

CHAPTER XXV.

CHARLES VI. AND THE TURKISH WAR RENEWED.

FROM 1735 TO 1739.

ANXIETY OF AUSTRIAN OFFICE-HOLDERS.—MARIA THERESA.—THE DUKE OF LORRAINE.—
DISTRACTION OF THE EMPEROR.—TUSCANY ASSIGNED TO THE DUKE OF LORRAINE.—
DEATH OF EUGENE.—RISING GREATNESS OF RUSSIA.—NEW WAR WITH THE TURKS.—
CONDITION OF THE ARMY.—COMMENCEMENT OF HOSTILITIES.—CAPTURE OF NISSA.—
INEFFICIENT CAMPAIGN.—DISGRACE OF SECKENDORF.—THE DUKE OF LORRAINE
PLACED IN COMMAND.—SIEGE OF ORSOVA.—BELGRADE BESIEGED BY THE TURKS.—
THE THIRD CAMPAIGN.—BATTLE OF CROTZKA.—DEFEAT OF THE AUSTRIANS.—CON-
STERNATION IN VIENNA.—BARBARISM OF THE TURKS.—THE SURRENDER OF BEL-
GRADE.

THE emperor being quite unable, either on the Rhine or in Italy, successfully to compete with his foes, received blow after blow, which exceedingly disheartened him. His affairs were in a desperate condition, and, to add to his grief, dissensions filled his cabinet; his counsellors mutually accusing each other of being the cause of the impending ruin. The Italian possessions of the emperor had been thronged with Austrian nobles, filling all the posts of office and of honor, and receiving rich salaries. A change of administration, in the transference of these States to the dominion of Spain and Sardinia, "reformed" all these Austrian office-holders out of their places, and conferred these posts upon Spaniards and Sardinians. The ejected Austrian nobles crowded the court of the emperor, with the most passionate importunities that he would enter into a separate accommodation with Spain, and secure the restoration of the Italian provinces by giving his eldest daughter, Maria Theresa, to the Spanish prince, Carlos. This would seem to be a very simple arrangement,

especially since the Queen of Spain so earnestly desired this match, that she was willing to make almost any sacrifice for its accomplishment. But there was an inseparable obstacle in the way of any such arrangement.

Maria Theresa had just attained her eighteenth year. She was a young lady of extraordinary force of character, and of an imperial spirit; and she had not the slightest idea of having her person disposed of as a mere make-weight in the diplomacy of Europe. She knew that the crown of Austria was soon to be hers; she understood the weakness of her father, and was well aware that she was far more capable of wearing that crown than he had ever been; and she was already far more disposed to take the reins of government from her father's hand, than she was to submit herself to his control. With such a character, and such anticipations, she had become passionately attached to the young Duke of Lorraine, who was eight years her senior, and who had for some years been one of the most brilliant ornaments of her father's court.

The duchy of Lorraine was one of the most extensive and opulent of the minor States of the German empire. Admirably situated upon the Rhine and the Meuse, and extending to the sea, it embraced over ten thousand square miles, and contained a population of over a million and a half. The duke, Francis Stephen, was the heir of an illustrious line, whose lineage could be traced for many centuries. Germany, France and Spain, united, had not sufficient power to induce Maria Theresa to reject Francis Stephen, the grandson of her father's sister, the playmate of her childhood, and now her devoted lover, heroic and fascinating, for the Spanish Carlos, of whom she knew little, and for whom she cared less. Ambition also powerfully operated on the very peculiar mind of Maria Theresa. She had much of the exacting spirit of Elizabeth, England's maiden queen, and was emulous of supremacy which no one would share. She, in her own right, was to inherit the crown of Austria, and Francis Stephen, high-born and

noble as he was, and her recognized husband, would still be her subject. She could confer upon him dignity and power, retaining a supremacy which even he could never reach.

The emperor was fully aware of the attachment of his daughter to Francis, of her inflexible character; and even when pretending to negotiate for her marriage with Carlos, he was conscious that it was all a mere pretense, and that the union could never be effected. The British minister at Vienna saw very clearly the true state of affairs, and when the emperor was endeavoring to intimidate England by the menace that he would unite the crowns of Spain and Austria by uniting Maria and Carlos, the minister wrote to his home government as follows:

"Maria Theresa is a princess of the highest spirit; her father's losses are her own. She reasons already; she enters into affairs; she admires his virtues, but condemns his mismanagement; and is of a temper so formed for rule and ambition, as to look upon him as little more than her administrator. Notwithstanding this lofty humor by day, she sighs and pines all night for her Duke of Lorraine. If she sleeps, it is only to dream of him; if she wakes, it is but to talk of him to the lady in waiting; so that there is no more probability of her forgetting the very individual government, and the very individual husband which she thinks herself born to, than of her forgiving the authors of her losing either."

The empress was cordially coöperating with her daughter. The emperor was in a state of utter distraction. His affairs were fast going to ruin; he was harassed by counter intreaties; he knew not which way to turn, or what to do. Insupportable gloom oppressed his spirit. Pale and haggard, he wandered through the rooms of his palace, the image of woe. At night he tossed sleepless upon his bed, moaning in anguish which he then did not attempt to conceal, and giving free utterance to all the mental tortures which were goading him to madness. The queen became seriously alarmed lest his

reason should break down beneath such a weight of woe. It was clear that neither reason nor life could long withstand such a struggle.

Thus in despair, the emperor made proposals for a secret and separate accommodation with France. Louis XV. promptly listened, and offered terms, appallingly definite, and cruel enough to extort the last drop of blood from the emperor's sinking heart. "Give me," said the French king, "the duchy of Lorraine, and I will withdraw my armies, and leave Austria to make the best terms she can with Spain."

How could the emperor wrest from his prospective son-in-law his magnificent ancestral inheritance? The duke could not hold his realms for an hour against the armies of France, should the emperor consent to their surrender; and conscious of the desperation to which the emperor was driven, and of his helplessness, he was himself plunged into the deepest dismay and anguish. He held an interview with the British minister to see if it were not possible that England might interpose her aid in his behalf. In frantic grief he lost his self control, and, throwing himself into a chair, pressed his brow convulsively, and exclaimed, "Great God! will not England help me? Has not his majesty with his own lips, over and over again, promised to stand by me?"

The French armies were advancing; shot and shell were falling upon village and city; fortress after fortress was surrendering. "Give me Lorraine," repeated Louis XV., persistently, "or I will take all Austria." There was no alternative but for the emperor to drink to the dregs the bitter cup which his own hand had mingled. He surrendered Lorraine to France. He, however, succeeded in obtaining some slight compensation for the defrauded duke. The French court allowed him a pension of ninety thousand dollars a year, until the death of the aged Duke of Tuscany, who was the last of the Medici line, promising that then Tuscany, one of the most important duchies of central Italy, should pass into the hands

of Francis. Should Sardinia offer any opposition, the King of France promised to unite with the emperor in maintaining Francis in his possession by force of arms. Peace was thus obtained with France. Peace was then made with Spain and Sardinia, by surrendering to Spain Naples and Sicily, and to Sardinia most of the other Austrian provinces in Italy. Thus scourged and despoiled, the emperor, a humbled, woe-stricken man, retreated to the seclusion of his palace.

While these affairs were in progress, Francis Stephen derived very considerable solace by his marriage with Maria Theresa. Their nuptials took place at Vienna on the 12th of February, 1736. The emperor made the consent of the duke to the cession of Lorraine to France, a condition of the marriage. As the duke struggled against the surrender of his paternal domains, Cartenstein, the emperor's confidential minister, insultingly said to him, "Monseigneur, point de cession, point d'archiduchesse." *My lord, no cession, no archduchess.* Fortunately for Francis, in about a year after his marriage the Duke of Tuscany died, and Francis, with his bride, hastened to his new home in the palaces of Leghorn. Though the duke mourned bitterly over the loss of his ancestral domains, Tuscany was no mean inheritance. The duke was absolute monarch of the duchy, which contained about eight thousand square miles and a population of a million. The revenues of the archduchy were some four millions of dollars. The army consisted of six thousand troops.

Two months after the marriage of Maria Theresa, Prince Eugene died quietly in his bed at the age of seventy-three. He had passed his whole lifetime riding over fields of battle swept by bullets and plowed by shot. He had always exposed his own person with utter recklessness, leading the charge, and being the first to enter the breach or climb the rampart. Though often wounded, he escaped all these perils, and breathed his last in peace upon his pillow in Vienna.

His funeral was attended with regal honors. For three

days the corpse lay in state, with the coat of mail, the helmet and the gauntlets which the warrior had worn in so many fierce battles, suspended over his lifeless remains. His heart was sent in an urn to be deposited in the royal tomb where his ancestors slumbered. His embalmed body was interred in the metropolitan church in Vienna. The emperor and all the court attended the funeral, and his remains were borne to the grave with honors rarely conferred upon any but crowned heads.

The Ottoman power had now passed its culminating point, and was evidently on the wane. The Russian empire was beginning to arrest the attention of Europe, and was ambitious of making its voice heard in the diplomacy of the European monarchies. Being destitute of any sea coast, it was excluded from all commercial intercourse with foreign nations, and in its cold, northern realm, "leaning," as Napoleon once said, "against the North Pole," seemed to be shut up to barbarism. It had been a leading object of the ambition of Peter the Great to secure a maritime port for his kingdom. He at first attempted a naval depot on his extreme southern border, at the mouth of the Don, on the sea of Azof. This would open to him the commerce of the Mediterranean through the Azof, the Euxine and the Marmora. But the assailing Turks drove him from these shores, and he was compelled to surrender the fortresses he had commenced to their arms. He then turned to his western frontier, and, with an incredible expenditure of money and sacrifice of life, reared upon the marshes of the Baltic the imperial city of St. Petersburg. Peter I. died in 1725, leaving the crown to his wife Catharine. She, however, survived him but two years, when she died, in 1727, leaving two daughters. The crown then passed to the grandson of Peter I., a boy of thirteen. In three years he died of the small-pox. Anna, the daughter of the oldest brother of Peter I., now ascended the throne, and reigned, through her favorites, with relentless rigor.

It was one of the first objects of Anna's ambition to secure a harbor for maritime commerce in the more sunny climes of southern Europe. St. Petersburg, far away upon the frozen shores of the Baltic, where the harbor was shut up with ice for five months in the year, presented but a cheerless prospect for the formation of a merchant marine. She accordingly revived the original project of Peter the Great, and waged war with the Turks to recover the lost province on the shores of the Euxine. Russia had been mainly instrumental in placing Augustus II. on the throne of Poland; Anna was consequently sure of his sympathy and coöperation. She also sent to Austria to secure the alliance of the emperor. Charles VI., though his army was in a state of decay and his treasury empty, eagerly embarked in the enterprise. He was in a continued state of apprehension from the threatened invasion of the Turks. He hoped also, aided by the powerful arm of Russia, to be able to gain territories in the east which would afford some compensation for his enormous losses in the south and in the west.

While negotiations were pending, the Russian armies were already on the march. They took Azof after a siege of but a fortnight, and then overran and took possession of the whole Crimea, driving the Turks before them. Charles VI. was a very scrupulous Roman Catholic, and was animated to the strife by the declaration of his confessor that it was his duty, as a Christian prince, to aid in extirpating the enemies of the Church of Christ. The Turks were greatly alarmed by these successes of the Russians, and by the formidable preparations of the other powers allied against them.

The emperor hoped that fortune, so long adverse, was now turning in his favor. He collected a large force on the frontiers of Turkey, and intrusted the command to General Seckendorf. The general hastened into Hungary to the rendezvous of the troops. He found the army in a deplorable condition. The treasury being exhausted, they were but poorly supplied

with the necessaries of war, and the generals and contractors had contrived to appropriate to themselves most of the funds which had been furnished. The general wrote to the emperor, presenting a lamentable picture of the destitution of the army.

"I can not," he said, "consistently with my duty to God and the emperor, conceal the miserable condition of the barracks and the hospitals. The troops, crowded together without sufficient bedding to cover them, are a prey to innumerable disorders, and are exposed to the rain, and other inclemencies of the weather, from the dilapidated state of the caserns, the roofs of which are in perpetual danger of being overthrown by the wind. All the frontier fortresses, and even Belgrade, are incapable of the smallest resistance, as well from the dilapidated state of the fortifications as from a total want of artillery, ammunition and other requisites. The naval armament is in a state of irreparable disorder. Some companies of my regiment of Belgrade are thrust into holes where a man would not put even his favorite hounds; and I can not see the situation of these miserable and half-starved wretches without tears. These melancholy circumstances portend the loss of these fine kingdoms with the same rapidity as that of the States of Italy."

The bold commander-in-chief also declared that many of the generals were so utterly incapable of discharging their duties, that nothing could be anticipated, under their guidance, but defeat and ruin. He complained that the governors of those distant provinces, quite neglecting the responsibilities of their offices, were spending their time in hunting and other trivial amusements. These remonstrances roused the emperor, and decisive reforms were undertaken. The main plan of the campaign was for the Russians, who were already on the shores of the Black sea, to press on to the mouth of the Danube, and then to march up the stream. The Austrians were to follow down the Danube to the Turkish province of Wallachia, and then, marching through the heart of that province, either effect a junction with the Russians, or inclose the Turks be-

tween the two armies. At the same time a large Austrian force, marching through Bosnia and Servia, and driving the Turks out, were to take military possession of those countries and join the main army in its union on the lower Danube.

Matters being thus arranged, General Seckendorf took the command of the Austrian troops, with the assurance that he should be furnished with one hundred and twenty-six thousand men, provided with all the implements of war, and that he should receive a monthly remittance of one million two hundred thousand dollars for the pay of the troops. The emperor, however, found it much easier to make promises than to fulfill them. The month of August had already arrived and Seckendorf, notwithstanding his most strenuous exertions, had assembled at Belgrade but thirty thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry. The Turks, with extraordinary energy, had raised a much more formidable and a better equipped army. Just as Seckendorf was commencing his march, having minutely arranged all the stages of the campaign, to his surprise and indignation he received orders to leave the valley of the Danube and march directly south about one hundred and fifty miles into the heart of Servia, and lay siege to the fortress of Nissa. The whole plan of the campaign was thus frustrated. Magazines, at great expense, had been established, and arrangements made for floating the heavy baggage down the stream. Now the troops were to march through morasses and over mountains, without suitable baggage wagons, and with no means of supplying themselves with provisions in so hostile and inhospitable a country.

But the command of the emperor was not to be disobeyed. For twenty-eight days they toiled along, encountering innumerable impediments, many perishing by the way, until they arrived, in a state of extreme exhaustion and destitution, before the walls of Nissa. Fortunately the city was entirely unprepared for an attack, which had not been at all anticipated, and the garrison speedily surrendered. Here Seckendorf, hav-

mg dispatched parties to seize the neighboring fortress, and the passes of the mountains, waited for further orders from Vienna. The army were so dissatisfied with their position and their hardships, that they at last almost rose in mutiny, and Seckendorf, having accomplished nothing of any moment, was compelled to retrace his steps to the banks of the Danube, where he arrived on the 16th of October. Thus the campaign was a total failure.

Bitter complaints were uttered both by the army and the nation. The emperor, with the characteristic injustice of an ignoble mind, attributed the unfortunate campaign to the incapacity of Seckendorf, whose judicious plans he had so ruthlessly thwarted. The heroic general was immediately disgraced and recalled, and the command of the army given to General Philippi. The friends of General Seckendorf, aware of his peril, urged him to seek safety in flight. But he, emboldened by conscious innocence, obeyed the imperial commands and repaired to Vienna. Seckendorf was a Protestant. His appointment to the supreme command gave great offense to the Catholics, and the priests, from their pulpits, inveighed loudly against him as a heretic, whom God could not bless. They arraigned his appointment as impious, and declared that, in consequence, nothing was to be expected but divine indignation. Immediately upon his arrival in Vienna the emperor ordered his arrest. A strong guard was placed over him, in his own house, and articles of impeachment were drawn up against him. His doom was sealed. Every misadventure was attributed to negligence, cupidity or treachery. He could offer no defense which would be of any avail, for he was not permitted to exhibit the orders he had received from the emperor, lest the emperor himself should be proved guilty of those disasters which he was thus dishonorably endeavoring to throw upon another. The unhappy Seckendorf, thus made the victim of the faults of others, was condemned to the dungeon. He was sent to imprisonment in the castle of Glatz,