

one of the chambers of his palace. He had an infant son, but a few weeks old, lying in a cradle in the nursery. A fire broke out in the apartment of the young prince. The whole palace was instantly in clamor and confusion. Some attendants seized the cradle of the young prince, and rushed with it to the chamber of the emperor. In their haste and terror they struck the cradle with such violence against the wall that it was broken to pieces and the child fell, screaming, upon the floor. The cry of fire, the tumult, the bursting into the room, the dashing of the cradle and the shrieks of the child, so shocked the debilitated king that he died within an hour.

Leopold was but eighteen years of age when he succeeded to the sovereignty of all the Austrian dominions, including the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia. It was the first great object of his ambition to secure the imperial throne also, which his father had failed to obtain for him. Louis XIV. was now the youthful sovereign of France. He, through his ambitious and able minister, Mazarin, did every thing in his power to thwart the endeavors of Ferdinand, and to obtain the brilliant prize for himself. The King of Sweden united with the French court in the endeavor to abase the pride of the house of Austria. But notwithstanding all their efforts, Leopold carried his point, and was unanimously elected emperor, and crowned on the 31st of July, 1657. The princes of the empire, however, greatly strengthened in their independence by the articles of the peace of Westphalia, increasingly jealous of their rights, attached forty-five conditions to their acceptance of Leopold as emperor. Thus, notwithstanding the imperial title, Leopold had as little power over the States of the empire as the President of the United States has over the internal concerns of Maine or Louisiana. In all such cases there is ever a conflict between two parties, the one seeking the centralization of power, and the other advocating its dispersion into various distant central points.

The flames of war which Charles Gustavus had kindled

were still blazing. Leopold continued the alliance which his father had formed with the Poles, and sent an army of sixteen thousand men into Poland, hoping to cut off the retreat of Charles Gustavus, and take him and all his army prisoners. But the Swedish monarch was as sagacious and energetic as he was unscrupulous and ambitious. Both parties formed alliances. State after State was drawn into the conflict. The flame spread like a conflagration. Fleets met in deadly conflict on the Baltic, and crimsoned its waves with blood. The thunders of war were soon again echoing over all the plains of northern and western Germany—and all this because a proud, unprincipled young man, who chanced to be a king, wished to be called a *hero*.

He accomplished his object. Through burning homes and bleeding hearts and crushed hopes he marched to his renown. The forces of the empire were allied with Denmark and Poland against him. With skill and energy which can hardly find a parallel in the tales of romance, he baffled all the combinations of his foes. Energy is a noble quality, and we may admire its exhibition even though we detest the cause which has called it forth. The Swedish fleet had been sunk by the Danes, and Charles Gustavus was driven from the waters of the Baltic. With a few transports he secretly conveyed an army across the Cattegat to the northern coast of Jutland, marched rapidly down those inhospitable shores until he came to the narrow strait, called the Little Belt, which separates Jutland from the large island of Fyen. He crossed this strait on the ice, dispersed a corps of Danes posted to arrest him, traversed the island, exposed to all the storms of mid-winter, some sixty miles to its eastern shore. A series of islands, with intervening straits clogged with ice, bridged by a long and circuitous way his passage across the Great Belt. A march of ten miles across the hummocks, rising and falling with the tides, landed him upon the almost pathless snows of Lange-land. Crossing that dreary waste diagonally some dozen miles

to another arm of the sea ten miles wide, which the ices of a winter of almost unprecedented severity had also bridged, pushing boldly on, with a recklessness which nothing but success redeems from stupendous infatuation, he crossed this fragile surface, which any storm might crumble beneath his feet, and landed upon the western coast of Laaland. A march of thirty-five miles over a treeless, shelterless and almost uninhabited expanse, brought him to the eastern shore. Easily crossing a narrow strait about a mile in width, he plunged into the forests of the island of Falster. A dreary march of twenty-seven miles conducted him to the last remaining arm of the sea which separated him from Zealand. This strait, from twelve to fifteen miles in breadth, was also closed by ice. Charles Gustavus led his hardy soldiers across it, and then, with accelerated steps, pressed on some sixty miles to Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark. In sixteen days after landing in Jutland, his troops were encamped in Zealand before the gates of the capital.

The King of Denmark was appalled at such a sudden apparition. His allies were too remote to render him any assistance. Never dreaming of such an attack, his capital was quite defenseless in that quarter. Overwhelmed with terror and despondency, he was compelled to submit to such terms as the conqueror might dictate. The conqueror was inexorable in his demands. Sweden was aggrandized, and Denmark humiliated.

Leopold was greatly chagrined by this sudden prostration of his faithful ally. In the midst of these scenes of ambition and of conquest, the "king of terrors" came with his summons to Charles Gustavus. The passage of this blood-stained warrior to the world of spirits reminds us of the sublime vision of Isaiah when the King of Babylon sank into the grave:

"Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all

the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee,

"Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols; the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the nations!"

"They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee and consider thee, saying, 'Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, and didst shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness and destroyed the cities thereof, that opened not the house of his prisoners?'"

The death of Charles Gustavus was the signal for the strife of war to cease, and the belligerent nations soon came to terms of accommodation. But scarcely was peace proclaimed ere new troubles arose in Hungary. The barbarian Turks, with their head-quarters at Constantinople, lived in a state of continual anarchy. The cimeter was their only law. The palace of the sultan was the scene of incessant assassinations. Nothing ever prevented them from assailing their neighbors but incessant quarrels among themselves. The life of the Turkish empire was composed of bloody insurrections at home, and still more bloody wars abroad. Mahomet IV. was now sultan. He was but twenty years of age. A quarrel for ascendancy among the beauties of his harem had involved the empire in a civil war. The sultan, after a long conflict, crushed the insurrection with a blood-red hand. Having restored internal tranquillity, he prepared as usual for foreign war. By intrigue and the force of arms they took possession of most of the fortresses of Transylvania, and crossing the frontier, entered Hungary, and laid siege to Great Wardein.

Leopold immediately dispatched ten thousand men to succor the besieged town and to garrison other important fortresses. His succors arrived too late. Great Wardein fell

into the hands of the Turks, and they commenced their merciless ravages. Hungary was in a wretched condition. The king, residing in Vienna, was merely a nominal sovereign. Chosen by nobles proud of their independence, and jealous of each other and of their feudal rights, they were unwilling to delegate to the sovereign any efficient power. They would crown him with great splendor of gold and jewelry, and crowd his court in their magnificent display, but they would not grant him the prerogative to make war or peace, to levy taxes, or to exercise any other of the peculiar attributes of sovereignty. The king, with all his sounding titles and gorgeous parade, was in reality but the chairman of a committee of nobles. The real power was with the Hungarian diet.

This diet, or congress, was a peculiar body. Originally it consisted of the whole body of nobles, who assembled annually on horseback on the vast plain of Rakoz, near Buda. Eighty thousand nobles, many of them with powerful revenues, were frequently convened at these tumultuous gatherings. The people were thought to have no rights which a noble was bound to respect. They lived in hovels, hardly superior to those which a humane farmer now prepares for his swine. The only function they fulfilled was, by a life of exhausting toil and suffering, to raise the funds which the nobles expended in their wars and their pleasure; and to march to the field of blood when summoned by the bugle. In fact history has hardly condescended to allude to the people. We have minutely detailed the intrigues and the conflicts of kings and nobles, when generation after generation of the masses of the people have passed away, as little thought of as billows upon the beach.

These immense gatherings of the nobles were found to be so unwieldy, and so inconvenient for the transaction of any efficient business, that Sigismund, at the commencement of the fifteenth century, introduced a limited kind of representation. The bishops, who stood first in wealth, power and rank, and the highest dukes attended in person. The nobles of less

exalted rank sent their delegates, and the assembly, much diminished in number, was transferred from the open plain to the city of Presburg. The diet, at the time of which we write, was assembled once in three years, and at such other times as the sovereign thought it necessary to convene it. The diet controlled the king, unless he chanced to be a man of such commanding character, that by moral power he could bring the diet to his feet. A clause had been inserted in the coronation oath, that the nobles, without guilt, could oppose the authority of the king, whenever he transgressed their privileges; it was also declared that no foreign troops could be introduced into the kingdom without the consent of the diet.

Under such a government, it was inevitable that the king should be involved in a continued conflict with the nobles. The nobles wished for aid to repel the Turks; and yet they were unwilling that an Austrian army should be introduced into Hungary, lest it should enable the king to enlarge those prerogatives which he was ever seeking to extend, and which they were ever endeavoring to curtail.

Leopold convened the diet at Presburg. They had a stormy session. Leopold had commenced some persecution of the Protestants in the States of Austria. This excited the alarm of the Protestant nobles of Hungary; and they had reason to dread the intolerance of the Roman Catholics, more than the cimeter of the Turk. They openly accused Leopold of commencing persecution, and declared that it was his intention to reduce Hungary to the state to which Ferdinand II. had reduced Bohemia. They met all the suggestions of Leopold, for decisive action, with so many provisos and precautions, that nothing could be done. It is dangerous to surrender one's arms to a highway robber, or one whom we fear may prove such, even if he does promise with them to aid in repelling a foe. The Catholics and the Protestants became involved in altercation, and the diet was abruptly dissolved.

The Turks eagerly watched their movements, and, encouraged by these dissensions, soon burst into Hungary with an army of one hundred thousand men. They crossed the Drave at Esseg, and, ascending the valley of the Danube, directly north one hundred and fifty miles, crossed that stream unopposed at Buda. Still ascending the stream, which here flows from the west, they spread devastation everywhere around them, until they arrived nearly within sight of the steeples of Vienna. The capital was in consternation. To add to their terror and their peril, the emperor was dangerously sick of the small-pox, a disease which had so often proved fatal to members of the royal family. One of the imperial generals, near Presburg, in a strong position, held the invading army in check a few days. The ministry, in their consternation, appealed to all the powers of Christendom to hasten to the rescue of the cross, now so seriously imperiled by the crescent. Forces flowed in, which for a time arrested the further advance of the Moslem banners, and afforded time to prepare for more efficient action.

CHAPTER XX.

LEOPOLD I.

FROM 1662 TO 1697.

INVASION OF THE TURKS.—A TREATY CONCLUDED.—POSSESSIONS OF LEOPOLD.—INVASION OF THE FRENCH.—LEAGUE OF AUGSBURG.—DEVASTATION OF THE PALATINATE.—INVASION OF HUNGARY.—EMERIC TEKEL.—UNION OF EMERIC TEKEL WITH THE TURKS.—LEOPOLD APPLIES TO SOBIESKI.—HE IMMEDIATELY MARCHES TO HIS AID.—THE TURKS CONQUERED.—SOBIESKI'S TRIUMPHAL RECEPTIONS.—MEANNESS OF LEOPOLD.—REVENGE UPON HUNGARY.—PEACE CONCLUDED.—CONTEST FOR SPAIN.

WHILE Europe was rousing itself to repel this invasion of the Turks, the grand vizier, leaving garrisons in the strong fortresses of the Danube, withdrew the remainder of his army to prepare for a still more formidable invasion the ensuing year. Most of the European powers seemed disposed to render the emperor some aid. The pope transmitted to him about two hundred thousand dollars. France sent a detachment of six thousand men. Spain, Venice, Genoa, Tuscany and Mantua, forwarded important contributions of money and military stores. Early in the summer the Turks, in a powerful and well provided army, commenced their march anew. Ascending the valley of the Save, where they encountered no opposition, they traversed Styria, that they might penetrate to the seat of war through a defenseless frontier. The troops assembled by Leopold, sixty thousand in number, under the renowned Prince Montecuculi, stationed themselves in a very strong position at St. Gothard, behind the river Raab, which flows into the Danube about one hundred miles below Vienna. Here they threw up their intrenchments and prepared to resist the progress of the invader.