

DB
925.3
F33H
cop.2

A
A
0
0
0
6
8
3
4
1
2
1



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

3A.

HUNGARY:

A Short Outline of its History.

BY

LOUIS FELBERMAN.

(Author of Hungary and its People.)

Published by the

EDUCATIONAL SECTION OF THE HUNGARIAN EXHIBITION,
EARL'S COURT, LONDON 1908.

LB
925.3
F33h
cop.2

HUNGARY:

A SHORT OUTLINE OF ITS HISTORY

By LOUIS FELBERMAN.



THE idea is prevalent amongst a certain number of the British public that Hungary forms part of the Austrian Empire. That this is not the case will at once be proved by a casual glance at the history of Hungary. The Kingdom of Hungary has always been independent of Austria, and can boast a constitution which it received a few years after the grant of the Magna Charta in England. The only link between Austria and Hungary is the Sovereign, the Emperor-King, who, by virtue of dynastic rights is crowned King of Hungary, likewise Emperor of Austria, which title is a more recent creation.

The Magyars.

Historians differ as to the origin of the Magyars. Some describe them as the descendants of the Huns, to whom were related the Mongols, Tartars, and the Turks. Others again refer to them as belonging to the Finn-Ugur branch of the Ural-Altaic family. So much however is certain, that they originally inhabited the district along the Ural Mountains in Asia. Having been hard pressed by various kindred tribes, they left their cradle-country, and, after wandering for many years along the banks of the Volga and the Don, and the shores of the Black Sea, under seven different chiefs, they settled in the neighbourhood known as Bessarabia and Moldau. Here the different tribes assembled and elected Árpád, the son of the chief Álmos, as their only hereditary duke.

In taking their oath of allegiance to him in the Kazar fashion, they agreed upon certain laws which would guide them in their future conquests—which laws formed the basis of the Constitutional Laws of Hungary.

After a stay of three years they left this district, invaded the neighbouring Russian territories, and finally crossed the Carpathian Mountains in the year 895, and after much resistance on the part of the Bulgars, Slavs, and other races, they occupied Hungary, which they claimed as their inheritance from their ancestors, the Huns.

The Magyars invade Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Conquer Austria.

For some years after the Conquest of Hungary the mighty Byzantine and German Empires were terrorised by the Magyars, who made repeated incursions also into Germany, France, Italy, and Spain, from which countries they exacted heavy tribute. It was at that time also they conquered Austria, which they held for many years. After their defeat at Lech, near Augsburg, in the year 955, in a battle fought against Otto the Great and his confederates, they retired to their own country and gradually adopted Western civilisation.

St. Stephen receives a Crown with the Title of Apostolic King of Hungary.

At the close of the 10th century, Hungary became a Christian nation. St. Stephen received a Crown with the title of Apostolic King of Hungary, from Pope Sylvester II., and after his death was canonised.

St. Stephen, who married Gisela, of Bavaria, was a very wise ruler. He established a council of state, and consolidated his kingdom. At his death, in 1038, long before Austria was a Duchy, Hungary was looked upon as a model State.

Of the rulers that followed him, Ladislaus I., styled St. Ladislaus (1077-1095), deserves to be classed as one of the great Hungarian Kings. This monarch, who was a pattern of Hungarian chivalry, conquered Croatia in 1091.

His nephew, Koloman (1096-1114), styled "The Book-

King," owing to his great learning, introduced many useful laws and reforms, and, though he had to guard the country against depredation on the part of the Crusaders, he managed to wrest Dalmatia from the then mighty Venetian Republic (1105), and annexed it to Hungary.

Andrew II. grants the Golden Bull (1222), the Magna Charta of Hungary.

The thirteenth century opened with a glorious period for Hungary, for it had Andrew II. (1205-35) for its King, an enlightened and pious ruler, who was elected by the Crusaders as their leader in the holy wars. He granted in the year 1222 the "Golden Bull," a charter similar to the English Magna Charta which was granted by King John eight years before. In this charter the privileges of the people are defined, and it also gives them the right to appeal to arms against the Crown should it abuse its power—a right which was only renounced in the reign of Leopold I. (1687).

The Tartar Invasion.

His son, Béla IV. (1235-70), who succeeded him, had to face an invasion of the Tartars (1241 to 1242), who, with an army of over 1,000,000, invaded and laid waste the country, but Béla, after their departure, soon raised it again from its ashes, and invited German settlers into the country.

Béla IV. had also to fight the Austrians and Styrians. He defeated and killed in the battle Frederick, the last member of the House of Babenberg (1246), who then ruled over Austria. He was also engaged in numerous wars with Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Bulgaria.

His successor, Stephen V. (1270-1272) and his grandson Ladislaus IV. (1272-1290), were notable for their wars against Ottokar II., King of Bohemia. Ladislaus IV. concluded an alliance with Rudolph of Hapsburg, King of Germany in 1275, against Ottokar II., who was totally defeated. Later, in 1278, Ottokar took up arms against the allies again, and was killed on the battlefield. His territories were then annexed by Rudolph of Hapsburg. Thus the Hapsburgs, who now became the rulers of Austria, Styria, Carnolia, and

Carinthia, have to thank the Hungarians for establishing their family power, which has now lasted over 600 years. With the death of Andrew III. (1301), the successor of Ladislaus IV., the Dynasty of the House of Arpád, which had ruled Hungary for over 400 years, became extinct.

During their rule from 895 to 1301 the Hungarians had accomplished wonders; from a pagan race they became the champions of Christianity and freedom throughout the Continent of Europe.

During the rule of the dynasty they vanquished many nations, including Austria, and founded a powerful and extensive kingdom without the aid of friends, but by their valour and at the point of the sword.

The House of Anjou.

After the extinction of the male line of the House of Arpád, various pretenders belonging to the female line put in their claim, but finally, in the year 1308, the crown was offered to, and accepted by, Charles Robert of Anjou, of the Neapolitan branch of the House of Anjou, who was a grandson of Stephen V. of Hungary.

Charles Robert proved an excellent ruler. He invited some of the great Neapolitan nobles and high clergy to settle in Hungary, and remodelled the state after the Italian fashion, introducing also the arts and culture of that country into Hungary.

Louis the Great of Hungary.

Charles Robert was succeeded by his son Louis (1342-82), styled Louis the Great. As soon as he ascended the throne he organised an expedition to Naples in order to avenge the death of his brother Andrew, who was murdered at the instigation of his wife Johanna, the Queen of Naples. He captured the city, and punished the murderers of his brother, and returned to Hungary without annexing Naples owing to the opposition of the Pope.

Louis the Great did everything to encourage the arts and sciences. He promoted trade and commerce, and forwarded the development of municipal institutions, which were destined to play such an important part in the future of the kingdom.

The reign of Louis the Great, which lasted for 40 years, was a most brilliant one in Hungary. He recaptured Dalmatia from the Venetians, conquered Moldavia, and Bulgaria, and the rest of the Balkan States—Servia, Bosnia, and the Wallachia had to submit to the supremacy of Hungary.

Louis was elected King of Poland in the year 1370. Having no son, he was succeeded in the year 1382 by his daughter Maria, who ruled conjointly with her husband Sigismond, a son of the Emperor Charles IV. Sigismond was also elected Roman Emperor (1411) and King of Bohemia (1419), whilst the throne of Poland Louis secured to his second daughter Hedwiga by her marriage with Uladislaus Jagiello, Duke of Lithuania, the founder of the illustrious Dynasty of the Jagiellos in Poland which lasted till 1572.

Internal Troubles.

The powerful State established by Louis the Great immediately after his death was exposed to internal troubles and uprisings. The Turks assumed a menacing attitude in the Balkans, and Sigismond's forces, though at first victorious, were ultimately defeated at Nikopoli (Bulgaria). This led to a rebellion, and Sigismond had to pawn some of his Provinces so as to be able to oppose the forces of Uladislaus, husband of Hedwiga, who invaded Hungary. In this state of confusion the Turks established a firmer footing on the borders of Hungary, the Venetians recaptured Dalmatia, the Hussites rose in arms in Bohemia and in Hungary to avenge the death of their leader, John Huss, causing great destruction. After a long and inglorious reign he died in the year 1437, being succeeded by his son-in-law, Albert II., Duke of Austria, who died after two years' reign. Uladislaus, the King of Poland, then invaded the country and was elected King. The widowed Queen, taking with her the crown and her newly born child Ladislaus Posthumus, fled the country, taking refuge with her kinsman, the Emperor Frederick III., to whom she pledged the Hungarian Crown. In the meantime the country was in a most confused and hopeless state, and the attitude of the Turks became more menacing.

John Hunyady.

Fortunately for Hungary a great star appeared suddenly on the horizon in the person of John Hunyady, who proved to be the greatest hero of the middle ages. Hunyady formed a small army of horsemen at his own expense and boldly faced the enormous numbers of Turkish troops. He defeated and humiliated three successive Sultans, pursuing them through Walachian, Servian and Bulgarian territories, and spreading terror among them. In the twelve glorious battles which he fought two only were lost, one being the battle of Varna (1444), where King Uladislaus made a false move and lost his life. Hunyady was then chosen captain-general pending the coming of age of the young King Ladislaus, and successfully held the Turks at bay. The last battle that he fought was the glorious victory of Belgrade, in commemoration of which a papal Bull was issued, ordaining the tolling of the church bells at noon for all time to come throughout the length and breadth of Christendom. His death, which took place a few weeks later in the year 1456, was mourned by the whole of Europe.

King Matthias (1458-90).

The reign of Ladislaus was only of short duration, and after his death Matthias, the son of John Hunyady, was elected King of Hungary, and proved to be the wisest and most just of Hungarian rulers. He took Servia and Bosnia under his protection, and organised the first Huszár regiment, which became a pattern for the whole world. Matthias expelled the Turks from the frontier towns and pursued them into Servia and Bosnia, where they were defeated, and Sultan Bajazet had to sue for and conclude peace with him for eight years. Matthias then directed his troops against the Emperor Frederick III., who had devastated Hungary, whilst the Magyars were engaged with the Turks. Matthias invaded Austria, captured Vienna, which he made his capital, and drove the Emperor Frederick III. out of his Austrian dominions, of which he only regained possession after the death of King Matthias.

Defeat of the Hungarians at Mohàcs (1526).

Matthias died in 1490, and was succeeded by Uladislaus II. of Bohemia of the house of the Jagiellos. Under this

monarch and his son Louis II., the power of Hungary rapidly declined, and the Turks invaded the country again with 200,000 men under Suleiman. At the battle of Mohács, in 1526, the Hungarians were totally defeated and King Louis II., whilst retreating from the battlefield, was thrown from his horse and perished in the swampy marshes which surrounded the battlefield. The Turks followed up their victory and devastated the country all along the Danube right up to Buda, after which they withdrew with large spoils.

The Hapsburg Dynasty.

The Hungarian throne having become vacant after the disastrous defeat at Mohács, one party elected John Szapolyai, a Hungarian noble and Waywode of Transylvania, as King of Hungary, but Queen Maria, the widow of King Louis II. advocated the cause of her brother, the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria (who was married to Anna of Hungary, sister of the late King Louis II.) Ferdinand was duly elected at the National Assembly held at Pozsony (Pressburg), and was subsequently crowned in accordance with the Hungarian Constitutional Laws at Székesfehérvár, where the Kings of Hungary from the days of St. Stephen were wont to be crowned.

Ferdinand, on the death of Louis II., became also King of Bohemia and with it became possessed of Moravia. He succeeded in the year 1556 his brother Emperor Charles V. in the Imperial dignity. The election as King of the Archduke Ferdinand caused internal troubles—the Sultan, supporting the cause of John Szapolyai, invaded Hungary in 1529 with a large army, capturing Buda and pursuing Ferdinand's forces as far as Vienna. In the year 1538 it was agreed by a special treaty at Nagy Várád that the country should be divided among the two contesting rulers, both bearing the title of King, and at the death of Szapolyai, the country should revert to Archduke Ferdinand or to his heirs. Transylvania was made independent and was to be ruled by John Szapolyai and after his death by his successors. This brought peace to the country for some time, but after the death of Szapolyai (1540) the people in Lower Hungary declared in favour of his infant son, Sigismund, in which claim he was supported by the Sultan, who again invaded the country and held a large portion of

the same in trust for Sigismund, and Ferdinand had to pay heavy yearly tribute to the Sultan for the rest of the country. Maximilian, who succeeded his father the Emperor Ferdinand (in 1564), found his rights contested by Sigismund, and it was only after a treaty in 1570 between the two rival kings and the death of Sigismund in 1571 that the Emperor Maximilian became the acknowledged ruler of the entire country except Transylvania, where Stephen Báthory was elected Prince. From that period the Sovereigns of Hungary were identical with those of Austria and the other dominions of the House of Hapsburg. Hungary, however, in electing the Hapsburg dynasty as its rulers had never lost its right of being a constitutional country, and was, and is now, ruled in accordance with its own laws, regardless of the other dominions of its King.

National Heroes.

As soon as order was restored it was hoped that the Turks would be expelled from the country, but in this the Magyars were bitterly mistaken, and for a period of over 150 years the bulk of the nation was constantly engaged with the Turks in the defence of their country. During this period the Hungarians performed heroic deeds and feats of bravery worthy of Hellas and Sparta. At Kőszeg (1532) Miklós Jurisics, with only 700 men, principally peasants from the district, barred the progress of Sultan Suleiman on his way to Vienna with an army of 200,000 men. With a small force of 2,000 men Losonczy (whose wife sold her jewels in order to furnish the means) defended for a long time Temesvár (1552) against 50,000 assailants. At Drégely in the same year George Szondy, with a handful of men resisted for a long time the numerous forces of the Turks, and seeing that no further resistance was possible, rather than surrender he made preparation for his funeral on the capture of the fort. At Eger, Stephen Dobó (1552) with 2,000 men, consisting chiefly of peasants, aided by patriotic women, defeated a Turkish force of 100,000 men. The very name of Szigetvár sends a thrill of patriotism through the heart of every true Hungarian, for here in 1566 the great hero Miklós Zrínyi, held out most heroically with a small body of 2,500 men against a mighty force of 90,000 of Suleiman's men, fighting desperately till his number was reduced to 300 men, and seeing there was

no chance of further resistance he and his comrades arrayed themselves in holiday attire and with drawn swords opened the gates and then blew up the fort, preferring to die in this way rather than surrender. For over a century and a half the Hungarians immortalised themselves in the numerous battles fought against the Turks, and hero upon hero followed each other with lightning rapidity. Amongst these were Sigismund Báthory, who in 1595 defeated the Turks at Giurgevo. In the year 1663 Miklós Zrinyi proved a worthy descendant of his ancestor of the same name, the heroic defender of Szigetvár.

Struggle against Religious Persecutions.

But, sad to say, not only did the Hungarians have to fight the Turks, but they had on repeated occasions to defend their country against their own Kings, who in Hungary as in Germany persecuted the Protestants and deprived the country of its constitutional rights. This was especially the case during the reign of Rudolph I. (1576-1608), and in this movement the Hungarians were led by Stephen Bocskay. The latter defeated Rudolph's forces, which led to the conclusion of peace in 1606, whereby the liberties of the Protestants were guaranteed.

The persecutions, however, were renewed during the reign of Ferdinand II. (1619), the hero of the Thirty Years' War. A champion was then found in Gabriel Bethlen, Prince of Transylvania, who attacked the King's forces, and obliged him to conclude a treaty of peace first in 1622, and then in 1626, whereby the privileges of the Protestants were absolutely guaranteed.

During the reign of Ferdinand III. (1637-57) these persecutions were again renewed, and this time George Rákóczy I., Prince of Transylvania, came to the rescue of his Hungarian brethren. He attacked Ferdinand's forces and gained victories (1644). George Rákóczy made an alliance with the Crown of Sweden against Ferdinand, who in consequence was forced to conclude a treaty of peace (1645 and 1647).

The persecution of the Protestants continued again, and even with greater violence, during the reign of Leopold I.

(1657-1705), who also curtailed the privileges of the Hungarian nation. The Emperor Leopold I., in order to be able to turn all his forces against the Magyars and Protestants, concluded a humiliating treaty with the Turks, by which they practically ruled over certain parts of Hungary, whilst the rest of the country Leopold treated as a mere province, matters being decided in Vienna without consulting the Hungarians. The Magyars could no longer tolerate this abuse of their rights, and organised a plan for the dethronement of their King. The leaders were Peter Zrinyi, Count Frangepán, Palatin Nádasdi, and Francis Rákóczy I. The plot was discovered and all the ringleaders were executed (1671). An exception was made in the case of Francis Rákóczy I., whose mother bought his freedom for 400,000 florins.

Fearful persecutions followed, which led to a second revolt under Emeric Thököli, who obtained possession of the greater part of Hungary, and concluded an alliance with the Sultan, who sent a large army to bombard Vienna.

Recapture of Buda from the Turks.

For seven weeks 150,000 Turks besieged Vienna (1683), which was in the most critical state, but at last John Szobieszky, King of Poland, came to the rescue of Prince Charles Lorraine, who conducted the defence of the city, and drove the Turks away from the gates of Vienna, and they were compelled to retire to Buda. Thököli in the meantime was fighting against the King's forces in the interior of Hungary and defied the Austrian troops for a long time, whilst his wife, known to history by the name of Hona Zrinyi, most heroically defended the fort of Munkács. In the end, however, their adherents became smaller, for after the defeat of the Turks at Vienna the Hungarians thought that the time had arrived when the Turks could be expelled from Hungary, and peace would be given to the country. They therefore joined the King's flag and attacked the Turks at Buda. The Hungarians were reinforced by Germans, French, English, and Spanish soldiers, and after nine weeks' struggle, in which their wives and children took part, the Turks had to surrender Buda, and for the first time since 145 years the Hungarian flag was hoisted over the historic Castle of Buda.

The Turks expelled from Hungary.

In 1687 there was a grand procession at Buda solemnising the re-capture of that town from the Turks. Prince Charles pursued the enemy into the interior of the country, and at Mohács, the place where 161 years before the Turks destroyed the Hungarian army, they were thoroughly defeated by the Hungarians. The Turks were pursued and attacked at Belgrade, Bosnia was re-taken, and gradually the greater part of Servia was conquered. The Christian armies were everywhere victorious till 1690. Later on the Turks assisted Thököli in his revolt, but they were defeated and Thököli had to take refuge in Turkey.

This victory led to the re-annexation of Transylvania to the Crown of Hungary. Hardly, however, had the Turks left the country when the Hungarians were subjected to most cruel treatment and hundreds of the best known Hungarians were arrested on the slightest possible pretence or suspicion for conspiracy against the Crown, and were summarily executed. Leopold convened a national assembly at Pozsony (Pressburg) for the recognition of the Hapsburg dynasty as the rightful rulers of Hungary, and at the same time the assembly renounced the rights of the nation to appeal to arms against the Crown, in the terms of the Golden Bull, granted in 1222.

Revolt headed by Francis Rákóczy II.

This cruel treatment led to another revolt, of which Francis Rákóczy II. (son of Ilona Zrinyi, the heroine, and step-son of Thököli) was the leader, who spread the revolt throughout the country, taking one fort after another, and even bombarding Vienna. Rákóczy occupied the whole of Upper Hungary right to Transylvania, of which principality he was chosen Prince. The Emperor Leopold, alarmed at the success of Rákóczy, sued for peace but nothing came of it, and when he died (1705) the country was in a hopeless state, and though the credit is due to him of having expelled the Turks from Hungary, yet owing to the persecution of the Magyars and Protestants during his reign both would have gladly welcomed the Turks back again.

Joseph (1705-11).

Immediately upon his accession to the throne The Emperor Joseph offered to re-establish the Hun-

garian Constitutional Laws and to respect the Protestant faith, and sought the intervention of the British Ambassador to approach Rákóczy for the conclusion of peace. By the treaty of Szatmár the Constitutional Rights of Hungary and the freedom to Protestants were guaranteed, and an amnesty was proclaimed also to all political offenders. Rákóczy did not object to the conclusion of the treaty so that peace might be given to the country he so dearly loved, but as the terms of the treaty did not quite satisfy him, rather than submit thereto and accept the amnesty offered to him, he left Hungary for ever, accompanied by a few of his faithful adherents, going first to Poland, then to the Court of Louis XIV. of France, and finally settled in Turkey, where he died at Rodosto. The ashes of this great hero and his faithful companions were brought back to Hungary in the year 1906 by the consent of His Majesty King Francis Joseph I.

The Pragmatic Sanction.

In the reign of Charles III. (1711-1740), who had no male descendants, the Pragmatic Sanction was introduced, decreeing the hereditary rights of the female descendants to the throne. The Pragmatic Sanction also guaranteed to Hungary the right to be ruled in accordance with its own Constitution, regardless of the other states of the Hapsburg Dynasty.

The Hungarians come to the Rescue of Maria Theresia.

Maria Theresia (1740-1780), succeeded to the throne and became ruler of the Austrian Empire, Hungary, the German Netherland, Tuscany, and Lombardy. Her rights, however, were disputed by the Elector of Bavaria and the Kings of Prussia, Spain, France, Sardinia, and Poland, who invaded all her dominions, except Hungary. The young Queen, who some months before gave birth to a son, retired to the ancient Hungarian capital Pozsony (Pressburg), and here she convened the National Assembly, and holding her child in her arms pleaded for the chivalrous protection of the Hungarians. The Magyars, moved by the sad situation of the Queen, forgot all the injustice done to them in the past, and the members of the assembly with drawn swords in their hands, uttered

the historic exclamation, "Vitam et sanguinem pro rege nostro Maria Theresia!" "We live and die for our King." (She was considered as a King in accordance with Hungarian laws). Very soon a strong Hungarian army faced the united French and Bavarian forces, driving them out from Bohemia and Bavaria and pursuing them across the Rhine as far as Alsace. Another detachment attacked Frederick the Great, defeating him in Bohemia, after which the Hungarian troops roved into Prussia and occupied Berlin. The result was that all the Queen's enemies had to sue for peace.

Maria Theresia was grateful to the Hungarians, and improved the condition of the peasantry and devoted herself to the welfare of the country.

Joseph II. (1780-90) was an excellent ruler. He ameliorated the condition of the peasants and established many schools for the education of the peasantry and encouraged industries, navigation, agriculture, and cattle-breeding. He was, however, not popular, owing to his having refused to be crowned King of Hungary, and acting without consulting Parliament, though he owed his crown to the bravery of the Hungarians. Before his death, however, he re-established Hungarian rights, and sent the crown of St. Stephen from Vienna to Buda.

During the short reign of his son Leopold II. (1790-92), the Hungarians gained the upper hand, and re-established their constitutional rights in the memorable Diet of 1790-91.

Francis I.

Francis I. (1792-1835), sat on the throne at the time when the French revolutionary spirit spread all over Europe, including Hungary. Then came the Napoleonic period, and the Austrians lost their Italian possessions, together with Istria, Dalmatia, Tyrol, and were engaged in the series of wars with Napoleon so well known to the student of history of that epoch. Napoleon I. issued a manifesto to the Hungarians (1809), inviting them to declare themselves independent and elect a king of their own, but the Hungarians remained loyal to the Hapsburg dynasty. At the conclusion of peace, however, the Austrians proved to be ungrateful to

the Hungarians, and persuaded the Emperor Francis for the curtailment of the privileges of the Hungarian nation. All matters had to be decided at Vienna. The schools were in decadence and the Hungarian language was not taught; and all books had to be submitted to the Austrian censor, and the Hungarian Parliament had not been summoned for fourteen years.

Fortunately a great man in the person of Count Stephen Széchenyi appeared on the horizon. He founded the Academy of Sciences and took the education and the general development of the country into his own hands, thus destroying the evil effects created by the Austrian advisers of the King.

Ferdinand V. (1835-48), who succeeded Francis I., introduced many reforms, founded many schools, and made the Hungarian language the official language of the country, but the nation demanded the re-establishment of constitutional freedom and equality of all classes. In their demands the nation was led first by Baron Wesselényi and then by Louis Kossuth, who, with his masterful oratory, won to his cause the entire country and all classes demanded Constitutional Freedom. In 1847 Parliament was opened by Ferdinand V. in person in Hungarian language, and he made a promising speech, but those in power were not in favour of granting the national demands.

Events of 1848.

The Revolution which broke out in France and caused the downfall of the Orleans dynasty, spread also to Hungary, where the Liberal party, under the leadership of Louis Kossuth, decided to claim a free Press, responsible Ministry, the annual assembly of Parliament, and the equality of all classes and creeds. Public enthusiasm was at its highest pitch, crowds of students and masses of people marching in the streets, reciting the patriotic and stirring poems of Petöfi, and singing revolutionary airs. The Imperial troops were then in Italy and Austria had no available forces to suppress the national rising. King Ferdinand had no alternative but to accept the resolution of the Hungarian Assembly and appointed a responsible Hungarian Ministry, consisting of Count Louis Batthyányi, Count Széchenyi, Louis Kossuth, Francis Deák, L. Mészáros, G. Klauzál, B. Szemere,

with Prince Paul Esterházy as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Viennese, however, continually plotted against the Hungarians, and incited the Ban of Croatia to revolt against Hungary, and also the Serbs in the Bánát. As a result, the Hungarian Parliament was summoned and voted 200,000 soldiers for the national defences. People flocked from all parts, offering their services for the cause of the country. The Imperial troops having now returned from Italy, the King was induced to revoke his previous concessions, which led to a general rising.

In the meantime a Revolution broke out in Vienna and Ferdinand had to abdicate in favour of Francis Joseph I. As soon as order was restored in Vienna, the Austrians poured into Hungary with enormous troops under Prince Windischgrätz, who occupied Buda. The Hungarian Government retired to Debreczen, in the lowlands, and organised large forces for the defence of the country. History records how heroically the Magyars fought and how shamefully and disastrously the Austrians were beaten on all sides. The Hungarians all along desired to remain loyal to the Crown, considering their young sovereign to be an instrument in the hands of his Viennese advisers, but finally the nation, incited by the arrogance of the Austrian Government, who declared invalid the Hungarian Constitution, after the first successes of Windischgrätz, convened an Assembly at Debreczen, where the independence of the country was proclaimed.

The Austrians now appealed for help to Russia, who invaded Hungary with large forces, and though at first they were beaten, ultimately, after several months of desperate fighting, the Hungarians surrendered to them at Világos, which ended the War of Independence.

Cruel and hard days followed, the country was treated like a province and a state of siege existed from 1848 to 1857, the Hungarian language having been abolished from all schools and Government offices.

In 1857 His Majesty proclaimed an amnesty against political offenders, and year by year more concessions were made. Already in 1861 the Emperor-King desired to restore the Constitution to Hungary, and negotiations on that subject were carried on by the intervention of the famous Hungarian patriot Francis Deák, but matters were not finally settled when the war broke out between Austria and Prussia and also Italy, which delayed the negotiations.

In 1867 a compact was made with His Majesty Francis Joseph I., by which the Hungarian Constitution was restored and perfect freedom and independence guaranteed to Hungary as to the administration of its national affairs by its own Legislature in accordance with the Hungarian Constitutional Laws and regardless of the interests of Austria. At the same time a treaty was concluded between the two States whereby the army and foreign affairs are to be administered conjointly.

Francis Joseph I. Apostolic King of Hungary.

On the 8th June, 1867, His Majesty Francis Joseph I., accompanied by his Queen, entered the Hungarian capital, Budapest, and were crowned as King and Queen of Hungary. His Majesty all along has proved the wisest and best of rulers and the greatest and staunchest friend the Hungarians have possessed since the days of Maria Theresia, and though unfortunately at times certain friction has taken place over matters regulated in the Compact of 1867, yet his heart has always been with his Hungarian subjects, whom he loves as dearly as they revere his person.







3 1158 01304 1453

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 683 412 1

