavaria with an army to execute the decree. Resistance was hopeless. The troops took possession of the town, abolished the Protestant religion, and delivered the churches to the Catholics.

The Protestants now saw that there was no hope for them but in union. Thus driven together by an outward pressure which was every day growing more menacing and severe, the chiefs of the Protestant party met at Aschhausen and established a confederacy to continue for ten years. Thus united, they drew up a list of grievances, and sent an embassy to present their demands to the emperor. And now came a very serious turn in the fortunes of Rhodolph. Notwithstanding the armistice which had been concluded with the Turks by Rhodolph, a predatory warfare continued to rage along the borders. Neither the emperor nor the sultan, had they wished it, could prevent fiery spirits, garrisoned in fortresses frowning at each other, from meeting occasionally in hostile encounter. And both parties were willing that their soldiers should have enough to do to keep up their courage and their warlike spirit.

Aggression succeeding aggression, sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other, the sultan at last, in a moment of exasperation, resolved to break the truce.

A large army of Turks invaded Croatia, took several fortresses, and marching up the valley of the Save, were opening before them a route into the heart of the Austrian States. The emperor hastily gathered an army to oppose them. They met before Siseck, at the confluence of the Kulpa and the Save. The Turks were totally defeated, with the loss of twelve thousand men. Exasperated by the defeat, the sultan roused his energies anew, and war again raged in all its horrors. The advantage was with the Turks, and they gradually forced their way up the valley of the Danube, taking fortress after fortress, till they were in possession of the important town of Raab, within a hundred miles of Vienna.

Sigismund, the waivode or governor of Transylvania, an energetic, high-spirited man, had, by his arms, brought the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia under subjection to him. Having attained such power, he was galled at the idea of holding his government under the protection of the Turks. He accordingly abandoned the sultan, and entered into a coalition with the emperor. The united armies fell furiously upon the Turks, and drove them back to Constantinople.

The sultan, himself a man of exceedingly ferocious character, was thoroughly aroused by this disgrace. He raised an immense army, placed himself at its head, and in 1596 again invaded Hungary. He drove the Austrians everywhere before him, and but for the lateness of the season would have bombarded Vienna. Sigismund, in the hour of victory, sold Transylvania to Rhodolph for the governorship of some provinces in Silesia, and a large annual pension. There was some fighting before the question was fully settled in favor of the emperor, and then he placed the purchased and the conquered province under the government of the imperial general Basta.

The rule of Basta was so despotic that the Transylvanians

rose in revolt, and under an intrepid chief, Moses Tzekeli, appealed to the Turks for aid. The Turks were rejoiced again to find the Christians divided, and hastened to avail themselves of the coöperation of the disaffected. The Austrians were driven from Transylvania, and the Turks aided in crowning Tzekeli Prince of Transylvania, under the protection of the Porte. The Austrians, however, soon returned in greater force, killed Tzekeli in the confusion of battle, and reconquered the country. During all this time wretched Hungary was ravaged with incessant wars between the Turks and Austrians. Army after army swept to and fro over the smoldering cities and desolated plains. Neither party gained any decisive advantage, while Hungary was exposed to misery which no pen can describe. Cities were bombarded, now by the Austrians and now by the Turks, villages were burned, harvests trodden down, every thing eatable was consumed. Outrages were perpetrated upon the helpless population by the ferocious Turks which can not be told.

The Hungarians lost all confidence in Rhodolph. The bigoted emperor was so much engaged in the attempt to extirpate what he called heresy from his realms, that he neglected to send armies sufficiently strong to protect Hungary from these ravages. He could have done this without much difficulty; but absorbed in his hostility to Protestantism, he merely sent sufficient troops to Hungary to keep the country in a constant state of warfare. He filled every important governmental post in Hungary with Catholics and foreigners. To all the complaints of the Hungarians he turned a deaf ear; and his own Austrian troops frequently rivaled the Turks in devastation and pillage. At the same time he issued the most intolerant edicts, depriving the Protestants of all their rights, and endeavoring to force the Roman Catholic religion upon the community.

He allowed, and even encouraged, his rapacious generals to insult and defraud the Protestant Hungarian nobles, seiz

ing their castles, confiscating their estates and driving them into exile. This oppression at last became unendurable. The people were driven to despair. One of the most illustrious nobles of Hungary, a magnate of great wealth and distinction, Stephen Botskoi, repaired to Prague to inform the emperor of the deplorable state of Hungary and to seek redress. He was treated with the utmost indignity; was detained for hours in the ante-chamber of the emperor, where he encountered the most cutting insults from the minions of the court. The indignation of the high-spirited noble was roused to the highest pitch. And when, on his return to Hungary, he found his estates plundered and devastated by order of the imperial governor, he was all ready to head an insurrection.