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TWO GREAT RIVALS ②
FRANCOIS I. AND CHARLES V.



After the picture in the Louvre, by Clouet.

Livy et ses Fils del.

François I.

TWO GREAT RIVALS (FRANÇOIS I. AND CHARLES V.) AND THE WOMEN WHO INFLUENCED THEM

By

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"Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette," etc., etc.

WITH TWENTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS
INCLUDING A PHOTOGRAVURE PLATE

LONDON  **HUTCHINSON & CO.**
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TO

THE BARON ALBERT D'ANETHAN

ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY OF HIS
MAJESTY THE KING OF THE BELGIANS AT THE COURT OF TOKIO, JAPAN,

AS A MEMBER OF THE OLD NOBILITY OF THE MIGHTY EMPIRE

FORMERLY SUBJECT TO THE SWAY OF THE GREAT

EMPEROR CHARLES V.,

AS A DIPLOMATIST SPRUNG FROM THE SOIL WHICH

GAVE BIRTH TO THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF MODERN DIPLOMACY,

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE BROTHER-IN-LAW

ANDREW HAGGARD

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INTRODUCTION

Some Notable Women

“**C**HERCHEZ la femme !” is a familiar saying when troubles occur in the lives of even humble individuals, and how much more does it become applicable in the case of the continual jealous strivings of Great Powers !

ERRATUM

Page 18. *For* Duke of Brandon, *read* Duke of Suffolk.

ambitious and sister of the young Charles VIII. of France, the youthful Anne of Brittany, who succeeded her father, Duke François II., as ruler of the great Duchy in 1488, and the childish Archduchess Marguerite of Austria, daughter of the Archduke Maximilian, who became Emperor of Germany, were all three early factors in the great game of politics about to be played in Europe. Louise de Savoie, sister of Philibert II., Duke of Savoy, and niece of Anne de Beaujeu's husband, who became Duc de Bourbon, was another little girl present at the Court of France in 1490, and one who was, later on, to take a leading part in the struggle for mastery in Europe.

To all the preceding young women there was soon to be added another girl of the name of Marguerite.

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INTRODUCTION

Some Notable Women

“**C**HERCHEZ la femme !” is a familiar saying when troubles occur in the lives of even humble individuals, and how much more does it become applicable in the case of the continual jealous strivings of Great Powers !

If it had not been for the influence and heart-burnings of several women, which commenced to affect Europe before the birth of the showy and frivolous François I., and the calculating and courtly Charles V., it seems more than likely that the world would never have been turned topsy-turvy by the incessant rivalries of these two potentates.

The Duchesse Anne de Beaujeu, the capable and ambitious elder sister of the young Charles VIII. of France, the youthful Anne of Brittany, who succeeded her father, Duke François II., as ruler of the great Duchy in 1488, and the childish Archduchess Marguerite of Austria, daughter of the Archduke Maximilian, who became Emperor of Germany, were all three early factors in the great game of politics about to be played in Europe. Louise de Savoie, sister of Philibert II., Duke of Savoy, and niece of Anne de Beaujeu's husband, who became Duc de Bourbon, was another little girl present at the Court of France in 1490, and one who was, later on, to take a leading part in the struggle for mastery in Europe.

To all the preceding young women there was soon to be added another girl of the name of Marguerite.

She was the daughter of Louise de Savoie, who was herself married at the age of eleven to Charles d'Orléans, Comte d'Angoulême. The only other child of Louise de Savoie was François. He was born in 1494, two and a half years after his sister Marguerite, and was, twenty years later, to become the King of France.

To the ambitions, intrigues, betrothals, marriages, affections, and disappointments of these five women are directly attributable nearly all of the stirring episodes of war and policy which kept the continent of Europe in a ferment for the last ten years of the fifteenth and first fifty years of the sixteenth century; and the actions of François I. and the Emperor Charles V. came but as a natural sequence to the plottings and plannings of the four first-mentioned Princesses. As for the fifth, Marguerite d'Angoulême, during the earlier years of her brother's reign she may be looked upon as having been the actual Queen of France, so entirely was her brilliant and pleasure-loving brother guided by her policy, in which she worked solely for his advantage, no matter how much she might suffer herself. She was later to become Queen of Navarre, when François I. repaid this devoted sister with nothing but neglect of her interests.

The capable and designing daughter of the Valois line, Anne de France, Duchesse de Bourbon-Beaujeu, may be said to have started all the trouble. By a series of lucky chances, aided by great energy, her father, Louis XI., had contrived to become the first ruler of a politically united France. When his great rival, Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, was killed in battle at Nancy by the Duke of Lorraine, his widow was despoiled of Picardy and the Duchy of Burgundy by Louis XI. He had also taken and annexed Franche-Comté and Artois. By the extinction of the house of Anjou Louis XI. had also been able to incorporate the feudal appanages of Anjou, Maine, and the county of Provence with his own dominions.

The weak Charles VIII. succeeded his father in 1483,

and thus came under the Regency of his strong-minded sister, Anne de Beaujeu, who continued to rule him after he had attained his majority. She was not able to prevent her brother from returning Franche-Comté and Artois to the last heiress of the House of Burgundy, in the person of Marie, the daughter of Charles the Bold, married to the Emperor Maximilian I., but she determined to increase the dominions of France in another direction at the expense of that potentate. The Emperor's wife, Marie de Bourgogne, died of a fall from her horse at the age of twenty-five in 1482, and left two children, the Archduke Philippe, born 1478, and the Archduchess Marguerite, born in 1480. When Marguerite was but three years old she had been brought to Paris as the betrothed of Charles VIII., then Dauphin, who was nine years the little girl's senior. A regular form of marriage was gone through, with the result that the Emperor's daughter, two months later, had become Queen of France.

This little baby-Queen was brought up and carefully educated by the Regent, Anne de Beaujeu; but, after nine years at the French Court her protectress and governess played her false, and allowed her to become the victim of the base desertion of her husband, Charles VIII., now twenty-one years of age. The then ruling Duchess Anne of Brittany, although but a child only about four years older than the young Queen of France, became affianced to the widowed Emperor Maximilian. The celebration of marriage was gone through by proxy, the Emperor's envoy scandalising the good people of Brittany by placing his bare leg in bed with Anne so as to symbolise actual consummation of the nuptials.

The daughter of Louis XI. did not, however, propose to allow the Duchy of Brittany to be annexed to the Flemish States and Holland, which Maximilian had inherited from Burgundy with his first wife. She sent her brother Charles VIII. to invade Brittany, and, although Charles was already married to Maximilian's young daughter, instructed him to the effect that he

should now marry, instead, the Emperor's newly wedded wife.

After a certain amount of warfare had taken place in Brittany, the Duchesse Anne, now aged fifteen, was induced to consent of her own free will to this bigamous marriage with the King of France, whose marriage with the daughter of Maximilian had never been consummated.

The nuptials between Charles VIII. and Anne de Bretagne accordingly took place, and the marriage was consummated, the Duchy of Brittany being joined to France. The wilful young Anne, however, had made one stipulation in her marriage contract to which she ever after jealously adhered. This was to the effect that she should alone, during her lifetime, enjoy the administration of her own dominions of Brittany.

There were now two Queens in France, one of twelve and one of nearly sixteen years of age ; but the Pope having been induced to nullify the first marriage of Anne of Brittany and the first marriage of Charles VIII., the youthful Marguerite, daughter of Maximilian I., was deprived of her Royal title and reverted to her original rank as Archduchess of Austria. She was, nevertheless, retained for a year or so longer in France, in a state of semi-imprisonment, before she was allowed to depart for her paternal home in the Low Countries. She eventually joined her only brother Philippe, who was two years her senior, and the Princess Margaret of York, who had been the third wife of her maternal grandfather, Charles the Bold, at their Court at Malines. Although she left France on friendly terms with Anne of Brittany, who showed great kindness to the girl whom she had supplanted, Marguerite of Austria for ever after regarded with hatred the country of which she had been Queen, and which was the scene of her bitter humiliation.

As her girlish companion Louise de Savoie, Comtesse d'Angoulême, was to be in future years Regent of France in the absences of her son François I., while Marguerite was to become aunt and instructress of the as yet unborn Emperor Charles V., and likewise Regent of the Nether-

lands, including Holland, this talented representative of the Houses of Burgundy and Austria was to have plenty of opportunities of repaying humiliation for humiliation to the Court of France.

After his marriage with Anne of Brittany, Charles VIII., who had claims to the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily as the successor of the house of Anjou, commenced the series of Italian wars which were continued by his successors Louis XII. and François I. for half a century. From the time that the Norman adventurers, wresting the lower parts of Italy and Sicily from the Saracens, had established a Neapolitan Kingdom, and obtained Papal recognition for their tenure, the Popes had continuously claimed to be the Suzerains of Naples, and maintained that, whoever held that country, did so as a vassal of the Holy See.

After the Normans various Sovereigns of the House of Suabia, including the brilliant Emperor Frederick II., ruled Naples; the jealous Popes, however, offered the Crown of Naples to England and to Anjou in turn. Henry III. of England accepted the throne for his son Edmund of Lancaster, who never went to wrest its occupancy. Charles of Anjou, brother of Louis IX. of France, came, however, to Naples in person, and in 1267 took prisoner and beheaded the youthful Conradin, the last male of the Suabian dynasty. A female of the line of Suabia had, however, married into the House of Aragon, Sovereigns of which country claimed Naples and Sicily in consequence. The free-and-easy ways of the Frenchmen with the black-eyed beauties of Sicily brought about the downfall of the first Angevin dynasty in that island by the massacre known as the "Sicilian Vespers," in 1282, after which Aragonese Sovereigns ruled in Sicily. On the mainland various branches of the Angevin dynasty ruled, and when there were rival Popes existing at Avignon and Rome each Pope supported a rival branch of the family. Finally Alfonso, King of Aragon, supporting one of these branches, Queen Giovanna II. first declared Alfonso and then René, Comte of Provence

and Anjou, as her heir. René, who called himself King of Naples, but never reigned, transmitted his claims, through his nephew Charles of Maine, to Louis XI., and although Pope Pius II. granted the throne to John II. of Aragon and his illegitimate son Ferdinand, or Ferrante, Charles VIII. of France asserted his right to the Kingdom on the death of his father, Louis XI.

In the year 1494, aided by Ludovico Sforza, the usurping Duke of Milan, who hated King Ferdinand of Naples, Charles VIII. conducted in person the first Italian invasion at the head of 60,000 men, French and Swiss. He traversed Tuscany with ease, took and sacked the place of Fivizzano, belonging to Florence and ruled by the unpopular Piero de' Medici, and, obedient to the call of Savonarola, he entered Florence, and afterwards Rome, in which places he was received as a friend. The infamous Spaniard, Roderigo Borgia, was then on the Papal throne as Alexander VI., and, as Suzerain, had just conferred the investiture of the Kingdom of Naples on Alfonso II. of Aragon, in the place of his father, Ferdinand I. For fear of the young French King, the Pope Borgia shut himself up in the castle of Sant' Angelo, but, after a month's negotiations, he promised not to oppose Charles VIII.

Charles then advanced on Naples, when Alfonso II. abdicated and fled, his son assuming possession of the throne under the title of Ferdinand II., but taking flight, like his father, as Charles drew nearer with his army.

After an enthusiastic reception by the people of Naples, who were sick of the Aragonese oppression, Charles VIII. was crowned King of the Two Sicilies at Naples on February 22nd, 1495, and, with exception of two castles which he reduced with his artillery, all the cities and all the provinces acknowledged his rights and submitted without opposition. The defenders of the two castles were mercilessly butchered. Naples had been occupied with ease, and, had it not been for the folly of the French in treating a friendly people as a conquered foe, it could easily have been retained. The vice of Charles VIII.

and his troops, however, knew no bounds. No woman's virtue was respected; unrestrained licentiousness was the password of the army. The greed of the invaders was, moreover, unparalleled; there was no limit to their exactions. The result was that the Emperor Maximilian joined a league of all the Italian States, including the Duchy of Milan and Republic of Venice. A large army under Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua, was found by the French posted in their rear, and it was only after a furious battle at Fornovo, on the banks of the Taro, on July 6th, 1495, in which Charles VIII. displayed great personal courage, that he contrived to make good his retreat through the Milanese and back into France.

This feather-brained young monarch had left behind him in Italy a large part of his army, under Gilbert de Montpensier and the Grand Connétable d'Aubigny. The league, however, being reinforced by Spaniards, sent from Spain by Ferdinand the Catholic, of Aragon, under the famous Gonsalvo da Cordova, and by the Venetian fleets, proved too much for the French commanders, who, however, struggled on bravely for awhile and gained some successes at first. Eventually the Comte Gilbert de Montpensier fell, and d'Aubigny was obliged to evacuate the kingdom of Naples with such troops as he had left to him. The Aragonese dynasty was then re-established in the Two Sicilies; and thus, within four years of her ignominious dismissal from the French Court, had the youthful Archduchess Marguerite and her father, the Emperor, already the satisfaction of witnessing the humiliation of those by whom they had been so shabbily treated. And since, moreover, from her earliest years the counsels of Marguerite were ever listened to by her rough-and-ready soldier of a father, who loved her dearly, it is more than probable that the advice of this young Princess had not been for nothing in the formation of the league which had acted so disastrously for the fortunes of her first husband, Charles VIII. He, after vaguely talking for a couple of years of another expedition to recover his Kingdom

of Naples, came to an almost sudden end on April 7th, 1498. While playing at tennis he struck his head violently against a door, with the result that he died soon after. Although Anne of Brittany, who was about twenty-two when her husband died, had borne him children, there were none living at the time that she was left a widow.

In default of male heirs, Charles was succeeded, therefore, by an old friend of Marguerite, one who throughout his life always testified to her an excess of affection, which she, probably merely from motives of policy, in her letters, at all events, made a semblance of returning. This was Louis, Duc d'Orléans, the third cousin, once removed, of Charles VIII. He ascended the throne with the title of Louis XII.

Birth and Childhood of the Rivals

THE best that can be said of Louis XII. is that he was a good sort of a fellow, and a brave soldier; his intentions were good, his talents mediocre, and his appearance of the *bourgeois* German type. It is doubtful if he was really the son of his supposed father, the poet-Duke, Charles d'Orléans, who, himself seventy years of age, had been married to Anne of Cleves for twenty-two years before the youthful Louis arrived to astonish the household in the year 1462.

The Maître d'Hôtel Rabodanges, whom Anne of Cleves married at her husband's death, was popularly supposed to be the actual father of the Duc d'Orléans who became Louis XII. in 1498 at the age of thirty-six.

Be that as it may—and there were many of the Valois and the Bourbons whose origin would not stand too close an investigation—Louis ranked as a Valois, and as the first flower of the nobility of France before, by the lucky chance of his cousin's childless marriage, he succeeded him on the throne. He had as wife Jeanne de Valois, the sister of the late King Charles VIII. ; but, as she was not

prepossessing in appearance, Louis proceeded to get rid of her. He had already, before his accession, a youthful friend and servitor in the shape of Georges d'Amboise, a Bishop with ambition. This Bishop, who practically shared the throne with Louis from the outset, wished to become first Cardinal, then Pope. That accomplished villain, Cæsar Borgia, son of Pope Alexander VI., was himself Cardinal of Valencia in Spain. He made a bargain with Amboise by which, while making him a Cardinal, France in return was to aid Cæsar Borgia in establishing for himself an independent Monarchy of a large part of Italy. Cæsar came to France, bringing in his pocket the Papal dispensation which enabled the new King to get rid of his first wife, whereupon Louis XII. promptly married Anne of Brittany, his predecessor's brilliant young widow. Thus was Brittany preserved for France, although the handsome Anne, who had always had a great admiration for that shiftless, out-of-pocket, sportsman and fighting man Maximilian, her nominal first husband, proved but an unwilling bride. She only acceded to Louis' proposals on the distinct understanding that, where her Duchy was concerned, she was, as in the time of Charles VIII., to remain absolutely supreme.

With the aid of Georges d'Amboise, Anne de Bretagne likewise remained supreme in France—she was very self-willed.

Cæsar Borgia, who now flung away his Cardinal's hat and caused his father, the Pope, to unfrock him, was rewarded by being made Duc de Valentinois, in France, and promised all the assistance that he might require in Italy. He was likewise given a wife from the princely House of Albret.

Louis XII., who had already taken part in the warlike expedition of Charles VIII. to Naples, had reasons for making a new invasion of Italy on his own account, and was therefore perfectly ready to run in double harness with such an useful ally as Borgia, the Pope's son. His grandfather, Louis, Duc d'Orléans, the son of Charles V. of France, had married Valentina Visconti, daughter of

the reigning Duke Gian Galeazzo of Milan. Through his grandmother Louis accordingly claimed the sovereignty of Lombardy, now held by the Sforzas, and, on his accession to the throne of France, he took likewise the titles of King of the Two Sicilies and Duke of Milan.

Ludovico Sforza, called The Moor, had helped Charles VIII. to take Naples and then turned against him. Louis XII., having already gained the Pope, now made friends with Venice also to aid him to dispossess Sforza of Milan, the King and the Venetian Republic agreeing to divide Lombardy between them.

Before invading Italy it was necessary for Louis XII. to make sure of the Emperor Maximilian, whose old rancour against France was by no means forgotten. Indeed, throughout his life he kept a certain Red Book, in which, from time to time, he was wont to make entries of anything calculated to increase his hatred of France, just for fear lest he might be induced to forget old grudges. The worthy Max happened, however, to be engaged in doing a little hunting and a bit of fighting on his own account in Switzerland, whereupon Louis arranged matters with his son, the Archduke Philippe, the ruler of the Netherlands, who had no objection to making a treaty of peace behind his father's back and against his views.

Having secured the neutrality of the Empire, the descent into Italy was made by Louis XII. and, with the aid of Venice, short work was made of Ludovico Sforza. Only one city resisted the French, and all its inhabitants were put to the sword. The fickle inhabitants of Milan abandoned their Duke, and received Louis XII. with every expression of joy. The country of Lombardy was divided, according to agreement, with Venice, and all went well for France in September and October 1499, while Ludovico fled to Germany to endeavour to raise an army.

Many of the Italian principalities were, however, badly treated ; among them Ferrara, Bologna, and Florence were heavily ransomed to pay the expenses of the French army. Cæsar Borgia, moreover, who had taken the ambitious title of Cæsar Borgia *de France*, was, with French soldiers

and Papal Swiss, allowed to ravage all Romagna. His cruelties caused a thrill of horror throughout Italy, with the result that a revulsion of feeling was aroused against his allies the French, and that when Ludovico Sforza reappeared with eight thousand Swiss he was received everywhere with acclamation. Unfortunately for this capable Prince, who had, as the usurper of the dominions of his weak nephew Galeazzo Sforza, deserved his troubles, his Swiss troops proved unreliable. They fraternised with the Swiss mercenaries of Louis XII., and gave the Duke and his brothers up to the King of France. All the captured members of the Sforza family, including the innocent children of Galeazzo, the rightful Duke, were dragged off into France, and, after being shown on the road like wild animals, thrust into various damp dungeons, to die for want of sunshine and air after years of imprisonment. Ludovico lived, with unbroken spirit, for eight years in the prison of Loches, and died at length, still unsubdued in heart.

By these successes Louis XII. was, in the year 1500, left in the position of arbiter of the fate of all Italy, and the reigning Dukes and Marquises of the various States hastened to place themselves under his protection. Among these were Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua, Alfonso d' Este, Duke of Ferrara, and Giovanni Bentivoglio, the Tyrant of Bologna ; while the popular party in Florence, where the powerful Medici were for the time in exile, also humbled themselves before the King of France.

Now it was that Louis XII. committed the crowning error of his reign, and made a mistake whereby France was for all time to come to lose the advantage of being the paramount Power in Italy. He allowed himself to be beguiled into an alliance with the crafty Ferdinand V. the Catholic, husband of Isabella of Castile. With such tricky allies already as the bloodstained Borgias Louis surely might have been content. But no ; he must needs now enter into an alliance with the subtle King who had made and broken more treaties than any other Prince in Christendom.

Already two Royal marriages had taken place which should have put Louis on his guard, since by each King Ferdinand of Aragon, himself the old rival of France, had become closely connected with the Houses of Austria and Burgundy, which France had so outrageously offended. In the autumn of 1496 the Infanta Joanna, the second daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, had been united to the Archduke Philippe, surnamed Le Beau, the only son of Maximilian and ruler of the Netherlands, while in March 1497 the Archduchess Marguerite, his sister, had proceeded to Spain to espouse the Infante Juan, Prince of the Asturias, the heir to the Spanish dominions. Undeterred by these events Louis XII., in the year 1500, entered into a most perfidious secret treaty, which was the offspring of the brain of Ferdinand of Aragon.

Frederic III. of Aragon, who after Charles VIII. had been driven out of Naples, had, with the sanction of the Pope, succeeded to the Crown of that country, was to be the victim of the unholy alliance. As he did not suspect the treachery of his cousin, the Catholic King, for the sake of his own protection against France, he opened his ports and strong places to the Spanish troops. But in the meanwhile, by the terms of the treaty between Ferdinand and Louis, "to maintain peace, to prevent blasphemy, to protect the honour of virgins, to defend the Church against the Turks, and against *the friend of the Turks*, Dom Frederic of Naples," France and Spain were to invade Naples and divide Frederic's dominions.

The Kingdom of Naples was, in accordance with this treaty, promptly conquered, and divided between the two ambitious kings; but, unfortunately for Louis XII., the friendship which preceded the conquest did not long survive the division of the spoils. War broke out between Ferdinand the Catholic and Louis XII. in 1503, with the result that the brilliant General Gonsalvo da Cordova expelled the French from Southern Italy.

It was entirely owing to his own negligence that Louis lost Naples in this manner, since, when hostilities were declared between him and Ferdinand, he had at first



Photo by J. Lacoste after the carved wooden statue in the Cathedral, Malaga.

KING FERDINAND OF ARAGON.

taken, with exception of one or two towns, the whole of the Catholic King's share of the partition of Naples. Then, certain of success, he had returned to France, whence he carelessly neglected to send to his lieutenants in Naples the necessary reinforcements. When it was too late Louis made a violent effort, and assembled three armies, two of them to make diversions on the side of the Pyrenees, the third to recover Naples. But Gonsalvo, while himself safely entrenched on the frontiers of the Kingdom, allowed this third army to waste itself away for want of provisions and from sickness before he finally attacked and overthrew it on December 28th, 1503. And thus, for the second time within a few years, had the French taken and been driven from Naples, and a couple of years later Louis, by treaty, resigned his share of that kingdom to the Catholic King.

This was when the King's niece, Germaine de Foix, daughter of his sister, Marie d'Orléans and Jean de Foix, Vicomte de Narbonne, became the second wife of Ferdinand of Aragon. The bridegroom was fifty-four and the beautiful bride eighteen when she took as her dower the French rights in Naples to her Spanish husband.

Louis remained, however, the Sovereign of Milan, and treacherously attempted to despoil his allies, the Venetians, of their share of Lombardy. At the same time Alexander VI. invested Cæsar Borgia with the Duchy of Romagna, whose lords he had dispossessed with such cruelty and treachery.

While, for nearly a dozen years, the French troops had been gaily overrunning Italy, and, with unrestrained French gallantry, making love to the seductive, dark-eyed beauties of the peninsula, the birth had taken place of the two boys who, as the natural sequence of the above series of events, were to be life-long rivals.

Charles d'Orléans, Comte d'Angoulême, was twenty years the senior of Louise de Savoie, daughter of Duke Philippe II., whom he married before she was twelve years old. Charles was the first cousin of Louis XII., and, like him, great-grandson of Charles V. of France.

Louise de Savoie presented him with a daughter at a very early age—the famous Marguerite d'Angoulême, the "Pearl of the Valois," who was born in April 1492. A couple of years later, on September 12th, 1494, Louise gave birth to a son at the Château of Cognac. He was named François, and his father, the Comte d'Angoulême, dying a couple of years after his birth, the boy was made Duc de Valois by his cousin, Louis XII.

As Anne of Brittany gave birth to only one son, still-born, and her other two surviving children were girls, furious jealousy existed between her and Louise de Savoie. Louis XII., however, made the best of a bad job; as his young cousin increased in years he invited him to the Court, became thoroughly attached to him, and recognised him as his probable heir.

The future François I. grew up a brilliant lad. Handsome and strong, well trained in knightly and athletic exercises, he was likewise, under the influence of his sister and his mother, from an early age of an artistic temperament, fond of learning, and devoted to poetry—being himself, like his sister, no mean poet.

The young Duc de Valois, under whose influence the French Renaissance was later to become an accomplished fact, was indeed from an early age the most brilliant figure of the French Court. Hot-headed and daring, he especially distinguished himself in the chase, no wolf or wild boar being too savage for him to attack single-handed with his sword. Full of boyish tricks, the story is told of him that he once had a huge wild boar let loose in the courtyard of the castle at Amboise, where he was living with his mother, and when the furious animal broke through a doorway and ran upstairs into the apartments, he himself attacked and killed the great tusked beast as it charged him on the staircase. Feats such as these, and the wild snow-balling fights and practical joking in which he indulged with his gay and warlike comrades, Bonnivet, Montmorency, and Charles de Montpensier, later Duc de Bourbon, endeared the showy young Prince to the rough spirits of the age, even if to his mother

and sister a wild boar in the salons may have seemed about as much in place as a bull in a china-shop. At an early age Louis XII. married his boy-cousin to Claude de Valois, his elder daughter by Anne de Bretagne, to which amiable Princess during her short life François neglected no opportunity of being openly and glaringly unfaithful. For, in spite of his great personal courage, and supposed chivalrous nature, that François was unreliable and equally devoid of heart and of honour was before long to be equally apparent to his friends and his enemies.

Five and a half years later than the birth of François, on February 24th, 1500, was born, in the Flemish city of Ghent, the heir to the great dominions of the Archdukes of Austria and the now extinct line of the Dukes of Burgundy. Although deprived of the Duchy of Burgundy by Louis XI., Marie de Bourgogne, the first wife of the Emperor Maximilian, had retained as her dower the old County of Burgundy and all its possessions—a goodly heritage, which had been reunited to the Duchy by the marriage of her ancestor, Duc Philippe le Téméraire (the Bold) to Marguerite, daughter of Comte Louis III. de Mâle.

The baby Charles, later to be known to the world as the Emperor Charles V., was the elder son of the Archduke Philippe le Beau, the son of the Habsburg Maximilian, and his mother was the Infanta Joanna of Castile, second daughter of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. Joanna had had an elder brother Juan, who had been married to Marguerite of Austria, sister of Philippe, and had living a sister, Catherine of Aragon, the wife of Henry VIII of England. In the veins of the new-born infant Charles there ran the blood of all the ruling families of Europe. He represented, accordingly, in his little body the monstrous mixture of the French, English, Dutch, Flemish, Spanish, Portuguese, and other races. Such were the strange results of the constant inter-marriages of the Royal and Ducal families, from the time of the first Duke of Burgundy, Robert I. (1032-1075), who was himself the son of Robert, King of France.

What was the world to expect from a child of such a strange, mixed descent? one who was, moreover, before long to become the sole heir to the vast possessions of Spain, who was to lay claim to Southern Italy and Sicily as the acquired spoils of his maternal grandfather Ferdinand, and to Northern Italy on the mixed grounds of the old claims of the Empire, and as the heir to the Emperor Maximilian, who took Bianca Sforza of Milan as a second wife?

The young Archduke Charles, however, was not, like François, an only son, nor the only prospective heir to these vast domains. His father, the Archduke Philippe, had five other children—four daughters and a second son, Ferdinand; and, moreover, himself aspired to all the honours which were only to descend to his elder boy. When Queen Isabella the Catholic died, Philippe proceeded to Spain, and early in 1503 he succeeded in having himself recognised as King of Castile in the right of his wife Joanna, her mother's heiress, although his father-in-law, Ferdinand of Aragon, strove to retain the government of that country in his own hands.

Philippe then returned to the Low Countries, where he continued the rule of Flanders and Holland until, in January 1506, he proceeded again in Spain, taking Joanna with him by sea with a powerful fleet. The Royal couple were duly crowned in Castile, but a month or two later Philippe died, presumably from poison, at Burgos (September 1506).

The widowed Queen Joanna, who from the date of her husband's death commenced to show slight signs of insanity caused by melancholy, remained in Spain with her infant children, the Archduke Ferdinand and the Archduchess Catherine of Austria.

The boy Charles, however, had remained to be educated in Flanders under the care of his Aunt Marguerite, who, having lost her husband, the Prince of Asturias, and her only son, born dead, had returned from Spain in 1499, the year after the death of her first husband, Charles VIII.

The widowed Marguerite had, on returning from Spain,

gone to join her father Maximilian at his German Court, which he was constantly changing from Strasburg or Augsburg to Spire, and sometimes to Vienna ; but when she learned, in February 1500, of the birth of a son and heir to her brother, she proceeded to his palace at Ghent in order to be able to attend the christening of the baby, as his godmother, in March. He was called Charles, after his great grandfather Charles le Téméraire (the Bold) of Burgundy, and his father, the Archduke Philippe, proclaimed the baby as Duke of Luxemburg at the same time.

Another of the infant's godmothers was the Princess Margaret of York, the sister of Edward IV. of England, who had been the last wife of the great Duke Charles the Bold.

After spending a couple of years at the Imperial Court and being frequently besought in marriage by Kings and Princes, Marguerite went to the altar for the third time in December 1501 with the handsome young reigning Duke Philibert II. of Savoy. As well as being a very good woman of affairs, and having a long head for political combinations to the advancement of her House, this young widow of twenty was remarkably handsome, with lovely golden hair. She seems to have fallen deeply in love with the brother of Louise de Savoie, who was of her own age, and whom she had already met in France, in the days when she had been the young Queen of that country.

Marguerite was, upon her arrival at the Château de Pont d'Ain, in Savoy, not, however, at all pleased to find that, owing to her husband's indolence, his illegitimate brother, René, the Bastard of Savoy, was practically ruling the country. Although she had been on friendly terms with the Bastard, who had, indeed, married her in proxy for Philibert, and, as a strange token of his allegiance, gone to bed with her in full armour ! the Duchess of Savoy soon showed that she intended to administer the affairs of Savoy herself. She brought about a quarrel between the brothers, caused her father, the Emperor, to

cancel an act whereby René had been declared legitimate, and made Philibert drive him from the Duchy, on pain of death if he should return. Having settled matters thus to her entire satisfaction, Marguerite ruled Savoy for her husband until he suddenly died of pleurisy at the age of twenty-four, in the autumn of 1504.

Her father, the Emperor, now endeavoured to persuade her to accept the proposals which the widowed Henry VII. of England repeatedly made to her. But Marguerite, at the age of twenty-four, declared that she was perfectly content with having had three husbands, and, although she was subsequently involved in a love-affair with the dashing Charles, Viscount Lisle, who became Duke of Brandon, the reputation of which brought her some discredit, she stuck to her resolution. She repaired to the Low Countries, where she established her Court at Malines, and from the year 1506, when her brother King Philippe of Castile died, she occupied herself with administering the dominions of her nephew Charles, of which her father appointed her Regent, and with superintending the little boy's education, initiating him, from his earliest years, into the mysteries of diplomacy and statecraft.

It was from this year, 1506, that the grandeur of Charles commenced, as he was declared the Sovereign Count of Flanders as soon as ever the news of his father's death arrived from Spain.

The Borgias, Julius II., and Marguerite

AT about the time when Gonsalvo da Cordova was giving the French troops of Louis XII. such a trouncing in Naples, the Borgia Pope Alexander VI. was, fortunately for Christendom, removed from this world by being served with a cup of poison which he had kindly prepared for one of his Cardinals. Cæsar Borgia, who also received a portion of the dose, was likewise incapacitated from doing any further mischief in Italy.



Photo by Anderson, Rome, after the painting by Raphael at Florence.

POPE JULIUS II.

By the time that he recovered, and after Pope Pius III. had reigned for only four weeks, the fiery old Cardinal, the enemy of the Borgias, Giuliano Della Rovere, had been elected Pope, under the name of Julius II. Before long Cæsar was seized and deported to Spain, where, although himself married to Charlotte d'Albret, he was eventually killed fighting against Jean d'Albret and Catherine de Foix, the King and Queen of Navarre.

Of all the Popes who have ever occupied the Papal Chair none was of such an ambitious and warlike disposition as the aged Julius. Determined from the first to increase the temporal possessions of Rome, he claimed all the cities and territories of Romagna of which the rightful owners had repossessed themselves on the downfall of the Borgias. He promptly excommunicated these Sovereign Seigneurs, declared them illegitimate occupants of their thrones, and mounted his warhorse against them with eminent success. Finding himself vigorously resisted by Bentivoglio, the Tyrant of Bologna, Julius ordered in his resentment that when the city should fall it should be burned to the ground and neither man, woman, nor child be spared.

The terrified inhabitants of Bologna deserted their chief and yielded up the city at once to the victorious Pontiff.

At the end of his successful campaign Julius made a triumphal entry into Rome, marching in to the sound of the cannons of Sant' Angelo under arches covered with inscriptions in celebration of his glorious and warlike exploits. He was not, however, as yet content with his spoils, and four years later, finding that he had need of the King of France to aid him in despoiling the Venetians, Julius II. sought the good offices of Marguerite of Austria in helping him to form a league of the various European Powers, to attack and divide the territories of the Republic. This nefarious scheme was successfully carried through by the young Princess in December 1508, under the name of the League of Cambray. Marguerite had already, for upwards of two years before

this, possessed all the powers of a ruling Sovereign as Regent and Governess of the Low Countries.

Some of the States and countries which had descended to Charles on his father's death were Flemish and some Dutch ; some were feudally subject to the Empire and others, descended from Burgundy, were held as fiefs under the French Crown. The child Charles was therefore not only the vassal of his grandfather Maximilian, but also of Louis XII., and later of his rival François I.

Various languages were spoken throughout this divided agglomeration of States and countries, but French was the language which Charles was brought up to speak, as it was likewise that of his aunt ; although her father the Emperor, as ruling Archduke of Austria, habitually used the German tongue, he wrote to his daughter in French. The Dutch and Flemish provinces were in those days closely akin to one another, and their respective dialects very similar, but the Counties of Artois and Franche-Comté, which have long since formed a part of France, used only French. So also did Western Flanders, Luxembourg, and likewise Hainault. These various countries had hastened to offer the Regency to the Emperor as soon as the King-Archduke Philippe died, and Maximilian, while accepting it, had, on the grounds that the Empire required the whole of his time, invested his daughter Marguerite, in whom he had such absolute confidence, in his place, and at the same time appointed her Governess to his grandchildren. She established herself with her Court and some wisely chosen Ministers in the Palace at Malines, although she likewise retained her own Savoyard Castle at Pont d' Ain, to which place she occasionally proceeded when she wished to superintend the work of the building of the magnificent cathedral which she erected to the memory of her husband Philibert at Brou, near Bourg-en-Bresse, which belonged to Savoy, and wherein her own bones now lie buried. The Duchy which she had ruled for a time continued to pay her a very handsome revenue, and when her young brother-in-law Charles III. succeeded to the Ducal Crown

of Savoy he was obliged to leave Bourg-en-Bresse in her hands as part payment of her dowry. As she did not find that Charles handed over the balance due with sufficient regularity, she repaired to her father's Court at Strasburg to complain of him, when the Emperor compelled the Duke of Savoy to hand over several more Counties of his dominions to this exigeante sister-in-law, who had no intention of being done out of her rights. As Marguerite was likewise still in receipt of a very large dowry as widow of the Infante of Spain, she was the most wealthy Princess in Europe. Possessing also great personal charms and talents of a very high order, it is no wonder if all the unattached Princes of Europe were constantly pressing her to consider entering the married estate for the fourth time.

In spite of her wealth, that she was by no means selfish was proved, over and over again during her career, by the way in which she put everything that she possessed at the disposal of her nephew Charles. For she was always ready to make every sacrifice for the aggrandisement of the head of the House of Austria, a House which may be said to have commenced its real grandeur and power entirely owing to her devotion and good management.

A good deal has been written of the talent of Marguerite as a poetess, and, as her attainments were varied, of her skill in sewing. She certainly wrote passably good verses, and also delighted the Emperor by helping to make his shirts for him with her own hands, but it is upon her ability as a diplomat, and not as a poet or a cunning sempstress, that her real fame rests to the present day. She was the founder of diplomacy in Europe, and all her diplomatic efforts were devoted to the advancement of Austria and the humiliation of France.

The results of this diplomacy were very nearly fatal to François d'Angoulême at a very early age. We have already mentioned that when Marguerite left France she remained on good terms with her supplanter, Anne of

Brittany, while Anne on her side, after she had in turn married Louis XII., remained furiously jealous of Louise de Savoie, the mother of the boy François. Anne had, while twice married to France, yet remained a foreigner at heart, and she continued far more attached to the romantic Emperor Maximilian, whom she had only married by proxy, than to the second French King of whom she had become the unwilling bride. Having failed herself to become the second wife of Max, she lent willing ear to the suggestions of Marguerite that she should induce Louis XII. to disinherit François, cause her elder daughter Claude to be declared the heiress of France and Brittany, and marry her to the Emperor's grandson, the infant Charles, thus handing over the possessions of France to the probable future ruler of nearly all the rest of Europe. Had this proposed marriage been carried out, it would truly have been a monstrous Empire over which Charles would in due course have become supreme. And yet by the wiles of the two women this union, which would have annihilated the separate existence of France and made of her but an extra appanage of the Habsburg, almost became *un fait accompli*.

When Louis XII. was very ill Anne obtained from him the necessary powers for arranging the marriage of her daughter, and agreed, by a stroke of the pen, to give back all the old possessions of Burgundy. Blois, Arras, and Auxerre were to be surrendered ; Venice was at the same time to be wiped off the map, its vast possessions to be divided between France, the Emperor, and the Pope. When Louis XII. again fell ill, the better to carry out this iniquitous arrangement, Anne endeavoured to carry her daughter off, to be brought up in safety in Brittany, and at the same time to have the person of the young François seized. The Queen was only thwarted in this design in 1505 by the seizure by the Maréchal de Gié, the Governor of the male heir to the throne, of the passages of the Loire, and by his showing boldly his design to arrest the Queen herself if she attempted to carry out her intention. This Marshal was himself a

Breton, Pierre, Vicomte de Rohan, and Anne contrived to have him imprisoned for five years. The King upon his recovery thought better of the matter, and contrived by assembling the Estates of the Kingdom, to cause himself to be requested to cancel the treaty by which he had agreed to hand over his daughter and his country to the House of Austria.

The treaty of Cambray of 1508 was arranged between Marguerite and Cardinal d'Amboise (who, like his mistress Anne, was anxious to keep in with Rome), on behalf of France. All the countries of Europe, big and little, including England, whose ambassador was present, Hungary, Spain, Savoy, Ferrara, and Mantua, were convoked by Marguerite to the conference, in which she represented the Empire. At this it was agreed that it would be an eminently pious work to help that good Pope Julius II. to recover a few of the towns now possessed by Venice on the mainland of Italy! An equally pious work, for all those who helped the good Pope, to help themselves to the other possessions of the maritime Republic!

Marguerite declared that "the war was sacred, as the Venetians were the thieves of the Church." All agreed, but Marguerite, who acted for the Pope, clearly foresaw that, when the fiery Pontiff should have been satisfied with the few cities he claimed, it would be an easy matter to arrange that the other despoilers of Venice—the Pope, Spain, and the Empire—should turn round and despoil the despoiler, Louis XII., and endeavour to kick him neck and crop out of Italy.

That was the way that matters worked out in the end, but in the meantime Venice made a very good fight of it against all the combined Powers of Europe. France, under Louis XII. in person, gained the greatest successes, before the other allies were ready to begin, and the French troops were guilty of the most horrible cruelties whenever a garrison surrendered—the commanders were hanged, the defenders butchered in cold blood.

The Venice which the Leaguers of Cambray attacked in such an unprovoked manner was the last rampart of

Europe against the aggression of the Turk. It had during the preceding century become more and more powerful in the Mediterranean, where it owned the Ionian Islands and had taken Cyprus from its King in 1489. As the Ottoman power increased, the Republic found its eastern expansion becoming restricted and had therefore gradually extended its dominion over a great portion of the mainland of Italy. At the commencement of the sixteenth century Venice flourished in wealth and power, in art and science, and its people were the most educated in Christendom. It still traded with India by way of the Isthmus of Suez, but the discovery of the maritime route to India round the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese Vasco da Gama in 1498 was already commencing to threaten its trade with the Orient. The Republic was, however, still prosperous and well governed, the spirit of its rule was liberal in all matters where the freedom of thought was concerned, it gave shelter to the great thinkers—such as Erasmus, the Voltaire of the sixteenth century—and it shared with Bâle the honour of encouraging the art of printing and the dissemination of literature.

This was the country, the ally which, in the interests of Europe if for no other reason, France should have supported, but which, stirred up by the wiles of Marguerite and the Pope, she on the other hand so ruthlessly attacked.

At the battle of Agnadello the brave bastard of the Orsini family, Bartolomeo Alviano, who had just driven back the Germans of the Empire, was defeated by the French. He had refused to comply with the prudent orders of the aged Pitigliano, another Orsini, who had retreated with the main body of the Venetians, and while his gallant force was crushed he was himself taken prisoner, covered with wounds. One of the most horrible incidents of the war took place at Vicenza, where six thousand persons, including very many ladies of high degree, who with justice feared outrage, had taken refuge in an enormous cave. All, with the exception of

one boy, were suffocated by means of fires kindled in the entrance to the cavern. Many new-born babes were found among the dead. The celebrated Pierre de Terrail, better known as the Chevalier Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche*, coming upon the scene too late to prevent the horror, hanged some of its perpetrators on the spot. It has never been rightly known whether it was by the orders of the officers of Louis XII. or by those of the Prince of Anhalt, a General commanding some troops of the Empire, that this atrocity was committed.

In order to save her subject cities from further cruelties of this description, and the horrors of being sacked, Venice now absolved all her towns on the peninsula from their allegiance ; they were given free permission by their Government to surrender to the Emperor. It is a proof, however, of the esteem in which the rule of the Republic was held that none but the nobles declared for Maximilian, while these subject cities hoisted the banner of Saint Mark and fought against the allies with fury in its defence—and many paid the penalty.

The warlike Emperor of Germany in person commanded a mixed force of a hundred thousand fighting men. He had under him Germans, French, and Spaniards, and the Italians of the lately victorious papal army of Julius II. Yet when with this mighty force Maximilian laid siege to Padua, such was the determination and fury of the besieged that the city could not be captured. The various units of the immense body of men before the walls of Padua eventually quarrelled with one another and the siege was raised. In the end, the result of the League of Cambray was that Ferdinand of Aragon retook his towns which Venice held on the Neapolitan coasts. Julius II. and Louis XII. took also shares of the spoils which they had marked out for themselves. Only the heroic Emperor was not quite so successful. Treviso and Padua, which he claimed, were both lost to him. As usual with this debonair and improvident Monarch, his want of money prevented him from keeping a sufficient number of men in the field.

The alliance of Cambray now came to an end, while the policy of Marguerite, of her father-in-law Ferdinand of Aragon, and of the fiery Julius II. brought about a new combination, frankly directed against their recent ally Louis XII., whom it was decided should be turned out of Italy. This was called The Holy League, and the Pope, whose anger against Venice was appeased with the capture of the cities he had claimed, found no difficulty in persuading the Republic to join in the league for the humiliation of France in Milan. Then, mounting his warhorse once more, the warrior-Pope proceeded to invade the dominions of the Duke of Ferrara, the close ally of the French King.

Gaston de Foix and the Battle of Ravenna

WHILE the world viewed with astonishment the spectacle of a seventy-year-old Pope conducting a campaign in the midst of the snows of a bitter winter, storming the city of Mirandola and himself entering by the breach, Louis XII. prepared to defend himself as best he could against the Holy League, of which Marguerite, in the interests of her nephew Charles, had persuaded her late Spanish husband's brother-in-law, Henry VIII., to become an active member.

The clever young Governess of the Low Countries was not at first able to detach her father from the alliance with Louis XII., as Max was continuing assiduously to borrow money from him. That treachery was, nevertheless, to come. While, however, she had enrolled her father-in-law, Ferdinand of Aragon, so recently married to the King's lovely niece, Germaine de Foix, in the Holy League, Louis was engaging Germaine's brother, Gaston de Foix, to fight at the head of his armies against the forces of Spain.

There was no more brilliant family in France than that of the but recently Sovereign Counts of Foix in the Pyrenees, which was also, in the person of Germaine's

cousin, Catherine de Foix, the ruling family of the Kingdom of Navarre, lying both in Spain and in France. By Catherine's marriage to Jean d'Albret, the French independent Principalities of Albret and Béarn were also incorporated with Navarre. The mother of Anne of Brittany was Marguerite de Foix.

Gaston de Foix, a brilliant young Prince twenty-two years of age, had every reason for being ambitious and for doing all that lay within his power to gratify his maternal uncle the King of France. For his father, Jean de Foix, Vicomte de Narbonne, had previously sought the aid of his brother-in-law, Louis XII., in dispossessing in his favour his niece Catherine from the throne of Navarre. Louis had already invested young Gaston with the Duchy of Nemours in France, and the youth hoped, should he but be successful in Italy, that the King would allow him to make use of the arms of France to decide the quarrel for a Kingdom with his cousin Catherine. Family ties went for but little with the Princely Gascon families of Foix and Albret, alike remarkable for the energy of their character and the violence of their crimes. Whether by war or by intrigue, they destroyed themselves or destroyed each other with the utmost impartiality. Their bravery in battle was renowned, while, as an example of their bloodthirstiness, one of the recent Comtes de Foix had slain his own son.

Born in the mountains of the Pyrenees, they passed their time hunting the wolf, bear, and chamois, and Gaston, brought up to climb the slippery rocks merely sandal-shod or barefooted, could vie in agility with the Basque peasants or the hunters of Béarn.

Owing to an unfortunate misunderstanding between Louis XII. and the Swiss Cantons, while the Alpine mountaineers upon whom France had been accustomed to rely for her infantry now engaged themselves willingly for his enemies, they refused any longer to enroll themselves under the banner of France. Thereupon, while the Maréchal de la Palice was reorganising the army for Italy, he was obliged, in addition to the usual supply

of the mounted men-at-arms, to obtain for the first time French foot-soldiers also. He procured eight thousand Picards from the north, while from the south Gaston de Foix brought a hardy band of five thousand Gascons. There were five thousand German mercenaries, infantry termed by the French *lansquenets*, from the German *landsknecht*, and commanded by an ancient warrior named Jacob von Empser; six thousand French cavalry, sixteen hundred of whom were nobles under the brave Dumolard, the great friend of the celebrated Bayard, and also some Italians who had enlisted among the footmen of France. Gaston de Foix, who was Commander-in-Chief, at once surprised the assembled enemies by the wonderful celerity with which he moved this force. In spite of blizzards of snow, causing his infantry to travel as fast as his mounted men-at-arms, this gallant young soldier passed by the Spanish army before its commanders had any idea that he was within miles of them, and threw himself into the beleaguered city of Bologna, which he re-victualled. Leaving reinforcements here, he dashed off again and surprised Brescia, which had gone over from France to Venice. Brescia was stormed, Gaston himself pulling off his shoes and mounting the slippery slope of the breach barefooted, like the greater part of his infantry.

The carnage at Brescia was horrible—fifteen thousand people had their throats cut. Bayard, who was wounded, had great difficulty in saving the lives of a lady and her two daughters into whose house he had been carried.

The soldiers of Gaston's army took so much booty at the sack of Brescia that many of them refused to fight longer, and recrossed the Alps into France with their riches. Thus was Gaston de Foix's army greatly weakened, but urgent letters arrived at this moment from the King of France informing his nephew that an instant and successful battle was necessary, or all would be lost. Louis had just been surprised with the news that the young Henry VIII., with whom he imagined himself on terms of amity, was preparing warlike expeditions to

descend into France in conjunction with Ferdinand in the south, and in the north with troops to be sent from Flanders by his supposed old friend Marguerite.

No doubt but that Anne of Brittany informed her husband that he had only himself to blame for this projected invasion—that it was caused by Marguerite's pique at the rupture of the proposed marriage of their daughter Claude to Charles, whereby France was lost to the Empire. Beginning to see through Marguerite's handiwork, Louis now trembled lest he should lose also his one remaining ally, Marguerite's father, Maximilian, who had but recently made a fresh loan while saying nothing about breaking off his friendship.

Anxious to win the desired battle without delay, the brilliant Gaston de Foix now hurried forward to the city of Ravenna, the capital of Romagna, which was held for the Pope by Prospero Colonna with a Roman army. Gaston had with him some useful reinforcements under Alfonso d' Este, Duke of Ferrara, especially some of the excellent artillery upon which that Prince prided himself. At about three miles from Ravenna Gaston found posted a large Papal army composed of Spanish troops under the famous Pedro Navarro and Raymond de Cardona, who was Ferdinand's Viceroy of Naples, while Fabrizio Colonna, a sturdy cavalry commander, was in command of a large mounted force of Italians.

Gaston, undismayed by the presence of this redoubtable force, attempted to carry Ravenna by storm under their very eyes. Without waiting to make a proper breach, five or six furious assaults were made on the walls, which were successively repulsed by the determination of the force of Prospero Colonna within the city.

While Gaston was forced to retire, and rest his weary troops before attacking in turn the Papal army close at hand, strongly entrenched behind the rushing river Ronco, he was threatened with a calamity which was likely to prove his ruin and that of France. Maximilian had turned against Louis XII. at last, and had sent a letter to Jacob von Empser, the commander of the five thousand

German lansquenets, ordering him and all his captains to desert the French camp at once upon the peril of their lives.

The loss of these five thousand trained and veteran spearmen, at such a critical moment, could only have meant the destruction of Gaston's army. It was the 10th of April, 1512, and, to regain the Alps, he would be compelled to retire through a country now all up in arms against him, and have to cross a number of rivers swollen by the spring rains and melting snows.

The worthy Jacob, however, was a true-hearted soldier, and one not at all inclined to desert his old comrades in arms at the moment of their greatest danger. He was devoted to the Chevalier de Bayard, although, with the exception of the words "Bonjour, Monseigneur," he was unable to converse with him save through an interpreter. Taking his interpreter, the gallant German secretly repaired to Bayard. He told him what had happened; said that for long he and his men had received the pay of the King of France, and that he would not consider himself worthy of his salt should he now obey the Emperor. But what was he to do? other letters would surely follow at once, and his captains would learn what none as yet knew but himself.

Bayard thanked his brother soldier for his chivalry, and begged him to put the letter of Maximilian in his pocket and keep it there until after the battle. To this Jacob agreed, but Gaston de Foix realised that he must attack the army of the allies early on the morrow without fail, although to do so he must place himself between the forces of the Colonna in Ravenna and of the united Spaniards and Italians in their palisaded entrenchments across the swiftly flowing Ronco.

On the morning of April 11th, while the German lansquenets crossed by a bridge, Dumolard and his men forded the stream, which was up to their armpits. Gaston had attired himself magnificently for the battle. Over his armour, richly inlaid with gold, he had thrown a splendid mantle bearing the escutcheon of Navarre—

Gules, portcullis chains Or—and had, he said, for the honour of his lady-love, bared his right arm to the elbow, in order that he might dye it crimson with the blood of his foes. He kept his vows nobly during the ensuing conflict, which was of the bloodiest description.

The artillery on both sides wrought terrible carnage. The newly raised French infantry suffered unnecessarily owing to the mistaken bravery of their commanders in ordering them to remain standing, for honour's sake. Most of the leaders were shot down. The Spanish infantry, already ensconced behind strong palisades, lay down to escape the murderous fire of the Duke of Ferrara's artillery. The Italian horsemen of the allies could not, however, escape in this manner, and underwent terrible losses. One cannon-ball is said to have killed thirty-three cavaliers.

The lansquenets under Jacob vied in courage with the French infantry, who made a furious attempt to take the Spanish guns. In this they were foiled, owing to the fact that the foreseeing Pedro Navarro had protected them with a kind of movable screen, beyond which the foot-soldiers could not advance. They fell back in disorder while being charged by the Spanish infantry; but the German lansquenets, coming to their assistance, drove the Spaniards back again with heavy loss. At this period the gallant Dumolard thought it time to publicly drink the health of the brave Jacob von Empser. Wine was brought on the battle-field, they sat down and drank it. Presently, as they were pledging each other, glass in hand, a cannon-ball came along and killed them both!

There now ensued a splendid charge of Colonna and his exasperated cavalry upon the French guns. It was met by a magnificent counter-charge, headed by the veteran Yves d'Allègre, who had lost two sons in the battle. Yves was killed, but his adversary, Fabrizio Colonna, was wounded and captured after a tremendous resistance. His followers were cut to pieces; the horses of the French men-at-arms being heavier than those of the Italians, the latter could not stand the shock.

By this time the lances of the Germans were to be seen hurling themselves against the Spanish infantry once more. But these, armed with a long pointed sword and a dagger, stood close together in a cuirassed phalanx behind their entrenchments, and fearlessly faced the spears of the Germans. Moreover, although the lansquenets were protected from the sword-points by the armour they wore on their bodies, the active Spaniards threw themselves on the ground between the long lances and struck upwards with their poignards, inflicting terrible wounds.

The French Gendarmerie, with Gaston himself at their head, now hurled itself on the flanks and rear of this Spanish infantry. As the heavy horsemen fell upon them with a terrible shock, the Spaniards went down like ninepins before their onslaught. The Viceroy Cardona had already withdrawn, and this charge settled the battle; the greater number of the Spaniards were slain, the remainder retired in as good order as they could.

The amenities of war were never more apparent than when Bayard was, with a few *gens d'armes*, about to charge one of these retiring bands, retreating in good order.

"Be content with your victory, Senor!" they cried out. "You have not enough men to charge us, and if God has allowed us to escape from the battle you had better likewise leave us alone." The Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche* saw the force of this advice, especially as his horse was about done up. He accordingly left the retreating Spaniards alone; indeed, they courteously opened their ranks and allowed Bayard to pass through.

Gaston had likewise been returning from the pursuit, all covered with blood and brains, when he had met the same body of men and before they had come face to face with the Chevalier Bayard.

"What is that band?" he demanded of a Gascon soldier.

"Some Spaniards who have beaten us," replied the Gascon.

Gaston de Foix and the Battle of Ravenna 33

Enraged at this reply, Gaston de Foix, at the head of but a few knights, charged the Spaniards. He was fired upon, and fell wounded into the water by the side of the causeway along which he had charged.

It was in vain that Gaston's cousin Lautrec, hoping to have him held for ransom, cried out to the Spaniards that he was the brother of their Queen. They slew the gallant young General, who fought furiously with his sword to the last, with a hundred wounds. The victory of France was none the less complete, and among the prisoners made was the young Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici, the Papal Legate, who was shortly himself to succeed to the Papacy, as Leo X.

After the brilliant victory of Ravenna the Pope, in a state of alarm, took refuge in the Castle of Sant' Angelo. He daily expected to see the French army appear at the gates of Rome. He had no cause for alarm, however, as, it is supposed, acting on secret orders from Anne of Brittany, who was devoted to the Papacy, the treasurer of Louis XII. in Milan disbanded the greater part of the French army in Lombardy.

After this act of folly Italy was soon lost to France. The Emperor gave free passage to fresh armies of Swiss, who soon re-established a Sforza, the vassal of the Empire, in Milan.

While the family of Medici was restored to the rule of Florence, the French, under La Trémouille, were utterly defeated at Novara. A little later Henry VIII. made a descent into the north of France, and, aided by troops sent by Marguerite from Flanders, overran the country and defeated the French at the Battle of Guinegate, known derisively as the "Battle of the Spurs," from the speed with which the French ran away. Louis XII. now hastened to make a truce for a year with the Catholic King. He made peace with Henry VIII., to whom he ceded Tournay and promised a subsidy of 100,000 livres yearly, and at the same time he promised his younger daughter Renée to Maximilian's younger grandson, the Archduke Ferdinand, in marriage.

Peace was signed in August 1514, and as the warlike Pope Julius II. had already died, while vowing vengeance on France and Ferrara, there seemed a real prospect of peace and quiet for a time in Italy.

Almost the last act of Louis XII., who had become a widower, was to marry Mary Tudor, the sixteen-year-old sister of Henry VIII. This lively young Princess led the elderly King of France such a life of dissipation, compelling him to pass his nights in balls and feasting, that he died in three months. Almost before her husband was cold in his coffin, and without leaving France, Mary married Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, while François I. ascended the throne of France.

ANDREW HAGGARD.

END OF INTRODUCTION

TWO GREAT RIVALS

FRANÇOIS I. AND CHARLES V.

CHAPTER I

The Amours of François and Françoise

FRANÇOIS I., who ascended the throne of France on January 1, 1515, in the full vigour of youth at twenty years of age, was a king who divided his time between three occupations—making love, the chase, and making war. We have named his pursuits in the order of their importance. He never ceased from being a victim to the attraction of the sex, and lost no opportunity of making a victim of any woman upon whom he had set his desires—therefore love came first and last in the career of this monarch. The chase he rarely neglected, even to his last moments, for more important occupations, while in war he distinguished himself at the outset of his career only, but then greatly.

No sooner had he stepped into the shoes of his cousin, Louis XII., than he sought to provide himself with the finest horses, the best of arms, and, for mistress, the most attractive and handsome young lady to be procured in France.

The first two were easy for a king to obtain, but not so the third, even when, by diligent inquiry, he had learned where the lady was to be found.

Having plenty of young and very noble companions quite as vicious as himself, some of these did not fail to inform the young King that, according to rumour, the handsomest young lady in France was one belonging to the quasi-Royal family de Foix. She happened to be married—had, in fact, been married from the age of twelve—and although, as a rule, marriage proved no obstacle in these matters, upon this occasion it caused all the difficulty. Françoise de Foix, daughter of the famous Phébus de Foix, Vicomte de Lautrec, was twenty years old and the wife of Jean de Laval, Comte de Châteaubriand, who was the most jealous husband in France. He kept his beautiful young wife carefully concealed in his ancient castle on the Chère, which had been built by his ancestor Briant I., Comte de Penthièvre, as long ago as in the eleventh century.

In the meantime the modern Comte de Châteaubriand amused himself elsewhere, as every French nobleman of his time was expected to do.

When the handsome young François took the first opportunity of inquiring of the Sieur de Laval why he did not bring his wife, whose beauty had been spoken of, to the Court, he replied :

“Sire, she is too stupid. That woman has no more brains than a snipe ; she could never amuse or interest anybody of intelligence at the Court. A mere piece of marble statuary, Sire—nothing more ; she is not worth while talking about.”

“None the less, we should like to see her, Comte ; moreover, it might brighten her wits to bring her up from the dull neighbourhood of Nantes. When will you send for her ?”

“Ah, she loves the country, Sire, and could never endure the town—she would pine away. I could not think of it, for, stupid as she is, I do not want to injure the poor creature’s health.”

Leaving the Court, the Comte de Châteaubriand posted off to his castle, and gave to the fair Françoise the strictest instructions that, except upon receipt of a

certain secret sign, agreed upon between them, she was never to leave the feudal château, which was originally named Château-Briant in the year 1015.

Unfortunately for the Comte's happiness, a certain official of the household having been offended by his Seigneur, was not above selling the secret sign, which he had probably learned from some waiting-women of the Comtesse, to a noble of the Court. Some gay young nobles soon arrived in the Comte's absence, and, giving the secret sign, to which Françoise de Foix replied with alacrity, carried the young lady off to the Court of François I. There she met with a most flattering welcome from all, with the exception of her husband. François I. lost no time in impressing upon the beautiful girl the deep effect that her freshness and charms had made upon his heart, while she very soon began to lose her timidity, and to make the King *les doux yeux* in return.

The Comte now took the most foolish step possible. Instead of remaining at the Court to look after the preservation of his wife's morals, he went off in a huff, declaring that he washed his hands of her. The *dé-nouement* was not long in arriving. Within a week of the Comte's hasty departure, Françoise de Foix gave herself up, body and soul, to the handsome young Monarch. Moreover, when once she had become the King's mistress, that this remarkable beauty was no fool was to be seen from the way in which she contrived to assert herself, and make friends with the greatest ladies of the Court.

Although the jealous and sharp-witted Louise de Savoie, now *Duchesse d'Angoulême*, and called "Madame," had attained the position of Queen-mother, she was obliged to put up with the rivalry of Françoise in her son's counsels. As for the retiring Queen Claude, and the King's sister, the clever Marguerite d'Angoulême, the "perle des perles des Marguerites," they treated Françoise as though she were on an equality with themselves. Nay, more, to please her brother, Marguerite made all

kinds of elegant designs and cunning mottoes, which were carried out in beautiful articles of jewellery, to be given to the brilliant young Comtesse de Châteaubriand, who soon enjoyed herself thoroughly at the Court, over which she shared the influence of Marguerite.

Whether or no the Comte objected, François now adorned for the Comtesse her sleeping apartment at Château-Briant. From an early age François exhibited that taste in art which made him the founder of the Renaissance in France, and the decorations of the bedroom of the fair Françoise became renowned. It was indeed a wonderful place, with voluptuous half-lights and splendidly sculptured chimney-pieces, held up by elegant caryatides. Her bed was a magnificent affair, surrounded by balustrades of carved wood, with mirrors, velvet hangings, and ebony seats.

When in this luxurious retreat, with a gallant young King for the companion of her pleasures, Françoise posed as a *demi-reine*. Without rising, she received all the greatest nobles of France by her bedside, according to the custom of the age for great ladies, and she was courted and flattered by all in a Court where the will of the reigning favourite was the will of the King.

She was to exercise her power over her devoted but by no means too faithful royal lover for some years, and during that period she contrived to supply him with her own three brothers as his principal Generals, by no means to the ultimate advantage of France.

These were the Comte Odet de Foix, Seigneur de Lautrec, André de Foix, Seigneur de Lesparre, and Thomas de Foix, Seigneur de Lescun. During her career as *maîtresse en titre* it would appear that Françoise did not hesitate to reward the King for his infidelities by certain little lapses of her own.

There was no greater rake at the Court of France than his boon companion, the splendid Bonnavet, upon whom was conferred the title of Admiral of France. To all the frivolous great ladies of the Court but one, the dashing attractions of Bonnavet made him irresistible.

The one exception was not, however, Françoise de Foix, for she deceived the King with the young "Amiral" to the top of her bent.

The sole exception to the list of his victims was one who, throughout her lifetime, always showed that she had one side of her character no less frivolous than the other ladies of the noblesse. This was the author of the indecent series of stories known as the "Heptameron," written as a sequel to Boccaccio's "Decameron," which work she was herself the means of introducing to the Court at the dawn of the Renaissance, as a rare classic worthy of the careful perusal of gallant Knights and gay ladies.

Marguerite d'Angoulême, the author in question, does not hesitate to tell the world gaily in her "Heptameron" full details of the manner in which, when she would not yield to the ardent desires of Guillaume Gouffier, Seigneur de Bonnivet, he almost succeeded in accomplishing his designs upon her by trickery and force. "He took the handsomest and best-perfumed shirt he had, and a night-cap of the choicest kind, then looking at himself in the glass, he was so satisfied with his own appearance that he thought no lady could possibly withstand his good looks. Promising himself marvels, therefore, from his enterprise, he lay down on his bed, where he did not think he should stay long, for he expected to exchange it for one more honourable!"

Then Marguerite relates in detail how, by the agency of a trap-door in the ceiling, the audacious Admiral succeeded in introducing himself, "without, in the first instance, obtaining her consent," into the bed of the supposed Princess of Flanders, and how the first intimation of his arrival was to find herself in his arms. Likewise, although "he endeavoured to stuff the quilt into her mouth for fear she should cry out," Marguerite relates, with gusto, how she repulsed the gay spark, and then proceeds humorously to describe Bonnivet's appearance when, having retreated through his trap-door, he found himself once more in his own room.

“The candle was still burning on the table before his mirror, which showed his face all scratched and bitten, and the blood streaming from it over his fine shirt.”

“Thou art rightly served, pernicious beauty!” he said, apostrophising his own lacerated visage. “Thy vain promises set upon an impossible enterprise, and one which, far from increasing my good fortune, will perhaps bring upon me a world of trouble.”

No trouble, however, came to the gay Bonnivet over this *fredaine*, for which the virtuous Princess Marguerite appears to have borne him no ill-will, being content with her victory.

She relates many other notorious love-affairs of this lady-killer in the course of her “*Heptameron*,” and historians inform us that her brother François only laughed at the whole affair as a good joke. Indeed, how little he cared for his sister’s honour is evident from the fact that Marguerite was herself at one time compelled to retire from the Court owing to her brother’s improper solicitations.

Louise de Savoie, the King’s mother, having been married at eleven, was still quite young when François came to the throne. Her temperament is described as having been ardently passionate, and it was, later, owing to her thwarted desires when she sought to make the Duc de Bourbon marry her that, in revenge upon him, she behaved so as to bring the greatest misfortunes upon her son and his kingdom.

She contrived, however, to have her own way in the end, to the discomfiture of Françoise de Foix, when she presented a still more attractive young lady, Anne d’Heilly de Pisselieu, one of her own ladies of honour, to the King’s notice.

A good story is told by Brantôme showing the wit displayed by the Comtesse de Châteaubriand, when she found herself at length supplanted.

The new mistress, become Duchesse d’Étampes, was desirous to possess the numerous jewels of her prede-

cessor, especially on account of the designs and mottoes with which they were adorned by the skill of "the Pearl of the Valois."

François accordingly sent a messenger to his former lady-love, to demand his presents back. The Comtesse kept the messenger waiting while she had them all melted down into ingots. Then she returned them to the King, saying that every word that they had borne was engraved upon her heart, so she could spare them—but that no one else should enjoy the love-tokens which she had solely valued as coming from him.

François could but laughingly observe that the wits of the Comtesse had proved too much for him, and he sent back the shapeless ingots of gold and jewels to their rightful owner.

Various stories are told about the fate of the Comtesse de Châteaubriand at the hands of her jealous husband. One of these, told by Varillas, is to the effect that he shut her up in a room hung with black for a time, and then had her held down by four men while she was bled to death by two surgeons. Another story is that he starved her to death. Whatever the truth, the Comte placed a fine Latin inscription over the grave of Françoise, in which, ironically, he praised her many virtues.

CHAPTER II

François Liege Lord, Charles Vassal

1515

FRANCE had lost all Italy ; and in 1512 all of Spanish Navarre, the gate of France, was ravished from Queen Catherine de Foix and her husband, Jean d'Albret, by Ferdinand of Aragon.

Accordingly, when François I. came to the throne he held no territory outside his French dominions, while he felt himself threatened on all sides—by the power of Spain, the might of the Empire, and the rivalry of England.

The young King was not, however, anxious on the subject of any possibly warlike views of his neighbours, except in so far as they might interfere in the great object of his ambition, the reconquest of the Duchy of Milan.

As great-grandson of Valentina Visconti, François shared the claims of his late cousin, Louis XII., in Lombardy, and, burning with martial ardour, he determined to make them good in person on the first opportunity. But in spite of his inordinate love of pleasure, which made him throughout his life far too much the slave of the fair sex, François possessed various princely qualities, and was sufficiently long-headed not to dash into perilous adventures without first taking ordinary precautions concerning the security of his frontiers. Before, therefore, undertaking any warlike exploits, he set to work with a certain amount of skill to establish friendly terms with his neighbours, to provide for the proper government of his dominions, and to give the most responsible commands in his army to nobles of tried valour and skill.

In person François was very tall, and he united great bodily strength to extreme skill in the handling of weapons such as the sword, the lance, and the crossbow. He possessed, likewise, a taste for letters and art, and had high ambitions, which seemed to have the more probability of attainment owing to his quick intelligence, to which was joined an unscrupulous vein of cunning. His features in youth were handsome; even the long nose, which as the years rolled on became such a prominent feature of his face, seemed in the noonday of his life but to impart an additional air of distinction.

For his Chancellor he proceeded to appoint Antoine Du Prat, whom he also made the Keeper of the Seals, and Du Prat remained his principal Minister for upwards of twenty years. Of the Treasurer of the three preceding Kings, Florimond Robertet, François made his Minister of Finance, at the same time that he gave the post of Grand Master to Arthus Gouffier de Boisy, who had been his Governor.

In the matter of the Army, he appointed to the supreme rank, that of Constable of France, the first Prince of the Blood, Charles de Montpensier, Duc de Bourbon, who was half an Italian, his mother having been a Gonzaga of the ruling family of Mantua. This great Prince, who was later driven to rebellion owing to the excess of love, followed by the excess of hate, of Louise de Savoie, was godson of Anne de France, or de Beaujeu, the sister of Charles VIII., and his marriage with her young daughter, Suzanne de Bourbon-Beaujeu, had brought him the possession of no less than seven provinces of France. The father of Suzanne had been Pierre, Duc de Bourbon, who had also been the uncle of Louise de Savoie, whose mother was Marguerite de Bourbon. It was owing to the fact of Louise being thus the first cousin of Suzanne, who died at an early age, that she was able later on to behave in such a scandalous manner to her more distant cousin, Charles de Montpensier, after he had succeeded to all the honours and appanages of both the elder and younger branches of Bourbon.

The Connétable de France was but five and a half years the senior of François, and yet he had already distinguished himself greatly in Italy under Louis XII. In fact, it was not only for his personal bravery that he was already renowned at the age of twenty-five, but for his grasp of tactics and strategy in warfare. It is, perhaps, scarcely correct to say that François did more than to confirm Charles de Montpensier, of whose power and reputation he could not but be jealous, in the rank of Constable, since the late Louis XII. had promised him this post two years before his death, being, he said, anxious to preserve "as his shield and buckler a Prince so renowned for his powers and virtues."

François, attaining to the throne at such an early age, could not well afford to disregard the late King's wishes in the matter, although there have been many who, judging by the light of later events, have considered that the young Monarch was unwise ever to confer upon his cousin such great dignity and power that the army of France was practically his to deal with as he liked. It must not, however, be forgotten that the passionate Louise was, at the time of her son's accession, so deeply in love with the haughty Bourbon that François could not well have gone against his mother's wishes.

There was only one Maréchal de France at this period, and he was an Italian, Jean-Jacques Trivulzi, a bold warrior who was the head of the French party in Lombardy.

The influence of the young Comtesse de Châteaubriand was, however, at once apparent when her brother, Odet de Foix, Seigneur de Lautrec, was appointed Maréchal. He was the first cousin of the brilliant Gaston, the scourge of Italy, who fell at Ravenna. A third noble upon whom the dignity of a Field-Marshal was bestowed was Jacques de Chabannes, Seigneur de la Palice, an experienced officer whose name is chiefly famous from the fact of his having raised that first body of really French infantry which behaved with such desperate courage under Gaston de Foix at the battle of Ravenna.

Having got the affairs of the Kingdom in order, and having been duly crowned and anointed at Rheims, François had leisure to think about entering into a state of alliance with such of his neighbours as seemed to be inclined to become on friendly terms with him.

Of these the young Archduke Charles had just begun to become important—the future Emperor Charles V. commenced, in fact, to be an actually reigning Prince only a month later than François himself, whose junior he was by almost six years.

In February 1515, when Charles had just attained his fifteenth year, the Emperor Maximilian, without consulting his daughter Marguerite, the boy's aunt and the Regent of the Low Countries, suddenly declared the lad as of age and capable of ruling his countries himself.

Marguerite of Austria was greatly chagrined at this unexpected slight being put upon her, one which she attributed to the influence of the Burgundian Guillaume de Croy, Seigneur de Chièvres, to whom during the eight years of her rule she had confided her nephew for the purpose of being instructed in statecraft and other matters fit for a ruler to learn. It had been a task which Chièvres had fulfilled with conscientiousness amounting to severity, and which Charles, who was naturally an idle boy, averse to study, and excessively gluttonous, had endeavoured to elude. He was fond of outdoor sports, and at an early age much preferred to ride and shoot than to study either statecraft or languages. In his shooting lessons, like one of the young Dauphins of France a couple of hundred years later, he had the bad luck, with either arquebus or crossbow, to kill a man. While the Dauphin in question never again could handle firearms, Charles, who had a firmer disposition, was, although grieved at the event, not to be deterred by a trifle like that from the continuance of the sporting exercises so dear to his grandfather Max, in spite of which he was never allowed to neglect his studies under Adrien of Utrecht.

Although Marguerite at first mounted a very high

horse, and insisted upon publicly rendering an account of her stewardship, the coolness between her and her nephew was of but short duration. The good-natured Emperor wrote to the boy whom he had emancipated, telling him that he was not on that account to forget what he owed to his aunt, and enjoining him to continue to consult her on all important matters. Charles, on his side, could not but acknowledge that Marguerite had made great sacrifices both of her own money and her jewels on his behalf, in the wars which she had waged with their troublesome neighbour, the Duc de Gueldre, who was the close ally of France. Accordingly, although he was now the master, he very plainly showed the world that she was to continue to enjoy his closest confidence, although her allowance was frequently left unpaid. Having been proclaimed Comte de Flandre and Duc de Brabant, the young ruler began to preside over his own Council with a very firm hand, M. de Chièvres, who continued to be his principal adviser, insisting from the first that he should open all his own despatches and read them himself; moreover, never sign a paper of which he did not thoroughly understand the contents. While François was anxious to make friends with Charles in order that he might have a free hand in Italy, the Archduke on his side was, for his own reasons, more than willing to be on good terms with his good cousin of France.

These reasons were that, as his now Grand Chamberlain de Chièvres explained, to ensure the repose of the Low Countries and to render easy his future accession to the combined Crowns of Aragon and Castile, it would be well to be at peace with his French neighbour, who could so easily attack Belgium or Holland at any time when their ruler might happen to be employed elsewhere. This peace with François was the more desirable as Charles' maternal grandfather, Ferdinand, King of Aragon, had plainly shown an intention of leaving that country to the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, Charles' younger brother.

An embassy, of which the astute Franche-Comtois, originally from Savoy, Mercurin de Gattinara, was the chief, was accordingly despatched to do homage to François for the fiefs of Flanders and other feudal appanages held under the suzerainty of the French Crown. At the same time the request was made for the hand of François' young cousin and sister-in-law, Renée de France, daughter of Louis XII., then only some three or four years of age.

When François received the embassy he did not fail, as between liege lord and vassal, to assert his superiority in a somewhat haughty, if affable, manner.

When, however, he learned the proposed terms of the dowry for Renée he opened his eyes and flatly refused them. These were, in addition to a large money payment, no less than the restitution of the Duchy of Burgundy, taken by Louis XI. from Marie of Burgundy, Maximilian's first wife and Charles' grandmother—and likewise the cession of the Duchy of Milan.

"My cousin, the Prince of Spain, is going a bit too far," remarked François. "As his Suzerain, he will find me as reasonable as possible where his duties to me as my vassal are concerned, and I wish him all happiness now that he has become a man able to manage his own affairs; but no Prince, big or little, shall interfere with me where my grandeur is concerned in either Burgundy or Milan."

Since, however, both the Suzerain and the vassal had their own interests to serve, the marriage was arranged to take place, with a money dowry only, when Renée should reach the age of twelve, and a peace treaty was arranged, which included the Duc de Gueldre, that thorn in the side of Marguerite for so long past. The odd part of this treaty was that Charles was unable to persuade either of his grandfathers, Ferdinand or Maximilian, to become partners to it—a fact which plainly shows the diversity of interests between those potentates and those of the grandson who was to succeed them both. Charles, for his part, agreed not to help Ferdinand of Aragon unless

within six months he should have returned Navarre to Queen Catherine de Foix and her husband, Jean d'Albret.

Thus François I. was likely to be left in a state of war with the Emperor, and the more so since the recent enemies of France, the Venetians, now came to the young King to ask his assistance in taking from Maximilian the possessions of the Republic which he still kept by force in Lombardy. François was delighted to accede to the request of the Venetians, since it fell in exactly with his own views of proceeding with an army into Italy, where he would be only too glad to find such a powerful ally as the Republic of the Adriatic. Nor would Charles be likely to interfere. On the contrary, in a second treaty, a little later, he approves of François making war on his grandfather the Emperor "for the good cause of the defence of Venice."

CHAPTER III

François, Charles, and Marguerite de Valois

THE character of François I. is easy to understand: it was so frankly sensual, yet at the same time refined and artistic. While pretending, owing to his undoubted courage, to be chivalrous, he was in other respects such a cur that one can readily realise in him his absolute humanity with all its faults. His very unreliability stamps him as a man of the race to which he belonged. Frivolous in love, dashing in war, not without generous impulses, at times affectionate, courteous, even if his courteous bearing were nothing but a blind, François was a very Frenchman. He was the result of no system of education, but the mere product of a line of Valois forefathers, gay, unrestrained, careless, oftentimes cruel; with no fixed ideas, no continuity of purpose.

But Charles V. ! how shall we understand the man ? The only way to do so is to consider, not so much his forbears as his early environment, his actions being distinctly the result of education and example. His relentless obstinacy was rather the result of training than spontaneity; his important deeds seem to have been prompted by fixed principles, to have sprung from cold calculation and hard self-interest rather than from any noble or even any frivolous, impulse.

Charles V. never loved anyone but himself; his sensuality was merely the effect of whim, a matter of temporary amusement. Not even the beautiful young Flemish lady, Marguerite Van Gest, by whom at an early age he became the father of a daughter, afterwards Duchess of Parma,

even stirred his feelings for more than a moment. He was likewise the father of another illegitimate child, the famous Don Juan of Austria. There has always been great mystery as to who was this son's mother. It is, however, evident how dead to all the ordinary feelings of nature was Charles V. that his contemporaries did not scruple to ascribe the motherhood of Don Juan to one of the Emperor's own sisters.

From his instructor, Guillaume de Croy, he acquired, with a certain slowness of accomplishment, a peculiar tenacity, never relinquishing an object that he had in view. From his aunt, who had never forgiven the France that she both regretted and hated, although her hatred was hidden under smiles, Charles became imbued with the determination to lose no opportunity of humiliating his Gallic neighbour.

Neither to the counsels of Charles, when he became King of Spain and Emperor of Germany, nor to those of Marguerite, as ruler of the Low Countries, were there admitted either Spaniards or Germans. The advisers of both aunt and nephew were chiefly level-headed and grasping Flemings or Burgundians, who looked upon Spain merely as a foreign country to be fleeced for their own benefit and advantage.

Probably the one of these who displayed the firmest character was the clever Mercurin de Gattinara, a man who did not at any time fear to speak his mind outright. He told Marguerite at one time that, if she mistrusted him, she did not deserve to possess a servitor like himself. His boldness of speech in pointing out to his master what was right and wrong caused his disgrace later under Charles V., when he was supplanted by the cunning Granvelle.

Of the education, the formation of character and personal appearance of the young Charles, one gains a good insight from the talented historian, Michelet.

"Behold!" he exclaims, "the people of Marguerite, the Kings of the day. Let us glance to one side at those of the morrow, who hold in their hand, who form and



From the painting in the Louvre.

CHARLES V.

make in their image, who prepare to their profit, this child, this Prince, this King, this Emperor, upon whom already hovers the destiny of Europe. In that hall at Malines, where sits to one side, in disfavour with and neglected by his pupil, the pedant Adrien d'Utrecht, watch at the lamp that pale child in black velvet, his cold and intelligent face in which the lower lip proclaims the blood of Austria, whose crocodile's jaw recalls the strong race of England. There appears the hard worker, greedy, absorbing, insatiable for work, intrigue, and affairs. A devouring person, of exiguous stomach (this is no figure of speech). Where may one find to satisfy him enough of either foods or of Kingdoms? Piles of despatches and State papers are before him. All that comes, even by night, arrives here and passes under his eyes; his Governor, de Chièvres, insists that the Prince shall read, in order to read himself, and that he may be able to report to the Council. In this way the education becomes, little by little, the Government. The power insensibly will slip away from Marguerite and pass into the hands of the Governor."

While from Marguerite Charles received lessons in policy and diplomacy, in this manner Guillaume de Croy brought him up with all the ambitions of his great-grandfather, Charles the Bold. But the visions of an universal Monarchy were by no means likely to become unrealisable for one in whom the result of so many political marriages had united the various Kingdoms of Spain with Lower Italy, the Austrian States, and the Low Countries. What could seem more probable than that the reversion to the Empire should fall to the grandson of Maximilian, the youth already lord of so many States? Why should not the sceptre of Charlemagne wave again in the hands of this later Charles, and be stretched with increased power and dominion over Europe? To obtain this universal might and power, however, two things were necessary: firstly to study, secondly to crush France. Accordingly, while the harum-scarum bold hunter, Maximilian, was constantly insisting that the lad should be given more

instruction in the bodily open-air exercises to which he was inclined, de Chièvres kept his pupil, on the other hand, grinding away eternally in the mill of public affairs and diplomacy. He taught him to assume a cold and dry demeanour—to let his heart be for nothing in his policies—to laugh to scorn the word gratitude.

These were the lessons of the school in which the family of Croy had been itself brought up in Burgundy. It was by a long course of ingratitude to Duke Philippe le Bon that the two brothers, Antoine de Croy and Jean de Chimay, had become great, and even married into the Ducal House of Lorraine, whose ruler slew Charles the Bold at Nancy.

The first results of the lesson became plainly apparent when Charles succeeded to his majority, and neglected to pay her allowances to the woman who had been as his nurse and mother combined, she who had made every sacrifice on his behalf—his aunt, the Archduchess Marguerite.

The coldness of demeanour, the Flemish stolidity, affected by the youthful Charles was not in any way relieved by grace of person. His face was pale as the result of such close application ; he was not tall, and when he sought to make an harangue he spoke with laboured effort. In spite of his constant instruction, moreover, he never became a finished scholar. He never learned to write his own language, French, well ; he was not fluent in German, and when he first went to take possession of Spain, the Spaniards of Castile were disgusted to find that he could not speak his own mother's tongue, Spanish, so as to be understood. Although at the last the Catholic King revoked by a codicil the will by which he had left Castile to Charles' younger brother, the disappointed Spaniards loudly declared that the Archduke Ferdinand, who had been brought up among them and spoke their tongue, was the only King whom they would have.

The contrast between François I. and his Flemish rival was indeed remarkable, so much had nature done for the

Frenchman. François was not only grace personified, but a fluent and elegant speaker ; indeed, his flow of well-turned phrases was far too easy, since his facile verbiage was often merely a cloak for insincerity. In stature he was a head taller than any other King who ever sat on the French throne, while his shoulders were broad and athletic. That he had inherited quite a taste for verse from his grandfather, the poet Charles d'Orléans, was, moreover, evident from the stanzas which, from an early age, he composed to his various lady-loves, or scratched with a diamond upon the window-panes at Chambord. When, later, he became a captive in a Spanish prison, François found in his talent for versifying almost his sole relief from the weary monotony of close imprisonment. In his Governor, Arthus de Gouffier, father of the lively Bonnivet, François found an instructor cast in an entirely different mould to the cold and calculating de Chièvres.

By Gouffier, who had been present in the Italian campaigns of both Charles VIII. and Louis XII., all the ravishing charms of the dark-eyed beauties who had so greatly beguiled the Frenchmen were warmly depicted. Vivid likewise were the descriptions of the noble feats of arms which Arthus had witnessed and shared in, when Charles VIII. was gallantly fighting for his very life at Fornovo, or when Gaston de Foix was dyeing his bared arm crimson in the blood of the Spaniards at Ravenna. Filled up with these tales of love and war, instead of the dry instruction in statecraft imparted to the young Charles, the mind of François d'Angoulême was from an early age filled with emulation of the deeds of love and war wrought by the Paladins of old.

He longed to emulate the feats of Amadis de Gaule, the hero of chivalrous romance, surnamed, from his coat of arms, "le Chevalier du lion." Like this most ardent lover, he longed to rescue beautiful princesses, and tear them, at the point of the sword, from the arms of a successful rival. Again he dreamed of out-doing the glorious deeds of the noble Roland at Roncevaux, the

Paladin who only sounded his ivory horn to summon back Charlemagne to his assistance, when, after having surrounded himself with heaps of slain, his good blade Durandal was at length shivered in his grasp.

Such, then, was the early training of the Royal rivals, and their subsequent career showed that by neither was it forgotten. While one Marguerite, she of Austria, was exercising such an influence upon, and giving a political bent to the mind of the heir to so many kingdoms, the other Marguerite—she who was to become later the Queen of Navarre and grandmother of the gallant Henri IV.—was devoting herself, body and soul, to the worship of the high-spirited young French King.

The cult of “*la perle des Valois*” for the brother whom she idolised partook indeed more of the ardent passion of a lover than the calm affection of a sister.

This devotion was shared by Louise de Savoie, although the other passions and interests by which this self-seeking Princess was agitated, from the time when, at the early age of eighteen, she became a widow with two children, did not permit to her nature the continuous, absorbing, self-abnegation of Marguerite. Indeed, on at least two occasions this selfish mother ruined her son's prospects by diverting to her own personal use money which should have been remitted to pay his armies.

In his youth, however, the mother's affection for her son was ardently directed towards securing his future grandeur. She was, therefore, furiously jealous of Anne of Brittany, from whom she kept herself as much as possible apart, in her castle of Amboise, where she lived with her two children.

Upon each occasion that the hated Anne was enceinte, Louise, as her diary shows, trembled ; while, when only a girl or a boy still-born proved to be the result of the accouchement of the Queen of Louis XII., Louise openly rejoiced. Anne, who knew her ill-wishes, suspected Louise of possessing the evil eye, and of being, by her spells, the cause of all her misfortunes.

How Anne de Bretagne retaliated, by endeavouring to

marry her daughter Claude to the child-Archduke Charles, when she knew how greatly Louise desired to unite the girl to François, we have seen. Although she was likewise foiled in the attempt to deprive the son of Louise of the succession to the French Crown, Anne was able to have her revenge in a matter affecting the sister of François.

In the year 1508 an Embassy was sent from the eight-year-old Charles to demand the hand of Marguerite de Valois, then aged sixteen, when, greatly to the chagrin of Louise de Savoie, Anne of Brittany caused her husband, Louis XII., to refuse the alliance. She selected, instead of this great Prince, as a husband for Marguerite, a Duke of the Blood Royal, in the shape of Charles, Duc d'Alençon, to whom, whether she wished it or no, Louise was compelled to give her daughter.

As far as the respective ages of the couple to be married were concerned, the Duc was a far more suitable *parti* than the young Archduke for Marguerite, since he was just twenty. But although he reigned over his own appanage with Royal authority, and signed himself "Charles, by the Grace of God," the marriage was a great disappointment, especially as Henry VII. of England had likewise demanded the hand of Marguerite for the Prince who became Henry VIII. only a few months later.

The future Henry VIII. was not, however, Prince of Wales at the time that this offer was made, as his elder brother Arthur, who married Catherine of Aragon before he did so himself, was still alive. The married life of that Prince lasted, however, but a short time, and Henry, disappointed at not being accorded the hand of the fair French Marguerite, had to put up with his brother's Spanish widow as a substitute.

One feels inclined to wonder how the state of affairs in Europe would have been affected had Henry married the sister of the King of France instead of the youngest sister of the mother of Charles V. One thing, at all events, seems certain, which is that, had not the jealousy

of Anne de Bretagne prevented this very suitable match, Henry would not have been found for ever playing a low, underhand game, plotting with Charles against François at the very time when he pretended to be feeling most cordially towards him.

When Marguerite d'Angoulême was married to her first husband she was a very pretty girl, with blue eyes, highly arched eyebrows, a pronounced but well-shaped nose, and a tender smiling mouth. Like her brother, she was tall and her figure remarkably graceful.

Although of a very lively disposition, and always very free in her manners and conversation, as also in her writings, from her childhood Marguerite was a student who studied all the books that she could obtain and learned various languages.

Her early companion and instructress was the accomplished Duchesse de Châtillon, a lady whose career, we are told, was "not without adventures." One of these was to remarry in secret the Cardinal Jean du Bellay.

Under this somewhat erudite lady, Marguerite was prepared for the rôle which she afterwards played as much as she dared in the face of François, who was hard towards her. This was to protect all the free spirits of the day, all those who were struggling for enlightenment and Reform, for freedom from the old abuses of the Church. Although more inclined to write mystic nonsense to that past master of nonsense-writing, Briçonnet, Bishop of Meaux, than to wish herself to make any change in her religion, Marguerite always hated a monk, and never had much respect for a priest. This is very evident from the pages of the "Heptameron," wherein she makes priests, Carmelites, and Grey Friars the heroes of numberless grotesquely indecent adventures, in which they invariably attain their nefarious ends with maid, wife, or widow, by practising the grossest fraud and deception.

Marguerite takes care to let us know in her lubricous pages that, although she was a Princess of "*moult joyeuse vie,*" nevertheless was she "*toutefois femme de bien.*"

Although she seems generally to have been taken at



From a lithograph by N. H. Jacob.

MARGUERITE DE VALOIS, SISTER OF FRANÇOIS I.

her word, it is difficult for the modern reader of such scandalous tales not to wonder at times. One asks, if the highly born author of such frankly lewd stories concerning many great lords and ladies personally known to herself, did not perchance protest just a little bit too much where her own immaculate virtue was concerned ?

It may, of course, have been that, while imbued with the gross impurity of mind common to those among whom she lived, Marguerite nevertheless remained a singular example of personal purity in the midst of impure surroundings. If it was so, let us honour her for her self-restraint, by which she remained virtuous in spite of having two unsatisfactory husbands.

In her strangely constituted mind, apparently inclined towards Protestantism, she mixed up religion, love, and mysticism. The Reformed religion, in the days of its infancy, undoubtedly owed much to the protection of the amiable Queen of Navarre, whose Court at Nérac or Pau was the refuge alike of the humanists and poets, such as Erasmus or Marot, and Lefebvre d'Étaples and Gérard Roussel, followers of the doctrines of Luther. It was indeed the home of liberty of every description, *Fay ce que voudras* being the motto of the Court of Navarre, where freedom from moral restraint and religious freedom walked hand in hand. Marguerite's second husband, Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre, who was eleven years younger than herself, was a notable offender against the moral code, and, while his wife was exerting herself to protect Calvin, Louis Berquin, Lefebvre and other heretics, this gallant soldier passed the greater part of his time in prosecuting various foolish love-affairs. He did not, however, neglect to improve the condition of his dominions.

The Duc d'Alençon, the first husband of the Princess Marguerite, was found by her very unsatisfactory from an intellectual point of view ; but as all her interests, hopes, and aspirations were, during his lifetime, entirely centred in her brother François I., and as she was constantly present at the Court, of which she formed the

most brilliant ornament, she was able to console herself for this lack of sympathy in her home.

How far, indeed, she carried her adulation for her brother, how much she admired him more than any other human being, is evident from the extravagant praise which she showers upon François in her poems. In these she proclaims that, "Heaven, earth, and sea contemplate his unparalleled beauty, while God has endowed him with perfect knowledge—in short, that he alone is worthy to be King."

CHAPTER IV

Bayard, Sans Peur et Sans Reproche

THERE is no story of the days of which we write more interesting than that of "Le Bon Chevalier Sans Paour Et Sans Reprouche," as the gallant Pierre de Terrail, Seigneur de Bayard, is termed by the honest chronicler who witnessed many of his noble feats.

Bayard was really a most remarkable man, one whose generosity of heart was only equalled by his extraordinary courage and prowess as a fighting man.

Although the "Gentil Seigneur" was but once entrusted with the command of an army, and seems to have been usually a mere free-lance, going wherever he was likely to be most useful, his very presence in a place—his name alone—was worth an army.

Upon one occasion a leader of the Imperial forces, hearing that the Knight had thrown himself into a city which he was besieging, exclaimed regretfully that his arrival alone increased the garrison by two thousand men.

One of the remarkable points about this true soldier was his possession of great military cunning, and likewise prompt decision. Thus, by long-headedness, he sometimes succeeded in overreaching a foe when force would not suffice; and on other occasions, by his rapid grasp of the situation, with only a few men he swiftly seized an important point, from whence he was able to prevent the advance of an army.

Born at the Château de Bayard in Dauphiné in 1489, at the age of thirteen Pierre de Terrail entered, as page, the service of the Duke Charles II. of Savoy, father of

Philibert, the second husband of Marguerite of Austria. The King of France, Charles VIII., saw the boy in the following year, and asked him to perform some evolutions on horseback ; when so wonderful was his skill that the King begged from the Duke his page and his horse also.

Three years later the seventeen-year-old lad was appointed by the Comte de Ligny an *homme d'armes* in the *Compagnie d'Ordonnance de gens d'armes* that he commanded. The companies of *gens d'armes* were then each composed of fifteen mounted lances, furnished. That is to say, that each furnished lance represented six men on horseback : the *homme d'armes*, or master, the page or varlet, three archers, and a coutillier, or knife-bearer, and the "men-at-arms" were always of gentle blood.

Until after the formation of the brave French infantry, which, under Gaston de Foix, performed such gallant deeds before Ravenna, no Frenchman would serve in any but these mounted corps. Not long after Pierre de Terrail became a man-at-arms the companies of *gens d'armes* were gradually augmented, until they reached sixty and eighty lances, furnished. Bayard himself commanded, later, a company of one hundred lances, which represented six hundred mounted men. The young man made his first mark in the world by entering the lists against the Comte de Vaudrey, a noble Burgundian who had given a tourney to amuse the King. To the astonishment of all, fighting both on horseback and on foot, the stripling vanquished the doughty giver of the entertainment in the presence of the whole Court.

Shortly after this brilliant opening of his career Bayard gave a tourney himself, at Aire in Picardy, where the company of the Comte de Ligny was quartered. He invited all comers to take part in three jousts, in which they were to fight with lances without buttons on the points, and to give twelve sword-blows apiece with sharp swords—all on horseback—and offered a prize of a bracelet engraved with his arms. On the morrow the fighting was to be continued, the matches being on foot, with lances, swords, and hatchets—the prize to be a

diamond. At the lists Bayard and other Knights gave and received many rude strokes, but, in spite of the sharpened weapons, no one seems to have been seriously damaged. When the lords and ladies were all assembled at a supper given by Bayard at the end of the second day, both the men who had fought in the tourney and the women voted unanimously that he himself was the conqueror in both days' jousting, and should keep his own prizes. The modest young host, however, refused to accept this decision, and therefore gave the prize for the first day to the Seigneur de Bellabre, while that for the second day of the tournament he awarded to the Scotch captain, David de Fogas.

Bayard's first experience of war was during the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. When, at the battle of Fornovo, the retreating King, with vastly inferior forces, was endeavouring to cut his way through thirty thousand of the enemy under Gonzaga, Charles very narrowly escaped capture. Mounted on his splendid black horse, Savoy, given him by the Duke, he was at one time completely separated from all his followers. He fought bravely, however, and, aided by the splendid qualities of his charger, which had but one eye, managed to maintain himself until assistance came. Bayard at this time was likewise in the thick of the battle, and covered himself with glory. He had two horses killed under him, but captured one of the enemy's standards, which he presented to the King. Thereupon Charles VIII. ordered the sum of five hundred crowns to be given to the young Knight.

During the succeeding campaign under Louis XII. the first exploit of Bayard, who was then aged twenty-four, was positively unique. After a furious four-hours' running combat on horseback with some of the cavaliers of Ludovico, surnamed "The Moor," Duke of Milan, the enemy, who were commanded by the Captain Cazzachio, fled towards the city. Carried away by the ardour of the pursuit, and, although his comrades shouted to him to return, Bayard, while still cutting and thrusting, followed

the fugitives through the city gates into Milan. Alone he pursued the foe through the streets, until they arrived under the windows of the Duke's Palace. There the people cried out that he was a Frenchman, knowing him by the distinguishing sign of a white cross, which the French wore over their armour, whereby they should know one another, for there was very little uniformity among troops in those days.

Bayard was surrounded by people of the town shouting "Kill! Kill!" whereupon the hunted Captain Cazzachio made him a prisoner, and, having disarmed him, took him to his quarters and treated him kindly, having been surprised at such valour in one so young—for his fury had been extreme. Ludovico sending for the young Frenchman, Cazzachio lent him some of his own clothing to appear in before the Duke, who asked him, "What on earth are you doing in the city of Milan?"

Bayard answered calmly that his comrades had been wiser than he had, or he would not have been there alone to become a prisoner. Not, he added, that he could be in better hands than those of the worthy Captain Cazzachio. After some conversation the generous Ludovico, being pleased with Bayard, ordered him to be set at liberty.

Thereupon Cazzachio sent for his armour, his arms and horse, and he was armed in the actual presence of the Duke; after which he was sent, with a safe-conduct, back to the town where he had been in garrison, a considerable distance from Milan. As we have already mentioned, it was soon the turn of the unhappy Ludovico to become a prisoner near Novara, when the Duke did not find in Louis XII. a gaoler to treat him as generously as he had treated Bayard, but one who left him to rot in prison until he died.

In the following campaign, when Louis XII. sent an army to conquer Naples in combination with the troops of Ferdinand of Aragon, Bayard served under the Captain Louis d'Ars, the lieutenant of his old protector, the Comte de Ligny. The French army was com-

manded by Robert Stewart, Seigneur d'Aubigny, who soon fell out with the Spanish Commander, Gonsalvo da Cordova. Bayard, tired of garrisoning a small place, one day led out a party of his friends in search of adventures, when he met Gonsalvo's cousin, the Count of Soto Mayor, on a similar quest. After a vigorous combat the victory rested with Bayard. He pursued Soto Mayor, most of whose companions were dead, shouting: "Turn! man-at-arms, turn! Do not die disgracefully by a blow from behind."

The Count turned and charged Bayard, and the pair had exchanged fifty blows when the horse of the Spaniard fell.

"Yield, or you are a dead man," cried the Chevalier.

"To whom shall I yield?"

"To the Captain Bayard."

The Count gave up his sword.

In spite of being put upon his parole, Soto Mayor escaped before paying his ransom, but, being recaptured, Bayard reproached him with his breach of faith, but did not ill-treat his prisoner. When, after a fortnight, the Count's ransom arrived, the Chevalier distributed it all to the soldiers of the garrison, then, with every courtesy, he set Soto Mayor at liberty.

Shortly afterwards word came that the Count was complaining of the hardships with which he had been treated by Bayard. The result was a courteous challenge to single combat, which was accepted. The cunning Soto Mayor, however, requested to be allowed the choice of arms, which being granted he selected, instead of the lance on horseback, with which Bayard was known to be invincible, daggers and swords on foot—the vizors of the combatants to remain open.

The Knights met, surrounded by their witnesses, when, after a furious encounter, during which the armour-clad duellists grappled body to body, Bayard, who had already driven his sword-point right through the Count's armour, finished his adversary off by a dagger-blow in the face.

“Yield, or you are a dead man, Don Alfonso!” cried the French Knight.

But when the “Gentil Seigneur” found that his adversary was dead he joined his lamentations to those of the Spanish friends of the man whom he had slain in this, their second, personal encounter.

In a subsequent combat, when thirteen Spaniards, thirsting to avenge Soto Mayor, challenged thirteen Frenchmen to fight on horseback, Bayard and his friend, named d’Oroze, alone remained alive on the French side.

The Spaniards having commenced the combat by killing the horses of their foes, Bayard and his friend made a rampart of the horses and corpses and fought for four hours, until night put an end to the combat.

Towards the end of this campaign the French were defeated by Gonsalvo, first at Seminara and then at Cerignola.

Eventually the “Great Captain” made a furious attack upon the *débris* of the French endeavouring to escape over the river Garigliano, to take refuge in Gaeta, forty miles north-west of Naples. During this most unhappy day for France the feats of the Bon Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche* shone out with their wonted radiance. Single-handed, he defended a bridge against a whole Spanish troop, and thereby saved a part of the retreating army. His chronicler, who published his relation, in 1527, three years after the death of Pierre de Terrail, says: “Bayard, with lance at rest, posted himself at the side of a bridge, and, like a furious lion, dealt such terrible blows, that at the start he overthrew four men-at-arms, of whom two fell into the river and were seen no more. The Spaniards, animated by the loss of their comrades, surround Bayard, and attack him with fury. But he, sword in hand, keeps them all off, and retreating, on horseback as he was, against the barrier of the bridge, gave them so much to do that they thought they had the devil to fight with and not a man.”

In this manner Bayard held the bridge by himself until some of his comrades returned to his assistance, and he

and his commander and friend, Louis d'Ars, were eventually the last men to leave Neapolitan territory.

With a few men-at-arms, whom they inspired with their own valour, these gallant cavaliers shut themselves up in Venosa, the town where the poet Horace was born.

They refused to quit this vantage-point until formal orders arrived from the King to return to France, when they left proudly, with their ensigns flying and with lances at rest. Not long after this retreat Bayard was again in Italy, and attacked the city of Genoa, which had revolted against the French King. Here, taking a hundred and twenty of his chosen friends, he scaled a mountain, and, after driving back the advance-guard of the Genoese, stormed a fort from which he drove three hundred men. Genoa then surrendered, when the Doge, Paul de Novi, was decapitated by order of Louis XII., and Genoa became once more French territory. At the neighbouring town of Savona, Ferdinand the Catholic, meeting the King of France, made a great deal of both the renowned Louis d'Ars and Bayard. "My brother," he said to Louis XII., "he is indeed a lucky Prince who possesses two such Knights."

It is impossible to relate in a few pages one hundredth part of the gallant exploits of Bayard, a Knight the purity of whose morals was only equalled by his daring and resource. In Navarre, at the battle of Agnadello, at the sieges of Padua and at Brescia, in the Duchy of Ferrara and at Ravenna, he was ever to the fore; and although he received some terrible wounds, was always to be seen again in the saddle before he had half recovered from their effects. We must not, moreover, forget to relate that when Henry VIII. descended into Artois, in the year 1513, he nearly fell into the hands of the bold Chevalier.

Bayard saw the young English King surrounded, near Thérouanne, by a large number of foot-soldiers, about twelve thousand, without a single horseman. Bayard was about to charge them with his fine force of trained

men-at-arms, but the Seigneur de Piennes refused to accompany him. "Do as you choose," said de Piennes, "but it will be without my consent. The King has ordered me only to hold the country, but to risk nothing." As Bayard was not in sufficient force to charge alone, Henry VIII. escaped, to join forty thousand men from Flanders, sent by Marguerite with the impecunious Emperor Maximilian, who had engaged himself as a volunteer under Henry at a wage of one hundred crowns a day.

CHAPTER V

Bayard and the Preludes to Marignano

HAD Bayard but succeeded in capturing Henry VIII. at Théroouanne, as he probably would have done if he had charged the footmen who surrounded the King, France would have been spared one of the worst blots which ever disfigured her escutcheon.

The encounter at Guinegate, the shameful Battle of the Spurs, took place but a few days later. In this affair all the mounted chivalry of France were seized with a sudden panic upon finding themselves unexpectedly confronted by a body of English infantry and artillery. The Duc de Longueville, the brave Chabannes, Maréchal de la Palice, and Bayard, being unable to rally the flying men-at-arms, were compelled to follow them as they tore away headlong in a tumultuous rout.

The cavalry which fled in this disgraceful manner had been engaged in making a feint and skirmishing for awhile upon one side of the town of Théroouanne, while eight hundred Albanian horsemen in the service of France had gallantly cut their way into the beleaguered city, each carrying a sack of provisions on his saddle before him.

Bayard, however, could not be induced to run far. Coming to a halt by a small bridge over a deep stream, he resolved to hold it, but not alone, as he had done at the river Garigliano.

“My friends,” he cried, “let us stop here and hold this bridge. I will promise you that the enemy will not take it from us in an hour.”

Fifteen of his comrades, who had already been holding back with him in the face of the pursuing cavalry, occupied the post, and gallantly they kept back the men of Burgundy and Hainault who repeatedly charged them, until at last they were left alone by the wearied foe, who halted to rest in front of the bridge after having lost many of their number at the hands of Bayard.

Two hundred fresh troops, however, having crossed the river at a mill some distance down stream, suddenly came and took the Chevalier and his brave companions in rear.

“Comrades,” said the Knight prudently, “I think it would be as well if we were to give ourselves up separately to any of the decent-looking men-at-arms whom we can see in front, who will hold us for ransom, for we are a little bit outnumbered, and none of our own people seem inclined to return and help us. If those rascally English archers get hold of us they will certainly cut our throats, and, above all, our horses have not a kick left in them.”

“Agreed,” cried his companions, and each rode forward to deliver himself into the custody of one of their late antagonists. Bayard, however, who had his wits about him, spurred his tired horse to where he saw, at some distance, a wearied gentleman who had divested himself of his armour and was taking a sandwich under a tree.

“Yield, man-at-arms!” he cried, “or I will kill you.” And he placed his lance at the astonished warrior’s throat.

This gentleman replied: “Certainly I yield, since I must, but to whom have I the honour to give up my sword?”

“To the Captain Bayard, who in his turn now surrenders himself to you. Here is his sword—he now becomes your prisoner.”

The puzzled officer, a Burgundian, had some difficulty in understanding the situation. Bayard explained how matters stood, and stipulated further that his arms should

be returned to him as they retired together, to defend himself from the English cut-throats, camp-followers, and other robbers who killed and plundered the wounded. To this the gentleman agreed, and in fact they had both to defend themselves as they left the field, side by side, from several bands of plundering rascals.

Having arrived in the camp of Henry VIII., the gentleman lodged the Chevalier in his own tent with him, and treated him with every courtesy.

A morning or two later, the Chevalier remarked casually to his host : "My good friend, I am beginning to be very much bored remaining here doing nothing ; I shall be much obliged if you will kindly conduct me to the camp of the King, my master."

The Burgundian gentleman stared : "But you have not said a word about paying your ransom !"

"Nor you of yours," responded Bayard. "Are not you my prisoner ? was not your life at my mercy, and did I not spare you ? You gave me your parole, and, if you do not keep it, you will have to fight me."

The astonished gentleman, not at all anxious for a personal combat with the great Bayard, suggested that they had better refer the matter to higher authority. As it happened, the old Emperor Maximilian, who knew how the whole army was rejoicing at the capture of the Chevalier, sent for him and received him with the greatest courtesy.

"Would to Heaven, my good friend Captain Bayard, that we had a few warriors of your stamp !" observed Max ; "we should not be long before we were able to pay back the King, your master, for a few of the dirty tricks with which he has served us. But how is it that you are here ? If memory does not fail us, we have met before ; and we seem to have heard that the Chevalier Bayard was never known to fly."

"Sire, if I had fled I should not be here now, and we have certainly met before on various occasions, which I will have the honour to recall to your memory."

While they were chatting together, King Henry VIII.

happened to drop in to the Emperor's tent, and, after first expressing his delight at meeting Bayard, the young English Monarch began to make fun of the Chevalier with reference to the rout of Guinegate. The honest Max likewise joined in the badinage, but Bayard, without losing his temper, replied that it was not fair to jeer at the French men-at-arms, as not only were they without either infantry or artillery to support them, but that they had been distinctly ordered only to make a feint, and not to fight.

"Will it please your Majesties to remember," he added, "that, although I do not consider myself worthy to share it, the reputation of the French noblesse does not date from yesterday."

"You!" replied Henry. "If only the rest of the French gentlemen were like you, Chevalier, we might have packed up, bag and baggage, and left the siege of Théroouanne long since. But never mind that matter, now we have the good luck to be able to keep you out of mischief, since you are our prisoner."

"With all respect to both your Majesties," rejoined Bayard, "I think that you are mistaken, and that, according to all the rules of the game of war, I am the prisoner of neither of you."

"How's that?" asked Henry VIII., laughing. "Will you kindly explain?"

When Bayard related the circumstances of his capture, the Burgundian officer confirmed them as being exact.

The Emperor and Henry looked at each other, when Max remarked decisively: "It seems to us that the Chevalier is in the right, and, if there is any one here who is a prisoner, it is this Burgundian gentleman. Looking at the matter all round, though, we think that each ought to release the other from his parole, and the Captain Bayard must be allowed to leave us, much as we shall regret to see him depart."

"Oh, if you say so, Emperor," remarked Henry VIII. sulkily, "I suppose there is nothing for it for a young King like us but to defer to your superior years and

experience of the rules of war. It seems to us, however, if we let our good friend Bayard go like this we shall not have long in which to regret him—we shall behold his face again only too soon for our own comfort.”

“We will arrange that matter,” replied Max good-humouredly.

“Captain Bayard, my friend, if our brother the King of England and ourselves agree to allow you to deprive us of the pleasure of your society in this way, do you think that you could be content not to seek us again except in the way of friendship for—let us say six weeks? Of course time will hang a little heavily on your hands, but what would you say to a safe-conduct to visit all the neighbouring cities of our grandson, the Archduke Charles’s possessions of Flanders? No doubt our good daughter, the Regent Marguerite, will be pleased to see you, and likewise many others.”

Bayard threw himself on his knee, kissed the hands of both the Monarchs, and quitted their presence with regret, to go off and pass a six-weeks’ holiday in the Low Countries.

He did not leave, however, without having first received brilliant offers from Henry to induce him to enter his service. It was in vain, however, for the English King to represent that, by old claims from the time of Henry V., his right to the throne of France was every bit as good as that of Louis XII., and that since, moreover, Bayard belonged to Dauphiné, a country which had not long been French, there would be no treason in his changing masters.

The Gentil Seigneur refused to see matters in that light, and courteously declined to transfer his allegiance, in the same way as, after the battle of the Garigliano at the end of 1503, he had already refused to accept the magnificent proposals of Pope Julius II. to become the Captain-General of the forces of the Church.

When, by the latter part of the summer of 1515, François had arranged matters at home and on his frontiers to his satisfaction, he got together at Lyon a

large army for the invasion and recapture of Milan. Italy, the country of his thoughts, beckoned to him with irresistible force. His dreams of new loves, of languishing dark-eyed beauties falling fainting into his arms, were mixed with ideas of conquest, while the artistic side of his nature was appealed to by the tales he had heard of the lovely marble palaces and gardens, the statues and the paintings. From the beginning to the end of his career, thoughts of Milan never left his head, and, time and time again, François I. sacrificed more important and practical interests lying close to his hand for the sake of this eternal chimæra of Italy in the distance.

Before proceeding to cross the Alps in person, François sent ahead the Maréchal de la Palice and Bayard, who arrived, by a mountain-path never previously traversed by cavalry, safely into the country of Piedmont, in the Marquisate of Saluzzo.

The Republic of Genoa, after undergoing various vicissitudes and changes of masters, had recently been threatened by Maximilian Sforza, the reigning Duke of Milan. It accordingly offered itself to France, and François I. thereupon became the ruling Seigneur of this useful maritime city, whose Doge made all preparations to give shelter and support to any French troops landed there by French flotillas.

Other useful allies François had, in the shape of those two warlike Princes of the German frontier and Flanders, the Duc de Gueldre and the Duc Robert de la Marck, Seigneur of Sedan and Bouillon, who was known by the soubriquet of the Wild Boar of the Ardennes. The Duc de Lorraine, another frontier Prince, had likewise thrown in his lot with France. With these three allies there came a splendid body of twenty thousand German lansquenets, who were armed similarly to the Swiss who were about to fight, under Maximilian Sforza, against France. Owing to an old quarrel with Louis XII., who had refused to pay the accustomed subsidies to the Helvetian Cantons at a moment when he thought that he had no further need for their services, the hardy mountaineers had flatly

refused to reply to the friendly overtures made to them by François on the very day after he had succeeded to the throne. Not content with informing the French King that his envoys would not be respected if they set foot on Swiss territory, the Diet of Zurich gave him formal notice to resign his pretensions to the Ducal Crown upon which he had set all his ambitions in Milan.

It was the antagonism of this race of hardy mountaineers which was likely to prove a terrible stumbling-block to the advance into Italy, as their forces were found to be posted in great numbers on the passes of Mont Cenis and Mont Genève. By these routes alone it was thought that the French army of sixty thousand men could possibly cross the Alps, especially as it had with it seventy-two large cannons of great weight, and a great quantity of small pieces carried on the backs of mules. Among his troops François had also two thousand five hundred heavily armed *gens d'armes*, furnished in the proportion of eight men to a lance, and the difficulty of conducting these twenty thousand mounted men across the Alps would, to all ordinary commanders, have appeared insurmountable. Not so, however, to the inexperienced and light-hearted François, who, with the insouciance of youth, merrily embarked upon an expedition which might have appalled a Hannibal. Emulating the feats of the great Carthaginian commander, who upwards of two thousand years earlier had traversed the same snow-clad mountains with twenty-seven elephants, the young French King attempted this all but impossible feat, and, like Hannibal, succeeded.

Very luckily for him, after the Spanish defeat at Ravenna in 1512 the clever captain, Pietro Navarro, had remained a prisoner in the hands of the French. Owing to the meanness of Ferdinand of Aragon, Navarro's ransom had never been paid, and he accordingly offered his valuable services to François I., who gladly employed him.

He got together twenty thousand infantry from

various parts of France, as far separated as Picardy, Brittany, and Gascony, and likewise organised a splendid corps of three thousand *pionniers* and sappers. Having learned from an Alpine chamois hunter of a mountain-track well to the south of the passes held by the Swiss, the ingenious Pietro Navarro set to work to clear a road for the army.

For the first time in warfare blasting operations were put into practice; huge rocks which barred the way were destroyed, and tunnels were pierced by the combined use of gunpowder and the crowbar. In addition, long wooden galleries of doubtful security were erected along the sheer faces of precipices, while bridges were thrown over the most awful ravines, at the bottom of whose darksome recesses could be heard the rushing of wild mountain torrents.

Across all of these obstacles were conveyed the seventy-two great bronze cannons, while, save for a few accidents by which armoured men and horses were dashed to pieces down frozen slopes, or carried into eternity by roaring avalanches, the rest of the forces crossed likewise in safety. On the fifth day from the start on the French side the triple chain of the Alps had been traversed, and the great army had descended the lower slopes on the Italian side and reached the plains in the Marquisate of Saluzzo, which lay at the gates of Lombardy.

It had taken five days to cross, and the allied army had passed the eternal mountains with but three days' provisions! Who shall say that the army of the twenty-year-old Francois I., the son of the Valois, is not as worthy of lasting renown as that of Hannibal, the valiant son of Hamilcar Barca?

To the rapidity of the feat, and the utter surprise of the Swiss by the brilliant action of Bayard with the advanced guard, is to be attributed the fact that the execution of this wonderful undertaking was not accompanied by some fearful disaster. For, had but the Swiss blocked the way at the exit, the whole long-drawn-out force, without food or room to fight, would have been

penned up in those mountain gorges, or on those freezing peaks, and been starved to death or crushed by rocks hurled down upon them from the heights.

Bayard, however, prevented any such a disaster by the promptitude with which he seized those who were on their way to warn the Swiss. When he and La Palice suddenly descended with their men-at-arms, like goats from the mountains, into the Marquisate of Saluzzo, he learned at once that the gallant Roman, Prospero Colonna, the Lieutenant-General of Pope Leo X., was occupying the district, and was about to repair to join the Swiss forces of Maximilian Sforza, watching the passes at Susa and Pignerolo. The former Cardinal, Giovanni de' Medici, who had become Pope at the age of thirty-eight, had recently joined a league with Maximilian Sforza and the Catholic King, against the French, and had Colonna reached the Swiss unmolested with the news that the first cavaliers of François were appearing in Piedmont, the rest of the French army would never have escaped from the recesses of the Alps. Bayard was, however, too quick for Colonna, of whom he learned that he had, for the moment, only seven or eight hundred horsemen with him.

The gallant Chevalier immediately determined to follow up and attack the celebrated Roman captain, who, although he was informed of the sudden arrival of the French men-at-arms, never dreamed of such an eventuality, and started on his march to Pignerolo in most leisurely fashion.

Bayard and his companions, Humbercourt, La Palice, and d'Aubigny, just missed Prospero at the Castle of Carmagnola, when the others, being disappointed, advised a halt to rest their horses; but Bayard persuaded them all to push on at once. They soon came in contact with twenty cavaliers, sent back by Colonna to observe their movements while he halted with his main force at Villafranca to dine.

Pushing on rapidly after the flying Italians, the French men-at-arms entered the town of Villafranca with them before the gates could be closed. After a hurried and

sanguinary combat with those in the place, they took the gallant Colonna prisoner, before a force of four thousand Swiss, only about two miles away, had time to march to his assistance, although they had been warned by mounted men of the danger.

Taking with them Colonna and three other well-known captains as prisoners, and fifty thousand ducats' worth of booty, capturing also seven hundred splendid Spanish horses, the French retired from the town of Villafranca by one gate as the four thousand Swiss, some on horse and some on foot, marched in by another.

The Swiss, struck with stupefaction at this sudden onslaught, and discouraged by the loss of Colonna, instead of advancing to resist the approach of François and his army, retired upon Milan and Novara. The greater number of them, not having received the pay promised to them by the Pope and the King of Spain, then mutinied and wished to retire at once to their native country. François, made aware of this fact, thought that it would be wiser to buy the Swiss than to fight them. Some of his nobles resisted this determination, but the young King answered them: "I will not buy with the blood of my subjects that which I can have just as easily for money."

Negotiations were at once opened with the men of the Confederation, who, having among them some leaders from the Cantons of Berne and Valais who were favourable to France, for whom they had formerly fought, were ready enough to accept the French King's fine new gold pieces. They argued: "What is the use of our getting ourselves killed, or killing the Frenchmen, our old friends? If we do so, who will profit but our enemies the Germans? Moreover, neither the Pope nor Ferdinand of Aragon will give us a ducat, while, as for the Duke Maximilian Sforza, he is drained dry, there is not a coin left in his coffers. Now, the French have got plenty of gold with them, which we can have without even fighting and risking our lives for it, so by all means let us take it."

Both sides being agreed, François I. generously offered to give the Swiss far more than they asked for, and made a bargain also to buy Bellinzona and Lugano from them, places which they held at the foot of the Alps.

Unfortunately, just when everything had been so beautifully arranged to the mutual satisfaction of François I. and the Swiss, an incident occurred which upset the apple-cart completely.

CHAPTER VI

The Battle of Marignano

SEPTEMBER 13TH, 1515

GIOVANNI DE' MEDICI was at the same time a literary and artistic man and one wedded to field-sports, magnificent banquets, buffoonery, and stage-plays of the very grossest description.

While brilliant and cultured in the highest degree, he was cunning and unreliable, and his extravagance was unbounded. In the year of the accession of François, and his first invasion of Italy, Leo X. showed his usual trickiness of character by trimming, until he should see who should become the master.

While, therefore he joined the league against the young French Monarch, and got a large force together which he did not pay, he secretly gave instructions to the commanders of his army to hold themselves aloof until they should see who was likely to obtain the upper hand. He happened, however, to be to a considerable extent under the influence of the rabid Mathieu Shiner, the Cardinal of Sion, in Switzerland, a priest who hated everything French worse than poison. Just after François had made such a satisfactory arrangement by which, instead of fighting them, he had agreed to pay off the Swiss army of Milan, this rancorous Cardinal arrived, by way of the Saint Gothard Pass, with twenty thousand fresh Swiss who had been no parties to the proposed amicable arrangement, of which he determined to prevent the execution.

The Spanish troops from Naples, who saw themselves menaced by the Venetian allies of François, under the great General, Bartolomeo Alviano, were not inclined to pay any attention to the furious exhortations of Cardinal Shiner, but, like the Papal army, preferred to remain in a state of observation. The newly arrived Swiss were, however, of another way of thinking.

These, greedy for their share of the booty of France and of Italy, cried out loudly that to give up Bellinzona and Lugano, to yield the passes of the Ticino, by which they were accustomed to have access to the so often despoiled plains of Lombardy, was worse than shameful.

“Since the French have so much money with them, let us attack them and take it all, every ducat of it,” they cried to the partisans of peace.

Mathieu Shiner likewise mounted a pulpit, and, in the most furious manner, exhorted all of the Swiss of both parties to fight. He cried out loudly for blood, shrieking, with wild gesticulations: “Would that I might wash my hands in, would that I might satisfy my thirst with the blood of the French!”

He ended up this strange discourse for a churchman by a falsehood: “The French are even now advancing upon us—we are all in danger of our lives.”

This settled the matter; the Swiss of both parties rushed to arms—and their united numbers exceeded thirty thousand men.

François was then in position at Marignano, some ten miles from Milan. The Swiss were in front of him, the Spanish and Pontifical armies behind him. The banner of Saint Mark, in the hands of Alviano close at hand, threatened, it is true, these two hostile forces, but the Spanish foot-soldiers were brave, disciplined, and mostly veterans of many a bloody field; it was more than doubtful, therefore, whether the Venetians could stand up against them should they be attacked.

The French army, with half a dozen commanders, can scarcely have been said to have had any Commander-in-Chief.

There was François I., with no experience, and the Connétable de Bourbon with plenty. There was the Maréchal Trivulzi and Pedro Navarro, likewise La Trémouille, a General who had seen many a battle-field. Bayard and La Palice were also present, but not so that hardy veteran the Duc de Gueldre, who, by the cunning action of Marguerite of Austria and Maximilian, had, despite the amicable arrangement made by François with his frontier neighbours, been suddenly recalled to defend his own dominions. All of his German lansquenets were therefore, at the last moment, left under the command of the Lorraine Duc, Claude de Guise,¹ a nephew of the Duc de Gueldre. The lansquenets, finding themselves left under the orders of a chief who could not speak their language, cried out bitterly that they were being betrayed, and were about to be handed over to the Swiss to be butchered, so that the King of France should be absolved from paying them the sums of money which he owed them. The Germans showed accordingly a strong disinclination to fight, and they being the heavy infantry and alone armed in a similar manner to the Swiss, left François I. to rely upon the light-armed French infantry under Pedro Navarro. Fortunately the Duc de Gueldre, in departing, had left behind him the Seigneur de Fleurange, the oft-times wounded son of his neighbour, the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, a young knight who was a celebrated leader of the German "Black Bands."

To employ to proper advantage his magnificent mounted force of Gendarmerie, in which served all the nobility of France, the young King required a level plain in which they could manœuvre. Instead of which there was only a causeway in the midst of marshes along which the men-at-arms would be able to charge. The Commander of the King's artillery posted, however, a great number of his heavy guns to his right, while

¹ Claude, son of René II., Sovereign Duc de Lorraine, was the first Duc de Guise. He was father of the warlike Duc François, and grandfather of Mary, Queen of Scots, and of the famous Henri de Guise, murdered by King Henri III. at Blois in December 1588.

Pietro Navarro threw up entrenchments around the cannon, behind which he placed his light-armed Basques, Gascons, and the men from Picardy. So convinced was the twenty-year-old François that his arrangement to buy off the Swiss would hold good, that he could not believe that there would be any battle until he had been warned several times that the Alpine mountaineers were actually approaching.

It was only upon the third announcement, made to him by Fleurange in person, that the King deigned to take the matter seriously. The son of Robert de la Marck found the Constable de Bourbon just sitting down to eat his dinner, while François was admiring himself in a magnificent suit of German armour which he was trying on. The plucky young King, all armour-clad as he was, embraced Fleurange for the good news that he brought, then said that, before entering into the conflict he must be dubbed a Knight.¹ At the same time he begged Alviano, who happened to be present in the camp, to hurry off and bring up his Venetian troops, which were at some distance. For the ceremony of being received into the order of Knighthood it was imagined that François I. would send for one of the greatest Princes of the realm. On the contrary, he declared that he would only receive that dignity from the hands of one beloved by all, the Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche*.

The modest Bayard made many objections before, making the King kneel before him, he struck him on the shoulder with his sword, and concluded the ceremony by observing, "May God will it, Sire, that never may you fly before your enemies in war!"

Very shortly afterwards the Swiss were seen advancing. They halted at a little distance, and, under the Papal banner, received absolution from the Cardinal de Sion. Immediately after this they were charged by the mounted cavaliers of France, who, in spite of all their desperate

¹ Some chronicles mention the fact of King François being knighted, not before, but after the battle of Marignano.

courage, were driven back by the enormous mass of heavily armed footmen to whom they found themselves opposed. This check could only have been expected owing to the narrow front of the charging Gendarmerie. The Swiss struck the horses with their lances and pulled the riders down with the crooks of their halberds, then, dashing furiously forward, threw themselves upon the hated German infantry standing sullenly under their black banners. The light-armed French infantry rushed impetuously to help the Germans, who were getting the worst of it, while the King, at the head of two hundred men-at-arms, created a diversion by falling upon the Swiss in flank. The details of the battle of Marignano are excessively conflicting, especially as François I., in his letter describing the furious conflict to his mother, boastingly made out that most of the execution was done by the mounted men, whereas there is ample proof to the contrary.

The battle lasted for two days, and one of the most notable incidents of the first day's fighting was the terrible charge made by the Swiss, by moonlight, on the murderous guns of Pietro Navarro. Around these guns attackers and attacked were piled up in heaps, until the cannons could no longer be fired on account of the mountain of dead and dying lying in front of their muzzles. Under the clear rays of the moon the carnage continued, until the King, mistaking an immense body of the Swiss for his own men, suddenly found himself surrounded.

Three hundred horsemen and several thousand lansquenets came to his assistance, when François contrived to fall back on his guns as the Constable de Bourbon made a determined onslaught with the French infantry and some fresh men-at-arms, and, so said François, cut five or six thousand of the Swiss in pieces. This ended the first day's fighting, which left the Swiss in possession of a part of the French camp. They had at one time occupied the whole of it, but the greater number were killed or driven out again, before, upon the moon sinking,

the wearied warriors on each side drew apart to rest until daybreak before recommencing the struggle.

It seems highly probable that, had it not been for the action of Cardinal Shiner in bringing up large quantities of wine and provisions, this first conflict would have ended by the capture of the King, whom a body of the Swiss could observe, with but a small following, among a battery of artillery. When the news spread among them, however, that some barrels of wine and food had arrived from Milan, the unconquered Swiss fell back to feast themselves upon the welcome provisions.

The French, on the other hand, had neither wine nor food. For prudence' sake, their camp-fires were extinguished, and the King had to drink only water so mixed with blood that it made him vomit. During the night his gallant captains, instead of resting, made new dispositions of their troops, and especially of their artillery, with the result that when the dawn broke the Swiss found the mouths of cannon, big and little, facing them everywhere.

The Cardinal of Sion had vainly imagined, at the end of the first day's struggle, that the battle had been won by the Swiss. He, accordingly, wrote off this news to the Pope in Rome, where it was received by Leo X. with the greatest signs of delight, and he gave orders for general rejoicing and the illumination of the city. It was not long, however, before the Venetian Ambassador, Marino Giorgi, had the pleasure of being able to announce to the Pope that his rejoicings had been a little bit premature. The battle had commenced on September 13th, 1515, and on the morrow it was continued with desperate determination. On this second day of the great fight the lansquenets of Fleurange, to the number of twenty thousand, showed an unbroken front and the Swiss could not force their ranks.

The French cavalry seem, from all accounts, to have been more successful also in their charges than on the preceding afternoon, while so perfect was the armour of both men and horses of many of the nobles that, in spite

of receiving many blows, they frequently sustained no damage. An example of this difficulty in slaying a foe was seen in the case of the son of La Trémouille, Prince de Talmont. When this young man had fallen it took no less than sixty-two blows on the part of the Swiss to despatch him. Whole battalions are also said to have passed over the fallen Claude de Guise, who was nevertheless rescued in the end. The brother of the Constable de Bourbon remained, however, like the son of La Trémouille and many other nobles, among the slain. In the end, the discomfiture of the gallant Swiss was accomplished by the advance of a troop of Venetian cavalry. Bartolomeo Alviano had marched all night with his men-at-arms in order to join in the conflict. When his waving banners were seen and his horsemen advanced, shouting, "Marco! Marco!" the Swiss, who had lost fifteen thousand men, at last lost courage and fled to Milan. The Milanese cavaliers of Maximilian Sforza retired also, while the warlike Cardinal de Sion, who had presided throughout the conflict on a large Spanish jennet, preceded by a crucifix, was likewise compelled to beat a retreat, which he did while cursing the French to the last.

The retirement of the Swiss in no way resembled a rout. The survivors of the battle, in which they had lost half of their numbers, reached Milan in good order, from which city, after demanding from the Duke Maximilian Sforza their pay, which they did not receive, they marched off to the Alps, vowing to return and take vengeance upon the French.

François I. lost no time in following up the defeated foe to Milan, which place opened its gates to his forces, consisting of the advance guard under the Constable de Bourbon. He immediately imposed a fine of three hundred thousand ducats upon its inhabitants; but, as the citadel still held out, Pietro Navarro was ordered to besiege it. When, after a three-weeks' siege, the citadel at length fell, Maximilian Sforza, who declared himself to be utterly wearied of a sovereignty which cost him

so much trouble and all his money to maintain, made terms with François I., who had posted himself at Pavia. He told the young Monarch that, "being tired of the inconstancy of the Emperor, the trickeries of the Catholic King, the shiftiness of the Pope, and the very expensive and turbulent aid of the Swiss," he willingly resigned to him the Ducal crown of Milan.

François I. treated his fallen adversary well. He promised to obtain for him a Cardinal's hat, but this was a promise that was never fulfilled. He gave him, however, a yearly pension of thirty-six thousand livres, with which Maximilian Sforza retired gracefully to France, where he lived perfectly contentedly for the rest of his days, never regretting his fallen grandeur. The Spanish Viceroy of Naples, Don Ramon da Cardona, having hurriedly retired from the neighbourhood of Pavia before François, that Monarch made a triumphal entry into Milan with all his forces on October 14th, 1515.

The joyful expression on the well-fed countenance of the Medici Pope, Leo X., changed to one of pallid and terrified alarm when Marino Giorgi imparted the intelligence of the utter overthrow of the Swiss at Marignano. "What will become of us?" he inquired.

He had, indeed, cause for alarm at the result of his duplicity. After having united himself by marriage to François I., by causing his brother, Giuliano de' Medici, to marry Filiberta of Savoy, the King's aunt, and having promised his neutrality, he had turned against him, with the result of his own utter discomfiture.

In spite of the Spaniards, who had hurried off without daring to show fight; in spite, too, of the trickery of the Emperor, the Swiss, the only good infantry in Europe except the German allies of France, had been defeated, and there were no forces now left available to coerce the triumphant young François—the Most Christian King—the eldest son of the Church! What steps might not the conqueror now take to make himself supreme in Italy? Why, indeed, should he not forestall the coming supremacy of Charles V. in Europe?

Nor was the Pope the only one to take alarm. Henry VIII. had his jealousy aroused, while the Emperor Maximilian was terrified lest he should find himself presently deprived of his remaining possessions in Lombardy.

The Pope made up his mind to hurry off to meet François at Bologna, to try and make terms. Upon his arrival he was greatly chagrined to find that the Most Christian King had likewise made up his mind to make him restore the territories of Placentia and Parma, which had been ravished from the Duchy of Milan by Pope Julius II. It was in vain for Leo to beg and pray ; François would take no denial. However, he considerably promised to take the Pope's natal city, Florence, under his protection ; moreover, to protect as its rulers the Pope's easy-going brother, Guiliano de' Medici, and his nephew, the dissipated young Lorenzo. The former was made by François Duc de Nemours, in France, while Lorenzo, three years later, married the King's cousin, Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne, and became by her the father of Catherine de' Medici, the mother of three Kings of France.

Not content with Parma and Placentia, François next demanded that the Pope, as Suzerain, should invest him with the Crown of Naples. This request was met, however, by dissimulation, as Leo promised to comply upon the death of Ferdinand of Aragon—an event, he said, that was to be expected to occur very shortly.

CHAPTER VII

A Clear Sky, but a Clouded Horizon

1516-17

FRANÇOIS, while having allowed himself to be jockeyed by the Pope out of the investiture of the Kingdom of Naples, under the understanding that he was to receive it on the death of the Catholic King, imagined that he had gained the real friendship of Leo X. The astute Pontiff, while taking pains to confirm him in this fallacy, suggested to the young Monarch a scheme whereby they should, between them, fleece the rich clergy of France. To this proposition François proved in no wise loth to agree. Accordingly, the Most Christian King and the Pontiff arranged a cunning Concordat, by the terms of which, while the King would in future have in his own hands the direct nomination to all French Bishoprics and Abbeys, the Pope would extract as his fee the first year's revenue from all the dignitaries of the French Church whom the King should appoint. The Gallican Church had, since the year 1438, been practically confirmed in its ancient independence of both the State and the supreme Pontiff; it now found itself muzzled, while François could, if he so chose, pile up various fat benefices in the hands of the same favoured Prince or noble.

This little matter being arranged to their mutual satisfaction, the French King and the Pope said good-bye to one another with every appearance of cordiality; and François returned to France, to receive the acclama-

tions of the Court and the people as a conquering hero who had performed prodigies of valour. He left behind him in Milan the Duc de Bourbon as his Lieutenant-General. He was supported by an army, with which, in conjunction with the Venetians, the warlike Constable set forth at once to be revenged upon the Emperor for his recent trickiness in the matter of the attack on the dominions of the Duc de Gueldre. Before long, therefore, Max found that his misgivings had not been unfounded, as the combined forces of Bourbon and Venice soon deprived him of all the places which he held in Lombardy, with the exception of the important city of Brescia.

During the time that François had been away from France he had left his mother, the Duchesse d'Angoulême, Regent of the kingdom, and during her tenure of office Louise had contrived to keep on good terms with her young English neighbour across the Channel and at Calais.

No sooner, however, had François returned than Henry VIII., who held Calais, Guines, Tournay, and other places, began to conceive schemes for the reconquest of the greater part of France. Being only some two years older than François, it was chiefly from jealousy at the brilliancy of the French King's feats that Henry sought to outdo him, or undo him. He commenced, accordingly, to stir up the Catholic King and Maximilian to revenge, and supplied the latter freely with money wherewith to raise an army.

The envoys of Henry, Ferdinand of Aragon, and Maximilian found themselves well backed up by the fiery Cardinal de Sion, when they sought to raise an army in Switzerland. The hundred thousand golden crowns advanced by the English King likewise had their weight, with the result that five of the Swiss Cantons placed all their armed men at the disposal of the Emperor, who took the command in person of a mixed force of thirty thousand men. François, however, had also money to spend, and spent it in Switzerland most royally. The

result was that, by the time that the worthy but procrastinating Max had got himself ready to descend into Lombardy, the men of eight other Swiss Cantons were on the line of march also in the same direction, and going as fast as they could to join the Duc de Bourbon in Milan. Owing to the foolish delay of the Emperor, in besieging a place called Asola, by the time that he found himself in front of Milan Bourbon had received his Swiss reinforcements, and shortly afterwards Maximilian was got rid of by a clever ruse on the part of the Maréchal Trivulzi, who was with Bourbon in Milan.

A letter was written, which purported to be from the Swiss within the city to the Swiss of the Imperial army outside. When, as was intended, this letter reached the hands of the Emperor, he took alarm. The superstitious Max had repeatedly suffered from bad dreams, in which he saw himself lying dead, like his father-in-law Charles the Bold, who had been slain by the Swiss under the Duc de Lorraine at Nancy. He recalled likewise the treachery of the Swiss to the Duke Ludovico Sforza, whom they had sold to Louis XII., and therefore determined that his person was not safe anywhere in the neighbourhood of such an unreliable and treacherous race. The Emperor accordingly decamped, and left his army without a commander and without being paid. The Imperial army, which consisted not only of Swiss, but Spanish and German infantry and Tyrolese cavalry, at once determined that, instead of waiting to fight and possibly be killed by Bourbon before Milan, it would be wiser to be off and see if they could not find their pay for themselves.

The force decamped accordingly, like its master, and, after devastating the country and brutally sacking the town of Lodi, its units separated, the Swiss returning to their country well laden with booty.

Brescia was now taken by the French and Venetians, while Odet de Foix, Seigneur de Lautrec, besieged Verona.

Verona, which made a furious resistance, was the last city which Maximilian held in Upper Italy, and was

greatly desired by Venice. The jealous Henry VIII., however, sent further large sums of money to the Emperor, being determined at all costs to frustrate the policy of François. Max thereupon returned to the charge with a new force, determined, *coûte que coûte*, to relieve Verona, a place of the greatest importance to him, since it covered the Tyrol. Should this place be lost, the Emperor realised that he would have no starting-point left whence he might issue upon new warlike expeditions into Italy. Matters had reached this stage, and there seemed little hope either that the French could take Verona or that peace could be brought about between the Emperor and France, when an incident of the greatest importance occurred—one after which the young Archduke Charles commenced to take an important hand in the game of which up till the present he had remained scarcely more than a spectator.

On January 23rd, 1516, Ferdinand of Aragon, the Catholic King, died, and Charles found himself the actual heir to the thrones of Aragon and Castile, of which, owing to her increasing insanity, his mother Queen Joanna was unable to assume the rule. In order to be able to take peaceable possession of these States it was absolutely necessary for Charles to come to terms with his powerful neighbour François; and by the advice of his aunt the Archduchess Marguerite, and the far-seeing de Chièvres, he realised that it was necessary that he should persuade his grandfather the Emperor to come to terms also.

All was arranged to his satisfaction by the treaty of Noyon between Charles and François, while, by the subsequent treaty of Brussels on December 3rd, 1516, Maximilian agreed to resign Verona for the equivalent of two hundred thousand ducats.

By the treaty of Noyon, Charles was to marry, not Renée the daughter of Louis XII. as previously arranged, but one of the infant daughters of François, and she was to bring as her dowry to Charles the part of the kingdom of Naples to which her father laid claim.

Until the child should reach a marriageable age Charles was to pay to François a hundred thousand golden crowns yearly. To the Queen of Navarre, Catherine de Foix, widow of Jean d'Albret, a large sum of money was accorded in return for her Spanish possessions, which had been taken from her by Ferdinand of Aragon when she had been fighting as the ally of France.

François I. and Venice now shared the north of Italy between them, while, by an alliance which the former entered into at Fribourg with the thirteen Cantons, it seemed as if his supremacy at Milan was absolutely secured. To make the settlement still more binding the young Charles, who now called himself King of Spain his grandfather Maximilian and François, made yet a third treaty at Cambray on March 11th, 1517. By this the three Monarchs vowed mutually to assist one another, and further to prepare a combined army wherewith to resist the aggression of the Turks. Even the jealous Henry VIII. was induced to come into this bond of friendship. He consented to give up Tournay and two other cities in French Flanders on consideration of the French King agreeing to pay six hundred thousand crowns, and allying the infant Dauphin to the Princess Mary, born in 1516.

Thus by the beginning of the year 1518 François had consolidated his power in France and Italy, he had covered himself with glory, and peace reigned throughout Europe. It seemed as if the only disturbances likely to jangle in the general quiet would be the sound of the marriage bells of the projected alliances which were for ever to unite the various Royal families.

Indeed, what cause for quarrel could there now be, with the young Dauphin to marry the daughter of Henry VIII., and Charles to become the son-in-law of the French King?

On such good terms did Charles at this time seem to be with François that in his letters to him he addressed as "My good father" this Prince only six years older than himself, and signed himself "Your dutiful son."

Alas, however, for treaties of friendship and treaties of marriage! Almost before the ink was dry on the paper the elements of discord were rife by which they would be torn to shreds.

The great question which was commencing to agitate all Europe at this moment, when the outlook seemed to be so peaceful, was who after Maximilian was to sway the Imperial sceptre of Germany, commonly known as that of the Holy Roman Empire. For Max was old, and worn out with his perpetual wars and hunting excursions; it did not seem as if he could live much longer to enjoy that title of Emperor to which, as a matter of fact, he had no right, for he was Emperor-Elect. According to the constitution of the Empire, from the time that, long after the downfall of Rome, it had been re-established by Charlemagne, to be Emperor it was necessary to be crowned by the Pope in Italy. Maximilian I., Archduke of Austria, although crowned in 1486 at Aix-la-Chapelle, had since his election never yet found time, opportunity, or a Pope willing to invest him. He, therefore, was in fact only the rightful possessor of the title always accorded to the elected heir to the Empire, that is to say, King of the Romans.

Herein lay the difficulty with reference to the future, for had he not been really the King of the Romans himself he could have contrived during his lifetime to induce the Princes of Electoral rank, spiritual and temporal, to elect his grandson Charles as King of the Romans, and thereby have ensured his succession.

These Electoral Princes were seven in number, and from ancient times the elections had taken place at a Diet assembled at Frankfort, although the Electors also met for various purposes occasionally at Augsburg.

Although, according to the Golden Bull of Charles IV. regulating the elections, they were supposed to be perfectly honest and free, all of the seven Electors, of whom three were Archbishop-Princes, were open to bribes. Their suffrages—such was the virtue of these honest Princes—could, in fact, be procured in no other way.

The wily Maximilian was well aware of this fact. He was a representative of the House of Habsburg, and two of his ancestors had already worn the Imperial Crown in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Again, for the last eighty-one years this Austrian family had without a break continued to occupy the Imperial throne; he did not therefore think that, just for want of a little money wisely expended, the Empire should on his own decease be allowed to go elsewhere. The impecunious Max did not, however, propose to spend this money himself. His daughter Marguerite was naturally of the same opinion as the Emperor, and likewise his grandson Charles; but while the former was ready to sacrifice her last stiver to ensure the succession of her nephew, the latter was anxious to buy the future votes of the Electors at as cheap a rate as possible. In the meantime, while the young Archduke, who now called himself King of Spain, was preparing to set sail for that country to endeavour to make good his claim to the succession, in spite of the fact of his crazy mother having become the actual Monarch of Castile and Aragon, he became aware that he had a rival in the field for the future possessions of the Empire.

The brilliant renown, the halo of glory, which floated over the head of the young conqueror of Marignano had caused many of the inhabitants of Europe to look towards the Valois rather than the Habsburg as one likely to defend them from the encroachment of the Turk. Overtures had been made to François from some of the Electors themselves, headed by the Archbishop of Trèves, to which he had not been at all slow in responding. They wanted his money, and he was quite ready to promise it to them, moreover as that frequently engaged Princess, Renée of France, did not happen just then to be betrothed to anyone, François promised her to the Electoral Prince of Brandenburg with an enormous dowry. At the same time he made other large promises to the German Princes, on the understanding that they should furnish him with soldiers to be kept in his pay in case of war.

Germany as a whole was willing enough to give herself into the hands of François at this time, if simply as a means of freedom from the exactions of the Church and the tyranny of religion. Luther was commencing to make his voice heard, and his followers were increasing rapidly. All that was required of François was to take the part of freedom, to declare himself against the Pope, or any other tyrant. Whether this tyrant belonged to the House of Habsburg or no would make but little difference.

It was, however, a mistake on his part, not being a German, to put himself forward as a candidate for the Empire. What he should have done was to have selected one of the Electoral Princes and made of him an Emperor, to be kept in his own pocket, and in this way he would have been able to resist the aggression which he might have to expect in the future upon his frontiers, from the directions both of the Low Countries and of Spain. He preferred, however, instead of looking to security at home by making the Germans his allies, and instead of contenting himself with protecting these allies against the oppression of the Empire, to become an Emperor himself and to go on with his Italian conquests. The Archduke Charles, who looked forward to himself succeeding his grandfather, was informed of the dangerous intrigues that were going on. He did not wish, at such an important moment in his career, to break the peace by which the safety of the Low Countries was secured, but at the very moment of embarking for Spain he sent off to inform his grandfather of what was taking place, and to ask him to take all possible steps to frustrate the French designs.

The Germanic Empire, to which both of these young Princes aspired, was an extraordinary agglomeration of States, and greatly divided. It comprised a Kingdom, that of Bohemia, Hereditary States, Elective Estates, and Electoral Principalities, Duchies, Marquisates, ruled by a Margrave, Sovereign Countships or Counties, Seigneuries, Free Cities, and various Ecclesiastical Principalities. Of these latter there were not only Sovereign Archbishoprics and Bishoprics, but even Sovereign Priories.

Among all these discordant units it had been in vain that the Emperor Max had sought to establish a Common Imperial Chamber of Justice ; for the various parts, small and great, were not only constantly at war with each other, but in a continual condition of ferment and revolt against their nominal Imperial Master. The Empire likewise included certain ancient rights in Italy, the chief of which was that of the Kingdom of Lombardy, while Maximilian, either as Emperor or in his own person as ruler of Austria, or through his grandson, the heir to his late wife Marie of Burgundy, ruler of the Netherlands, was in a constant state of warfare with various martial border Princes. Among these, the most important were Charles d'Egmont, Duc de Gueldre, whose territories on the affluents of the Meuse and the Rhine the Emperor claimed, and the famous Robert de la Marck, the Wild Boar of the Ardennes.

Some vague rights the Empire claimed likewise over Switzerland, and it considered the Duchy of Lorraine as being also under its influence, although the Duke of that country was more often than not in arms on the side of France. That the Emperor likewise claimed the powers of Suzerain over that turbulent State the Duchy of Savoy would seem apparent.

That there was little advantage other than honour in becoming the titular chief of such a heterogeneous mass of divided countries, cities, and States is evident from the fact that the bold Maximilian was often so short of cash as to be willing to enrol himself for pay as a soldier in foreign armies. It was but an empty honour at best, and one that a Frenchman like François had far better have left alone. His vanity was, however, so great that when, merely for the sake of what they thought they might get out of him, he was approached by the treacherous and greedy Electoral Princes, the young Prince fell into the snare at once and forged his own fetters for the future.

His folly was shared by the English King, for Henry VIII. likewise sought to make himself the representative of the Holy Roman Empire in Europe. The

way in which he went about the matter, when the time came, was mean and treacherous in the extreme. While representing to both the competitors, François and Charles, that he was working in their interests, Henry was really canvassing the Electors on his own behalf. He failed entirely in his designs, and probably felt thoroughly ashamed of himself when Europe saw through them. As, however, his candidature was such an utter failure we need say no more about it. He had not the excuse of François I.—the popularity which made his success not only possible, but probable.

The strength of François was not only that of circumstances, but personal. Everything smiles on youth and on success. His success at the start of his career deceived every one. What he did wrong was put down to his youth, but good seemed to prevail, and he had a fine appearance. This magnificent young Prince fascinated the world. Gifted with the power of brilliant speech, successful with the sword in battle, he became an imposing figure. The false hilarity of his deceitful eyes seemed to represent nothing but French gaiety, soldierly gallantry and frankness. To all he seemed the veritable Prince Charming who for long had been expected in vain. Why, indeed, should not every triumph fall to the lot of such a gay Paladin, one beloved by men and adored by women? In his manners François made a point of cultivating a charming courtesy. The idol of his sister Marguerite and of his mother, the latter of whom calls him in her diary "my Cæsar," he was to be seen bending low, hat in hand, when addressing them in public. This studied politeness in one who was a great King imposed on the popular mind; people thought that his heart must indeed be good. He had only, in addition, to show himself generous to appear the most gallant young Knight in Christendom; and generosity he practised, especially with his enemies, such as the Swiss, when he wished to captivate them, with signal success. His reputation, after three years of rule, was universally assured, therefore, for generosity, gallantry to

women, high-mindedness, chivalry, courteousness, and courage.

To make himself the centre of resistance among all the varied elements of Europe against the Pope and the House of Austria, all that it remained to him to do was to show himself really the protector of the weak against the strong.

Had François but pursued this policy consistently, instead of fitfully, with such high-hearted allies as the weak but undaunted la Marck and the Duc de Gueldre, had he but continued to follow his sister's teachings and supported those who strove for purity of religion, he would have become, if not Emperor, certainly the King of the hearts of Europe. He would have had none to fear but Henry VIII., who could do nothing so long as François backed up consistently the ambitions of Cardinal Wolsey to the Papacy. Henry VIII. could, moreover, have been controlled had François only followed a bolder policy in Scotland. To that country he sent the Duke of Albany as a Regent ; all that was required was to back up Albany with an army, to keep the English King employed at home instead of allowing him a free hand to descend from time to time into France.

If François had whole-heartedly backed up the revolution of the Church against the Pope, the ecclesiastical funds would have been at his disposal, and he would have been able to follow this course with signal success.

CHAPTER VIII

The Champions of Reform

1517 AND LATER

ALTHOUGH he had received his warlike education from Maximilian, whose prisoner he had been in his youth, after first being the prisoner of Charles the Bold, Charles d'Egmont, Duc de Gueldre, was, as we have seen, the friend of France and the enemy of Austria. His mother was Catherine de Bourbon, and from the time of Louis XI. both he and the Duc de Bouillon, the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, had drawn the sword against Burgundy and Austria on many a field. Wonderful indeed were the feats of these two noted leaders of the Black Bands, composed chiefly of German mercenaries. Having been taken prisoner by the Duke of Burgundy with arms in his hands at the age of six, later the Duc de Gueldre, an almost imperceptible Prince, did not shrink from defying the whole force of the Empire. It was in vain that, aided by Saxons and Bavarians, the Emperor, who claimed his Duchy, strove to crush this petty but irritating foe, one who, not content with defending himself, never hesitated to invade and pillage Holland and Brabant. The Archduchess Marguerite, Regent of the Low Countries, during the minority of Charles was frequently compelled to beg from England or from the Pope aid against this constant thorn in her side, but for nearly fifty years he remained indomitable, having for a long period the tacit if not the open support of France in Lower Germany. This French protection should have

been further extended to the Upper Rhine, so as to include the resistance of all the Knights and small nobility, so down-trodden by the feudal system, against the powerful liege lords by whom they were barbarously persecuted and despoiled.

There was a general revolution taking place within the confines of the Empire, and it was of two kinds. The poor Knights and small nobles, who were ruined and starving, and the peasantry, reduced to the utmost misery, formed the elements of the first kind, and these different classes joined hands in unanimously accusing the princely ecclesiastics of causing the common ruin. All cried out that the state of the Church in Germany could no longer be supported. Since no relief came from the Emperor, the people were determined to work out their own salvation.

The other kind of revolution was among the upper ranks of society. It was literary and religious, and involved the right of the human mind to educate itself, by the use of the ancient lore preserved to the world by the Jews in their books. Those who revolted, when the monks sought to burn the valuable Hebrew works and their translations, were the nobles, the jurists, and the savants. The whole of Germany was in an uproar over this matter, in which the fiercely combative knight, Ulrich von Hutten (who was named Poet Laureate by the Emperor, whom he converted to his views) was, with the talented scholar Reuchlin, in favour of the Jews and their literature.

Just after the battle of Marignano, when François' fame was at its greatest height, the young King, who was supposed always to be devoted to every form of *les belles lettres*, had the opportunity given him of deciding upon the rights of humanity in this matter. His opinion would have had the force of law at that moment, when Pope Leo X., a man who cared nothing for religion but a great deal for literature, was cowering at the feet of the splendid Knight and Monarch who held Italy in the hollow of his hand. The Dominican monks—the in-

tolerant and cruel bigots who formed the backbone of the Inquisition, had come from Germany to accuse von Hutten and Reuchlin to the Pope. They visited François, to ask him to give the weight of his opinion to their cause. To see how he acted and lost his chance of supporting this revival of learning, we will quote the words of Michelet.

“It depended upon a still more general question, that of knowing whether he was going to be the friend or the enemy of the Pope.

“This young man was at the bottom very neuter in all these great questions. Between the revolution and the Pope he had chosen—what do you think? A baker’s wife of Lodi! In the same way that the Swiss, when conquered, got drunk with the vin de Beaune, and allowed themselves to be burned alive, the conqueror established himself, they say, at the house of this *fornarina*: to his injury; he fell sick, as he had been once already before he came to the throne.

“Such, then, was the palm of this Cæsar, as his mother called him, the crown of this King of the world, the hope of the oppressed, the poetic idol of the weak heart of Marguerite. . . . This Royal figure, which seemed to understand all and boasted wonderfully, was in reality a splendid automaton in the hands of his mother, the intriguing, violent, and cunning Savoyarde, and of a man of business, Du Prat, cunning, vile, and base, whom he took for Chancellor. The mother loved her son passionately, and nevertheless played upon him. She said boldly to the Legate, ‘Address yourself to me; we will go our own road together. If the King scolds, let him.’”

Du Prat was at this time on the look-out for a Cardinal’s hat, and accordingly was quite ready to play the Pope’s game. He was a widower, and caused his head to be shaved, and made up to Leo X. quite irrespective of his master, who was given up to the Pope by the designs of Louise de Savoie and the man who was her Minister, rather than her son’s Minister.

Louise de Savoie was at this time trying to unite the

lilies of France to the pills which were the arms of the Medici, whose most ancient ancestor was an apothecary. The match, as we have already mentioned, was arranged between Lorenzo de' Medici and the King's cousin, Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne, and Du Prat got his hat. François at the same time allowed his Confessor to write to Leo X. against the German revolution.

The monks seemed to have gained their victory, but von Hutten was by no means suppressed. This poet, this young Knight, who had nothing but his sword and his pen, had a frail body, but indomitable courage. With sword and pen he was equally successful. He was famous for his duels and his love affairs, and ever as ready to whip out his long rapier from its sheath for a word against a woman as he was for a slighting remark concerning his beloved Germany, and his skill as a swordsman was as remarkable as that of Bayard with the lance.

Being protected by the good-natured Emperor, one day in Rome von Hutten heard seven Frenchmen abusing Max, when such blasphemy was more than he could stand. He charged the whole seven, and remained the master of the field.

In spite of the supposed enmity of the Pope, this daring spirit did not fear to revisit Rome. There he wrote a brilliant satire upon the Church, supporting the views of Luther, and boldly dedicated the work to no one less than Leo X. The Pope, who was little better than an educated Pagan and a sportsman who loved a joke, merely laughed at this volume of epigrams upon "the city where Simon the magician hunts the apostle Peter, and where the successors of Cato are the Roman women."

As a matter of fact, it was difficult for the Medici Pope to allow the Dominicans to burn, as they wished, both Reuchlin and von Hutten. For these had behind them the Emperor, the Dukes of Saxony, Wurtemberg, and Bavaria, while thirty-six German cities were writing in their favour. Likewise the humanists, with Erasmus at their head, joined with the great mass of the German

nobles in supporting them. On the other side were the pedantic Doctors of Paris and the Sorbonne; but their credit was in the decline, and they were killed by the ridicule of the ironical works which made sport of their antiquated methods.

Such was the force of the biting *Epistolæ obscurorum virorum* of Ulrich von Hutten, that after its appearance there was no chance for the Inquisition in Germany. The white robes of the Dominicans, which previously had everywhere been seen with terror, became merely objects of scorn. The monks themselves were treated as a joke—they were laughed at, even in Rome, as ignorant beasts who had been allowed to impose upon people too long—the pen of Hutten had shown them up as impostors. Upon leaving Italy, von Hutten, who had no place but his ruined castle to resort to, and no money, was recommended to change his ways. He was sick likewise, when the young Electoral Archbishop Prince of Mayence, Albert of Brandenburg, the man who managed the shady money-making affair of the sale of Indulgences for the Pope, thought it would be amusing to entertain him at his Court.

There was a certain amount of cunning in the action of the avaricious Archbishop Prince. He thought that the presence of this redoubtable hero of the German revolution at Mayence would serve as a protection to his own name—shield him from the attacks of those who knew him for what he was and did not scruple to say so. As von Hutten's protector, Albert imagined that he could pose as the protector also of the Muses, of those who supported freedom of thought, and of the learned.

The triumph of the Archbishop of Mayence, who was the head trafficker in the ignoble bargains for the Imperial elections about to take place, did not last long. Von Hutten soon realised the dirt of the puddle in which he had foolishly allowed himself to seek temporary repose, and determined to sully his coat no longer.

One fine morning, when the voice of Luther was commencing to make itself heard, without saying good-

bye to his host, Ulrich von Hutten took his hat and walked out. He went off and joined himself to that celebrated Knight, the free-lance Franz von Sickingen, a Paladin who had earned for himself the title of the avenger of the oppressed and the defender of the weak.

Von Hutten was a poet, and Martin Luther, the father of Reform, was a musician. This latter, far from being, as may have been supposed, a dreary-faced ascetic, was cheerful and robust, with a round, open countenance, and was usually to be seen with a musical instrument, lute or flute, in hand. Born at Eisleben in Saxony in 1483, by the year 1517 this question of the sale of Indulgences had aroused Luther's scorn and anger.

Leo X., the son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, was as prodigal a Pope as François I. was a King. He could not squander enough money on his immense entertainments, the production of the gross and ridiculous farces wherein his soul delighted, his Royal processions, and continual hunting parties. Spending thus with both hands, the immense sums which he received from the Church and his Papal dominions in no way sufficed for his boundless extravagance.

He invented or had suggested to him by his crony and toady, Dovizi, Cardinal of Bibbiena, the idea of raising money by the sale of eternal salvation, at so much a crime. Under the pretence that he required funds for the rebuilding of St. Peter's in Rome, Leo commenced to exploit Germany, where his principal agents were Fugger, the great banker of Augsburg, the financial King of Europe, and the Archbishop of Mayence.

Fugger was at the same time the banker of the Empire, and, for immense rights conferred, advanced all the boundless sums which were placed at the disposal of Maximilian and Charles for the purpose of bribing the Electors. Since Fugger had been forbidden to cash any French bills of exchange, when it came to the point that François required in a hurry more douceurs to pay to the grasping Electors, he found himself greatly handicapped. For these Electors, notably Albert of Brandenburg, re-

quired money down each time that they made a new promise to vote for the French or the Flemish aspirant to the Imperial title.

While Albert of Brandenburg was raking in the spoils by the sale of Indulgences and handing them on to Leo, through Fugger, both Archbishop and Banker sticking to their own share of the profits, it was a matter of indifference to him what kind of agent he employed for the nefarious traffic. His principal agent wherewith to deceive the people was an infamous monk named Tetzal, a regular charlatan who went round from city to city, like any other cheap-jack, advertising his wares. Luther declared humorously: "I will smash in his drum for him," and he was not long before he attacked Tetzal's master, the Archbishop of Mayence.

Tetzal was a man who had been guilty of all sorts of crimes deserving death. These, in his harangue to the crowds, he did not deny. "Look at me!" he exclaimed, "see what an Indulgence has done for a rascal like myself! I am now a lamb white as snow." He declared that there was no crime committed in the past or to be committed in the future which could not be covered by a Papal Indulgence, that everything would be infallibly forgiven. Tetzal had a scale of charges according to the crime which had been committed, or which it was sought to commit: murder so much, rape so much. Horrible as it all was, his merchandise was proving highly profitable throughout the States of Germany, when Luther took up the cudgels and boldly attacked the Archbishop of Mayence.

In 1517 Luther wrote a nobly worded letter to Albert, pointing out to him the reckoning of his account which he would infallibly one day have to render to God. At the same time he boldly nailed to the door of the Church of the Castle of Wittemburg his indignant and fiery condemnation, full of biting irony, of the sale of Indulgences.

Rome was terrified, especially as it imagined the determined action of Luther to be the work of the German Princes.



Tammé, photo after the painting by Lucas Cranach.

MARTIN LUTHER.

The Emperor Maximilian, who detested Leo X., began to say, "The Pope is a rascal, he shall be the last of them." And, oddly enough, he began seriously to think of causing himself to be elected Pope. When Luther was summoned to appear and answer for his performances in Rome, Max said, "Let us keep the monk, we may want him, he may be useful to us." The Electoral Duke of Saxony and the other great Princes were also inclined to sustain this defender of Germany.

Luther, however, appeared at a Diet at Augsburg before the Cardinal Cajetano, sent to coerce him if possible. Cajetano, who was at heart of Luther's own way of thinking, sought to show the Reformer the danger in which he stood and to persuade him to retract. "Do you think," asked the Cardinal, "that the Pope worries himself much about Germany? Do you fancy that the Princes will raise armies to defend you? What shelter will you find?"

"The shelter of heaven," replied Luther. When warned, later, not to pay any attention to the summons to appear before the Diet of Worms, he boldly declared: "I will go there, even if I should find as many devils as there are tiles upon the roofs." Devils there were in plenty, but Luther found protection in Germany, notably from the Electoral Duke of Saxony, and, although he was excommunicated in 1520, he publicly burned the Pope's Bull.

After having bravely appeared before Charles V. at the Diet of Worms in 1521, the Duke Frederick III. of Saxony, to prevent Luther from being taken off to Rome, probably to be burned at the stake, seized him and locked him up for his own protection in the Castle of Wartburg. There Luther occupied his time by translating the Old and New Testaments. Although in Holy Orders, in 1525 the Reformer married Catherine von Bora, who had been a nun, and he eventually died in 1546 at Eisleben, where he had been born.

After Hutten left the Elector of Mayence, he established himself with his printing press at Ebernburg, in the castle

of the bold Franz von Seckingen. He read to him Luther's writings, and secured the sword of this redoubtable champion for the cause of Reform.

From this time until his death in 1523, at the early age of thirty-five, Ulrich Hutten remained as much the backbone of the revolution in Germany as Luther himself. While, however, Luther, confined to his rancours born in the cloister, saw and desired only the reformation of the dogma and ecclesiastical discipline, the poetical Knight, whom the Emperor had caused to be crowned with laurels by a fair maiden of high birth, went further in his views. He attacked with passion political tyranny and social abuses. Given over to these ideas of political and social regeneration, Hutten inspired the powerful Seckingen with his aims. Together they formed projects for the unity of Germany on the ruins of princely and episcopal feudality. Utterly fearless, at one time he published the statement: "The real Turks are in Italy; the Sultan is the Pope and his army is the clergy."

Leo X. then demanded the Knight's extradition, but Seckingen's protection ensured his safety.

CHAPTER IX

The Love Affair of Éléonore

WHILE such an element of unrest was prevailing in Germany, Charles had proceeded to Spain to take possession of his new dominions. He had delayed for some time in Flanders after the death of his grandfather Ferdinand of Aragon, who left two Regents, both churchmen, to manage the countries over which he had ruled. His illegitimate son, the Archbishop of Saragossa, presided over Aragon, while the very aged Cardinal Ximenes governed Castile.

Charles had lost no time in causing himself to be proclaimed, at his Court of Brussels, as King of Spain in conjunction with his mother Joanna, but the touchy grandes and the people of Spain were greatly annoyed when they heard of this event, which they regarded as a breach of etiquette. Ximenes, however, after some delay, proclaimed Charles in Castile, and when the young Monarch showed no signs of coming, wrote repeatedly to hasten his departure from the Low Countries. Aragon, however, declared that Joanna was Queen and Charles only her heir. At length, after obtaining a loan from Henry VIII. to meet his expenses, Charles departed in September 1516 by sea, with a splendid retinue of Flemish nobles headed by de Chièvres, and taking with him also the wives of his principal courtiers.

He visited his mother and young sister Catherine at Tordesillas, when the former in her half-crazy condition had great difficulty in recognising Charles and his elder sister Éléonore, by whom he was accompanied,

The youthful Archduke Ferdinand, who was then in Spain, Charles not long afterwards sent back to Marguerite at Brussels, for he found his reception by the Spaniards by no means too cordial, and as Ferdinand was most popular he considered it better to have him out of the way.

It must be remembered that although Charles was not yet seventeen years old when he arrived in Spain, his training had been such as to make him foreseeing and careful, and he did not want to take any unnecessary risks owing to his brother's possible rivalry.

His behaviour was not, however, such as to endear him to the people of his Spanish dominions, since he gave at once every possible post to his Burgundian and Flemish followers, while excluding the ancient nobility of Spain. De Chièvres remained his principal adviser. Jean le Sauvage, the Chancellor of Burgundy, was appointed Chancellor of Castile, while a Croy, a mere boy of eighteen, the nephew of de Chièvres, was made the Archbishop of Toledo. The Flemish nobles soon made it plain that they had come to Spain solely with the idea of filling their pockets with the broad gold pieces of Ferdinand and Isabella, while their wives were just as bad if not worse than themselves. Although when the Castilians saw the furious hunger of money with which the Flemings had come, they had made their new King swear that no specie should be taken out of the country, the Flemings thought that it would be safer in Brussels than in Spain. They set to work, accordingly, to collect every one of the pure gold ducats that could be found. Soon there were so few left that when a Spaniard saw one of these large golden coins, with the head of Ferdinand on one side and Isabella on the other, he uncovered himself, remarking: "May God preserve you, double-headed ducat, since M. de Chièvres has not found you yet!" Upon one occasion when Charles ordered the assembly of the Cortes of Castile, which he did in order to ask, as usual, for supplies, he caused the greatest discontent by summoning it to assemble, away from Castile, upon the coast in a seaport



Photo by J. Laurent & Co. after the painting in the Prado, Madrid.

QUEEN JOANNA OF CASTILE,
Mother of Charles V.

of Galicia upon the Atlantic, whence it was more convenient to ship away the gold to Flanders.

One seems to be reading once more of the unscrupulous actions of the Princes de Condé and de Conti—who, in the time of John Law and the Regent d'Orléans, calmly drove off many wagonfuls of gold from the Banque Royale—when one learns what took place at this Galician port.

“Madame de Chièvres, after the fashion of a good housekeeper, brought there the load of eighty chariots and three hundred mules; Madame de Lannoy that of ten wagons and forty horses; the King's Confessor that of sixteen mules and ten chariots.”

This Madame de Lannoy was the wife of the future Viceroy of Naples, a man whose name was before long to become very celebrated in connection with the Italian wars against, and capture of, François I. in Italy. When after three years in Spain Charles and his courtiers returned to Flanders they left civil war behind them, the whole country being up in arms owing to their extortions. While there their sole idea was not to be disturbed by François I., whom they kept amused with the hope of Charles marrying a daughter of France.

François had his own ideas as to their sincerity, but so long as he was paid a hundred thousand golden crowns annually, under the pretence of this marriage, he was perfectly satisfied.

In spite of the great disinclination of the various Kingdoms of Spain to acknowledge him, Charles soon succeeded by his strong force of will in making the Castilians recognise him as co-Sovereign of Castile. He also persuaded the Cortes of Valladolid not only to place his name before his mother's in all official documents, but to vote him a subsidy of six hundred thousand ducats, to be raised in three years in the Kingdoms of Castile, Leon, and Granada. Proceeding from Valladolid to Saragossa in May 1518, Charles found the proud Aragonese nobles openly declaring that they would not call Don Carlos King, nor give him a single obolus so long as his mother should live. He, however, solemnly swore in the Church of San

Salvador, in his mother's name and his own, before the permanent Council of the Kingdom of Aragon, to respect all the ancient rights, privileges, and customs of the country. Subsequently he convoked the Cortes in person, and demanded recognition as King and also a subsidy.

After two months of hesitation, the four orders of the kingdom were overawed into admitting Charles to a share in the Kingdom with his mother. It was not, however, until a further period of six months had elapsed that, by requests accompanied by menaces, the Cortes of Saragossa consented to vote him the sum of two hundred thousand ducats. From Saragossa Charles proceeded to the Principality of Catalonia, and then to the Kingdom of Valencia, to enforce equal recognition and subsidies. It was when he was entering Barcelona in February 1519 that he learned of the death of his grandfather Maximilian, who had, ever since his departure from the Low Countries, been constantly writing to him, causing Marguerite to write to him, and working in the interests of his future grandeur.

We have mentioned above that Charles had taken his elder sister Éléonore with him into Spain. There had been a reason for this. The Archduchess was a handsome and very high-spirited girl of a romantic temperament, and she had contrived to fall deeply in love with the Count Frederick, brother of the Electoral Count Palatine, Louis V. She was at that time nearly twenty years of age, and, as Frederick had been brought up in the Court of her father, the Archduke Philippe Le Beau, the couple had had ample opportunities for love-making. Her passion was shared with fervour by the handsome cadet of the Palatine House, and it is uncertain to what extent their amours had proceeded when the astute Guillaume de Croy opened the eyes of Éléonore's brother to what was going on. De Chièvres was even mean enough to inform the Prince, then lately attained to his majority at the age of fifteen, that his sister had just received a love-letter from her beloved, and concealed it in her bosom. Charles determined to obtain this

epistle, and, after a personal scuffle with his sister, at length succeeded in wresting it from her. From its contents, in which the Count wrote, "*Ma mie*, I don't care for anything so long as I belong to you and you belong to me," Charles discovered that the loving couple intended to be married on the first opportunity.

Charles, the descendant of numberless Royal and semi-Royal personages, did not choose that his elder sister should marry the mere brother of an Elector Palatine, no matter how deeply her affections should be engaged. Nor did it matter to him that he had himself always been attached to the Count, who was, however, considerably his senior. Making use of his authority as ruling Prince of the Low Countries, the youthful Archduke caused his sister and her lover to undergo considerable humiliation. In the presence of "an apostolical notary," whatever he may have been, before also the Seigneur de Chièvres, the Seigneur de Roelux, the Baron de Montigny, and the Chamberlain de Courteville, all Knights of the Golden Fleece, he caused the guilty couple to abjure each other.

He then sent the Count Frederick away from his Court, and carried his sister off with him to Spain, so that she might have no further opportunities of giving herself up to the delights of love in his absence.

When he had arrived in Spain the astute boy soon found an opportunity of marrying his sister off to a King who was not likely to trouble his head as to any previous *amourettes* on the part of a bride so highly placed by birth as the delinquent Eléonore. This was Emanuel of Portugal, nicknamed the Fortunate or the Lucky, a Monarch who had already had two wives, Isabella and Maria, both of whom were aunts of his third spouse, since they were daughters of Ferdinand and Isabella. In his society Eléonore was not, however, compelled to live very long while mourning the loss of her affinity, for, his good fortune at last deserting him, Emanuel, who was by no means young, departed this life after making Eléonore the mother of a little girl.

The fair *Éléonore* thus became again a *Princesse à marier*—and, as a widowed Queen, she was left a valuable asset on her brother's hands, in that day when Royal matrimonial alliances were held out as a bait upon every possible occasion that political exigencies required. In spite of this, it was no less than twelve years before she again found a husband. When she did so, not only was he not the man of her own early choice, but she herself, from dwelling in the sultry climates of Portugal and Spain, had lost entirely the pristine freshness of her youth passed in the salt-laden airs of her northern land, washed by the stormy waves of the German Ocean.

Nor was she to be united *en secondes nocés* to a very great and warlike, if very unfortunate, personage of whom we shall hear a good deal before long, one who had made of the promise of her hand a stipulation for the performance of various very great services which he rendered to her brother Charles, and which proved extremely unfortunate to the fair realm of France. She was promised to Bourbon by her brother, it is true, but what were promises to Charles V. when he had made up his mind that he had more to gain by breaking than keeping them? Her second marriage with François I. was a most unhappy one for poor *Éléonore*. Even if, at the time of its consummation, it seemed as though it might bring to herself great honour and to her brother great profit, she very soon realised that she would have been far happier if, when she became her own mistress as the widow of the King, she had snapped her fingers at her Royal brother and redeemed the tender vows made at the age of twenty to the man whom she loved so dearly.

In the year 1524 *Éléonore's* youngest sister, Catherine, married John III., who in 1523 had succeeded the lucky Emanuel on the throne of Portugal. This Catherine was the sixth child of the Archduke Philippe and Joanna of Castile, and was born early in 1507 after her father had been dead five months, he having only lived to the age of twenty-eight.

CHAPTER X

Max and Marguerite Lay their Plans

1516—1519

WHEN Charles left for Spain in 1516 Maximilian and Marguerite were both agreed to look after his interests in his absence. Marguerite, whose hostile rancour to France was never forgotten, was as determined as was her father himself that if she could prevent it François should never become Emperor. She was now reinstated in all her ancient grandeur as Ruler of the Low Countries; indeed, her power was greater than it had been before Charles attained his majority. For Charles, in leaving for Spain, had not only invested her as Regent, but directly instructed that every paper signed or sealed by his aunt was to have exactly the same force and weight as though signed by his own hand. To make Marguerite's rule the more absolute, Charles even revoked certain ancient privileges of Home Rule enjoyed by some of the United Provinces of Holland and Flanders. These powers and all financial powers were now centred in Marguerite, who, while signing her orders *Par le Roy, Marguerite*, held the position of an autocratic Queen.

The busy life which she led as a ruler did not induce Marguerite to forget her spinning and sewing. She was constantly spinning flax, and at times making shirts for her father, concerning which garments Max wrote: "Our skin will be comforted with meeting the fineness and softness of such beautiful linen, such as the angels use for their clothes in Paradise." She likewise found the time in

which to make various jams and pickles for her household use, and to send to rejoice the Emperor's heart withal.

However, while this wonderful woman was spinning flax and making pickles, her brain was ever kept as actively employed in weaving plots for the downfall of France and the elevation of the House of Austria. It was, indeed, scarcely necessary for her "good father Maxi," as the Emperor signed himself, to write to his daughter, from Wels on December 12th, 1518: "We have good hope that you will so acquit yourself to the well-being, guidance, and direction of his affairs that he may not only have cause to be pleased, but, as your good nephew, he will increase your said authority more and more. In doing which he could do nothing more pleasing to us. This God knows, and may He, very dear and much-beloved daughter, have you in His keeping." The Emperor died just a month after writing this letter.

In spite of the above, there came a time only a few months after it was written when Marguerite did not act so that her good nephew felt that he had cause to be pleased, and this was when, feeling that Charles' chances of gaining the Imperial Crown were becoming very slim, she wrote and proposed that she should run his younger brother Ferdinand for the Empire in place of himself. Charles was furious, and wrote that it was absolutely necessary that he alone of the House of Austria, for the general benefit of their House, should occupy that post. Marguerite, who had already sent the juvenile Archduke into Germany, found herself compelled to write and explain that she had only done so in order that he might be near his grandfather, who was not in good health, and in order to watch over the German and Austrian hereditary domains of his elder brother. However, for a couple of years and more before this event, the Emperor and his daughter had been working hand-in-hand, and with considerable astuteness Max had contrived to make use of the discarded suitor of Éléonore, Count Frederick, in order to influence the Count Palatine his brother, whose vote seemed more likely to go to France than to Austria.

The seven Electoral Princes were the following, with two Hohenzollerns to begin with. These were Albert of Brandenburg, Archbishop of Mayence, and his brother, the ruling Margrave, Joachim of Brandenburg. Then came Richard of Greiffenclau of Wolrath, Archbishop of Trèves, Hermann of Wied, Archbishop of Cologne, Louis II., the very young King of Bohemia and Hungary, Frederick III., Duke of Saxony, and the Count Palatine, Louis V. The account of the various intrigues entered into between these seven Electors, and their near relatives, with François I., the Emperor, Marguerite and Charles V., with all the proposed matrimonial alliances of the young Princess Renée of France and the younger Catherine of Austria, which were held out as baits for votes, occupy no less than a hundred pages of small type of the historian Mignet. We will endeavour to avoid giving any particular description of them whatever, but a few general remarks cannot be avoided, especially with regard to the actions of the old Emperor in assembling a Diet over which he could exert his personal influence, and thus obtain promises of votes for the future election of his grandson to the dignity of *Rex Romanorum*—King of the Romans. There was no vote for Emperor, but after the King of the Romans had been crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle with the Crown of Charlemagne he became, as Maximilian remained till his death, Emperor-Elect. Only when crowned by the Pope in Italy could he be styled Emperor of the Romans.

A Diet was a Feudal Body which constituted the central authority of the Holy Roman Empire. It consisted of two colleges, until the peace of Westphalia in 1648, when an extra college was added. The first of these contained merely the three spiritual and four temporal Electors. The second was The College of the Princes of the Empire, and in all but actual voting these were the equals of the Electors. Maximilian assembled a Diet at Augsburg in August 1518, at which to discuss, openly, the great question of the defence of Christianity against the Turks ; secondly, and privately, the succession to the

Empire of Germany. The two questions hung together, since the Pope must openly declare himself in favour of that Prince who by his power and warlike exploits seemed the most capable of staying the Mussulman invasion of the south-east of Europe, which seemed likely to spread to Italy and Germany before long.

The Sultan, Selim I., had already shown himself terribly powerful and horribly cruel, and, in addition to a splendid army, he had recently established an immense fleet. Leo X. was openly in favour of the election of François I., whose prowess at Marignano had shown him to be a redoubtable warrior, whereas the youthful Charles had as yet never appeared in any warlike capacity. Each of these Princes, however, publicly gave out that it was from no personal ambition, but merely with the desire of protecting Europe from the Turk that they desired to assume the reins of Empire.

Leo X. sent a Legate to the Germanic Diet of Augsburg, to beg that body to furnish a contingent for an immense crusade, the idea of which had sprung from the fertile imagination of Max. By this crusade Europe was to be defended, Constantinople retaken, and Jerusalem likewise to be captured from the all powerful Selim I. When, however, the proposition was made by the Pope's Legate of an enormous scheme of general taxation throughout Germany, the Princes of the Diet, upon whom the resistance of Luther to the Pope had made its impression, refused to listen to the Sovereign Pontiff. They rudely declared that there was no more chance of the money demanded by Leo X. being used for a crusade against the Turk than there was that the cash raked in by the sale of the Indulgences would be used by the spendthrift Pope for the reconstruction of Saint Peter's in Rome. The Princes would, therefore, only agree to a very small tax being levied during three years upon such persons as should receive the Holy Communion—and this was practically to shelve the question of the crusade altogether.

In his secret negotiations Max was, however, more

successful. By repeatedly writing to Charles, and upbraiding his grandson for his niggardly spirit, he compelled him to agree to an enormous system of overbribing the Electors who were already being bribed by François—the bribes to be paid in cash without any delay. By the time that the Diet had ended its sittings, Maximilian had obtained the promises of the votes of five out of the seven Electors, for the immense sum of five hundred and fifty thousand golden crowns, the equivalent of more than a million and a quarter pounds sterling of to-day! Of this sum the needy Emperor retained fifty thousand golden crowns for his own commission.

He said that he required at least this amount for the expenses which he expected to incur in holding another Diet before long at Frankfort, at which he would cause the election, by the bought majority of Electors, of his grandson Charles to the dignity of King of the Romans.

Unfortunately for the fulfilment of this pleasant little family arrangement, the two Electors who had refused to accept bribes from the Emperor remained in favour of France, while, for that matter, all of the others likewise had in their pockets written agreements to vote for François.

These two, however, the Archbishop of Trèves and the Duke of Saxony, informed the Emperor that he was only King of the Romans himself; therefore, until he ceased to be so, it would be illegal to hold an election or to vote for any other King of the Romans. Max, greatly to the alarm of the timid courtiers of Charles in Spain, who dreaded nothing more at that time than fresh disturbances in Italy, talked of assembling an army and marching with it to Rome to be crowned. Probably Marguerite, and certainly Charles, sent representations that should the Emperor pursue such a course war must also break out with France in the Pyrenees, upon the open question of the Kingdom of Navarre; Max therefore, ever full of expedients, thought of a new plan. He caused Charles to request the Pope to send the Imperial Crown, with a couple of Cardinals, to the city of Trent for the

coronation of himself as Emperor at that place on Christmas Day.

These Cardinals were to be the Pope's illegitimate cousin, Giulio de' Medici, who afterwards became Pope Clement VII., and Albert of Brandenburg, who, on account of his previous promises made to vote for François, had recently been promoted to Cardinal rank by Leo X.

The Pope, however, was but little anxious to see the elevation of Charles, who as a King of Naples, in succession to Ferdinand of Aragon, and a Papal vassal, was, according to an old-established rule of Clement IV., expressly debarred from becoming Emperor. For that matter, he did not really wish a Duke of Milan, as François now was—or any Italian potentate who might interfere with himself in Italy—to be Emperor either; but he could hardly help himself. At all events, he vastly preferred a French Duke of Milan to a Spanish King of Naples, since he must have one of the two. Accordingly, he declined to send the Imperial Crown to Trent; and it is difficult to know what might have taken place as the next move on the part of Maximilian had not the Emperor suddenly become ill with fever after indulging in violent hunting excursions. He knew that he was dying, and prepared in the calmest manner for death at Wels, in Upper Austria. There, after giving the extraordinary instructions that his teeth were to be drawn and his body shaved and exposed after death, the worthy Max passed away peaceably, in all the odour of sanctity, upon January 12th, 1519. His had been an extraordinary and adventurous career from his earliest childhood, when he suffered great hardships, and was almost starved. His character was both chivalrous and bizarre, but his rule was distinctly advantageous to Germany. In conjunction with his daughter Marguerite, he likewise established the greatness of the House of Austria.

François I. in the course of his career was always making foolish mistakes, by which he contrived to



F. Hanfstaengl, photo after the painting by Albert Dürer.

MAXIMILIAN I.,
Archduke of Austria, Emperor of Germany.

deprive himself of the services of his most faithful friends and allies for some petty reason just when he was most likely to require their services. In the same manner as we shall find him later on making enemies of the Constable de Bourbon and that gallant hero of Genoa, Andrea Doria, he now committed the signal error of estranging both the Wild Boar of the Ardennes and Franz von Seckingen. The anger of the Seigneur de Bouillon et de Sedan he incurred by foolishly disbanding the Company of men-at-arms which he commanded in the service of France, while of Seckingen he aroused the anger in another manner.

The Knight Franz, who was an untitled member of the secondary nobility of Germany, held an extraordinary position. A mere country gentleman, he owned various castles, and maintained an army sometimes amounting to large dimensions, with excellent artillery. He was known as the National Justiciary of Germany, from his habit of righting the wrongs of those not strong enough to obtain redress for themselves, and had always been the friend of France, until François offended him so deeply that he refused to be placated.

The cause of the quarrel was that Seckingen having righted, sword in hand, the injustice inflicted upon a German merchant by some Milanese, the latter complained to François as their Sovereign. Thereupon the French King suspended the allowance which he was in the habit of making to the German Knight. When the wideawake Maximilian took the opportunity of making brilliant offers to Seckingen, he went over to the cause of Austria, as also did Robert de la Marck at the same time. It was in vain that François endeavoured to regain Franz, and a short time afterwards Seckingen was placed at the head of an army of twenty-four thousand men of the Suabian League, wherewith he attacked and utterly defeated the Duke of Wurtemberg, who passed for being the ally of France. After this triumph, which was in itself a heavy blow to the prestige of François I., Seckingen came and posted himself with his victorious

army in the environs of Frankfort, so as to overawe the Electors when at length they were, in June 1519, assembled to determine the fate of the Empire.

With him was Robert de la Marck : he it was, indeed, who had stirred up the resentment of his friend. With them both was Ulrich von Hutten, who by his writings had mainly aroused the resentment of the Suabian League against the Duke of Wurtemberg, a Prince who had killed a relation of Hutten's whom he had discovered to be the lover of his wife. Behind all of these was the ever-vigilant, ever-agitating Marguerite, who had detached la Marck from François I. At a time when she knew the Wild Boar to be sore with François, she had succeeded in seducing him from his allegiance by promising to obtain him a Cardinal's hat for his brother, Énard de la Marck, who was Bishop of Liège. But she made a proviso, which was that if he did not succeed in completely detaching Seckingen also there was to be no hat. The needy Hutten, the intimate friend of Seckingen, as we know, had also been bought by the skilful Marguerite.

The Regent of the Low Countries even sent six hundred lances of her own forces, representing three thousand six hundred mounted men, to fight under the command of Franz, the National Justiciary. "La Flamande" it was likewise who caused Seckingen, after the reduction of the Duke of Wurtemberg, to approach with his forces to the neighbourhood of Frankfort when the election was about to take place. The German Electors now pretty plainly understood that they were about to give themselves to a master in the shape of the Fleming—the Austrian—the Spaniard—Charles. Above all, the Count Palatine, who had been talked over by his heavily bribed brother, realised it. The Imperial cities of Strasburg and Constance, which belonged to the Suabian League, regretted bitterly also, now that it was too late, that they had given over their forces to the Flemish, to aid with their powerful weight in influencing the election.

But, oddly enough, the situation was so arranged by the manœuvres of Marguerite that all of the chiefs of

the German revolution were now about to give Germany over, bound, into the hands of those of the party of the counter-revolution. Seckingen, la Marck, Hutten, the German cities, all were in favour of Reform—all the enemies of the priests. But, by a paradox, they were there to aid in the election of an Emperor who came from Spain, from the country where the priests—the Benedictine monks—were more powerful than the Monarchs themselves.

All around Frankfort ambushes were laid by the Flemish party to capture and cut the throats of the partisans of François. While the Fuggers had been pouring out gold like water on the one side, on the other Bonnavet, the gay spark, the hero of so many love adventures, had come to the Rhine with many mules and men-at-arms, each laden with sacks of gold, to be distributed with both hands—what shall we say?—by the barrowful. But when the election was about to take place, the Ambassador Bonnavet was only able to penetrate to the neighbourhood of Frankfort in disguise, as a Captain Jacob.

While the army of François was lying not far away beyond the Rhine, which the existing peace prevented his crossing, there were twenty-five thousand men of the opposite faction actually in arms around Frankfort. Who can wonder at the way that the election went? At the last moment, when it was too late, François did what he ought to have done long before. He told his Ambassadors to support the election of a German Prince against the Austrian.

Bonnavet thereupon proposed first Joachim, Margrave of Brandenburg, and then Frederick, Duke of Saxony. For Brandenburg not even his brother Albert—who had at the last secretly insisted upon being paid twenty thousand additional golden florins, and received them—would vote. As for the Duke of Saxony, he was overawed by the presence of the armed forces—moreover, he was taken by surprise. He refused to allow himself to be made into an Emperor; he said that he was not strong enough to hold the position. Had he but agreed, the other

Two Great Rivals

Electors, while keeping the money that they had received, would have voted for him. He, personally, however, gave his vote for Charles—the Burgundian, Fleming, Austrian, and Spaniard. He lived to regret it later, when Charles V. proved to be his most bitter foe. The Emperor, moreover, cruelly imprisoned one of his immediate successors, the Elector Henry of Saxony, and utterly destroyed his House. The other six Electors, including the representative of the young King of Bohemia and Hungary, voted the same way as Duke Frederick.

Charles was elected unanimously the King of the Romans.

Thus, upon June 28th, 1519, in the person of a boy of nineteen, was accomplished at Frankfort the monstrous union of Spain and Germany—the forces of the Inquisition joined to the followers of Luther!

CHAPTER XI

Turkish Dangers and Troubles Ahead

1519—1520

WHILE the world had been torn to pieces by the jealousies aroused by the election of an Emperor, the Continent of Europe was being threatened by a very actual danger.

The Sultan Selim I., having conquered Syria, Babylonia, and Persia, subdued Asia Minor and Egypt, and inspired his own terrible Janissaries with fear of his strong arm, had invaded the Balkan States, and was threatening Hungary, Germany, Italy, and the coasts of France. His armies were immense, well disciplined, and quite equal in point of armament to those that the countries of Europe could put into the field, while that which made this particular Sultan so much to be feared was his fierce hatred of the Christian, and system of wholesale massacre of the followers of the Cross.

Up to the present the brave Hungarians had warded off the peril from Europe, but how long could this immunity endure?

Louis II., King of Bohemia and Hungary, was but a boy of thirteen, the son of the Pole Vladislav II., and his mother was a Frenchwoman, niece of the brilliant Gaston de Foix. He had been brought up under Polish tutelage, while the close friendship of Maximilian for the King of Poland had left the boy practically under the thumb of Austria. Of this fact Maximilian had duly taken advantage. He had brought about a scheme for

the double alliance of Austria and Hungary—one which was later to make of Hungary but an Austrian province.

Anne, the sister of the boy-King Louis, was affianced to the young Archduke Ferdinand, while the Archduchess Marie of Austria, Ferdinand's sister, was sent to the Court of Hungary, to stay there until she should be married to King Louis.

Ferdinand had no cause to complain of any want of generosity on the part of his brother Charles, for the young Emperor richly rewarded the Archduke for the manner in which he had behaved in accordance with his wishes, in not allowing himself to be run by Marguerite for the Imperial Crown. When Ferdinand married Princess Anne in 1521, Charles bestowed upon his brother no less than five Duchies, of which Austria was one. The others were Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, and the Tyrol. Later on, Charles bestowed also great territories in Germany, which he had inherited from his grandfather, upon his brother.

By behaving thus generously to his brother, who before long, through his wife, obtained the Crown of Hungary, Charles did a great deal towards consolidating his power as Emperor.

To return to the Sultan Selim. Having slaughtered all the Mamelouks of Egypt, he put the question to the learned Mullahs of Islam if it was not his duty to destroy some twelve millions of Christians in the south of Europe.

He wished to begin by the utter destruction of the Greeks. His Grand Vizier, however, more merciful than Selim, reminded the Sultan that according to old promises made by the Sultan Mahomed II. the lives of the Greeks were to be spared. Selim had, however, made up his mind that for the benefit of the souls of the rest of Europe, he would kill and destroy two-thirds of its Christian inhabitants. This bloodthirsty Turk imagined, perhaps with reason, that he would then have no trouble in converting the remaining third of the population to the tenets of Islam. Such was the terrible foe that

Europe had to dread, and whom, had François been elected, he had vowed to destroy.

By the election, however, which provided Christianity with another head than François, instead of all Europe uniting, in accordance with the dictates of reason and the urgings of Leo X., against the Turk, the Continent was again to become an armed camp in which Christian was to be pitted against Christian, while leaving to Selim a free hand to work his evil will in his own way.

At his Court, when François received the news of his defeat at Frankfort, he took the tidings well and calmly. Not so his mother, Louise de Savoie. Her diary shows only too plainly how readily she would, if she could, have wiped the detested Austrian who was the victor from the face of the earth.

All was not exactly peace at this time at the Court of France, where the eternal bickerings and jealousies of the King's mother and Françoise de Châteaubriand, his beautiful mistress, made life anything but a bed of roses for the frivolous young King.

The diplomatic Marguerite had now, by reducing everything to a matter of money, successfully abased the France which she hated to a secondary position. François realised that he would have to fight for his own hand if he would not soon be compelled to relinquish his conquests in Italy, lose there his beloved Duchy of Milan, and be also for ever deprived of the Kingdom of Naples. This remained in the hands of the rival, who, until he became Emperor, had kept up the farce of pretending that he intended to become the French King's son-in-law.

François began at once to cast his eyes around for an ally, and they fell naturally upon his very near neighbour, Henry VIII., with whom he began to exchange affectionate correspondence and to try to arrange for a personal meeting. Until Charles V. could, however, manage to return from Spain, in order to have himself crowned King of the Romans at Aix la Chapelle, Marguerite was not going to allow the grass to grow under

her feet. She therefore, likewise continued the most friendly relations with Henry—who as the husband of Catherine of Aragon was her brother-in-law.¹ While, therefore, François was planning the celebrated meeting soon to take place between himself and Henry at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, Marguerite, on her side, arranged that her nephew Charles should, on the way home with his fleet to Flanders, pay a friendly call upon his uncle the young King of England.

Owing to the numerous questions open between France and Spain, it was easy enough even for a child to see that war was becoming inevitable. The question of Navarre, for instance, of which the Spanish dominions had been torn from Jean d'Albret and Catherine de Foix by Ferdinand of Aragon in 1512. How was it possible for either François or Charles to give way upon this point? Navarre was the gateway by which access could be obtained to either of their respective kingdoms. Then again, Milan—this Duchy was a fief of the Empire! Then there was the still more burning question of the Duchy of Burgundy, of which Louis XI. had despoiled Marie, the first wife of the Emperor Maximilian, when she had been left an orphan by the death of her father, Charles the Bold.

As ardently as François desired to retain his Italian dominions was Charles wildly desirous to recover this lost Duchy of Burgundy. It was a constant source of irritation. France maintained that in annexing Burgundy she had but absorbed a fief which originally belonged to the French Crown—and maintained, moreover, that Burgundy had proved both ungrateful and dangerous, since she had persistently aided the English, to the extent even of making English kings, such as Henry V. and Henry VI., the Kings likewise of France. On account of this

¹ The Infanta Catalina, or Catherine, of Aragon, born December 1485, was the fifth and youngest child of Ferdinand and Isabella. The first husband of the Archduchess Marguerite was Juan, Prince of Asturias, only son of those Monarchs. He died, seven months after marriage, on October 4, 1497. Shortly after his death, and after twelve days of labour Marguerite gave birth to a still-born son.

ingratitude the gift of Burgundy, so insisted François, had been rightfully revoked. Nothing would induce him to return the Duchy to the Fleming.

Before matters had reached an acute stage, Charles was gaily continuing to engage himself in marriage in all directions. At the same time that he was affianced to a child-daughter of France he was likewise secretly engaged to a child-daughter of England—Mary, daughter of Catherine of Aragon and Henry—his first cousin. His Spanish subjects at the same time were crying out that to procure an heir to the Crown of Spain he should take a Princess who was already of a marriageable age. He therefore negotiated a third marriage in Portugal, before leaving Spain, from which country he, however, departed as a bachelor, when, with a large fleet, he set sail from Corunna for England in May 1520.

The young Emperor arrived safely at Dover on May 26th, where Henry VIII. and Cardinal Wolsey were waiting to receive him, and he met his aunt Catherine at Canterbury.

This visit was a time of unlimited feasting, during which Charles V. had every opportunity given to him of satisfying his enormous appetite with the roast beef of Old England. At the same time, he did not forget to closely cultivate Wolsey, whom he promised that he would strongly support when next the Papal Chair should become vacant. As Leo X. was always ill, and did nothing by his mode of life to take care of himself, it seemed more than likely that the ambitions of the son of the butcher might be realised before long.

When Charles left England, where by his courtly deference to his uncle Henry he had completely captured the heart of the Monarch, it was with the secret understanding that they should meet again very shortly, at Gravelines, immediately after Henry should have had his friendly meeting with the King of France in the neighbourhood of Calais.

Henry and Charles sailed on the same day from England, and the latter landed at Flushing on June 1st,

1520. At Bruges he was welcomed with the greatest affection and pomp by Marguerite and his brother Ferdinand, while Ambassadors and nobles of the various European countries were present, in numbers too great to be counted, to pay their court to the new Emperor, who was still only twenty years of age.

Up to the time of his return to the Low Countries, Charles had managed, by borrowing from his prospective father-in-law, Henry VIII., to pay the yearly pension that he had promised to his prospective father-in-law, François I. Once, however, that he had assumed the reins as Emperor, he gave no further thoughts to the matter of paying François what he owed in accordance with the treaty of Noyon, and shut up his pockets tight.

This action on his part was apt to hurry up the coming trouble, especially as he paid Henry d'Albret nothing on account of the usurpation of Navarre from his mother, now dead. He was careless enough also, after having made use of Robert de la Marck for the purposes of his election, to offend this "Brigand of the Meuse." When Charles V. declared that la Marck was merely one of his vassals of the Low Countries, the Wild Boar of the Ardennes quitted Austria as brusquely as he had France, and returned to his allegiance to François. What is more, it was Robert who in 1521 actually commenced the war. He openly sent his herald to defy Charles and all the might of the Empire, and then, with only three or four thousand men, marched into his dominions.

Unfortunately at that time, for one reason or another, François was not quite ready to back up the Seigneur of Bouillon, and therefore disavowed this movement of his bold ally; although by so doing he deceived nobody.

Charles was, however, for the time being, inclined to accept the excuses of François, while his Chancellor, Mercurin de Gattinara, gave him a hundred reasons for maintaining the peace.

It was not until Marguerite spitefully informed her nephew that the French were sneering at him, calling him "*Un quidam, certain petit roi,*" that, his vanity being deeply offended, the Emperor felt that the sword alone could decide his differences with the King of France.

CHAPTER XII

The Field of the Cloth of Gold

JUNE 1520

THERE was no man living more ambitious or more fond of magnificence than Cardinal Wolsey, the son of the butcher of Ipswich. Possessing entirely the ear of Henry VIII., he was for a long time in England more the King than the King himself. Everything else having fallen to his share, he was determined to become Pope, and had made up his mind accordingly to throw in the weight of his master on that side most likely to be useful to himself in gaining the Tiara and Keys of St. Peter.

François, determined if possible to remain master in Europe, lost no opportunity of writing the sweetest of epistles to the puissant Cardinal, whom he courted like a woman.

Charles, on the other side, sent him cash. The flattery and the cash from the two potentates were equally agreeable to Wolsey, but he determined to go over to France and see François for himself, and hear what he had to say before making up his mind to which of the rivals Henry should give his support. The chances were, however, considerably in favour of Charles, for the whole English instinct was antipathetic to France, the Crown of which Kingdom was still claimed by the island nation, where the victories of Crécy, Poitiers and Agincourt were not forgotten. The constant commerce, moreover, between England and the Low Countries



From an engraving by F. Holt after the painting by Holbein at Christ Church, Oxford.

THOMAS WOLSEY,
Cardinal of York.

made it highly desirable to remain on good terms with the ruler of those industrial States—London was therefore all in favour of Antwerp. The personal interview between the Monarchs of France and England was, however, arranged, François vainly hoping that by it miracles could be accomplished, old rancours forgotten, and a close and intimate friendship established.

Unfortunately, both of the young Kings, Henry of twenty-eight and François of twenty-six, started for their rendezvous between Calais and Ardres with the idea of cutting each other out by the brilliancy that they should display. Especially were these vain young men anxious to shine in the presence of the numerous gay ladies, whose bright eyes were to reign influence over the coming festivities.

Fearing, from the fact of his funds being short, that he might not be able to shine sufficiently, François wrote in advance to Wolsey, to suggest that, if his brother the King of England should think fit to forbid the nobles of his suite to erect tents of great richness, he would do the same. The result of this message, received through the French Ambassador, was only to determine Henry VIII. to do all the more in order to eclipse the Court of France. The English nobles were of the same mind ; it was determined by them that no expense should be spared. The Cardinal was accustomed to make public processions surrounded by his bodyguard of giants. He loved to perambulate the streets preceded by men of enormous stature carrying golden crosses, while he himself, attired in the purple of a Roman Legate, formed a magnificent figure in the centre of his huge retainers, from whose necks depended massive gold chains. When he found that François was alarmed at the prospective expense, he at once made up his mind that no effort should be spared by which Henry VIII. should outshine the King of France, and preparations were made accordingly.

When the French Court learned of this determination, it felt ashamed of its efforts in the direction of economy, and from that moment it was resolved that, since the

English wanted magnificence, they should find that the French could produce as much of it as themselves.

For the sake of the national honour, the French nobles set about ruining themselves to appear in the most brilliant attire and with the greatest éclat. Each one was resolved not only to outdo the English in the matter of expense, but likewise to outshine his own brother noble. No sacrifice appeared too great—châteaux, farms, estates were sold, while jewels, velvets, satins and brocades were bought. Above all, immense golden chains, to surpass the golden chains of the English, were obtained, which the Knights were to wear over their armour.

Of all the nobles of the French Court none made a greater outlay than that fop, the ladies' darling, Bonnivet, Admiral of France. As if to avenge himself for his recent defeat in his ambassadorial capacity at the Imperial election, he resolved to outshine all others. With his brother, Bonnivet raised a force of a thousand horsemen wherewith to appear at the festivities. Eminently satisfied with himself, he imagined that even the King's sister, Marguerite d'Angoulême, Duchesse d'Alençon, in whose good graces he was anxious to cut out the Duc de Bourbon, must acknowledge that he was worthy of the admiration of a Princess. Henry VIII. arrived at Calais on June 1st, 1520. He had brought with him Queen Catherine of Aragon, all the grand officers of his Crown, Cardinal Wolsey and all the prelates of his kingdom. All that was noble and rich in England had followed in his train. He carried with him in his fleet an immense palace of wood and glass, which was put together and set up outside his Castle of Guines, a little way from Calais. The interior of this palace was covered with the richest velvets and silks, and also ornamented with grand Arras tapestry. It was inside this temporary palace that Henry was to receive and entertain the Court of France.

François, on his side, had established himself at his Castle of Ardres. He had brought with him his wife, the young Queen Claude, his mother, the Duchesse d'Angoulême and his sister Marguerite. One lady there

was, however, in his train who outshone all of these Royal ladies. This was his brilliant mistress, Françoise de Châteaubriand, the real Queen of the fête.

This young lady, of the Royal race of Foix, still at this time reigned over the Court of France, although there were not wanting those who foretold that her brilliant reign would not endure much longer. For the present, however, in spite of the jealousy of Louise de Savoie, her sun remained strongly in the ascendant. What served to make François I. all the more assiduous to his lady-love was the furious jealousy of her husband, who often caused her beautiful eyes to be filled with tears by boxing her ears and administering other corporal punishment to his faithless spouse.

While the exhibitions of this ill-bred jealousy delighted the King's mother and the rivals of Françoise in the King's graces, they but served to keep the King at her feet. For François imagined that what another man desired so much must surely be worth keeping for himself, and he accordingly kept her, in spite of the jealous rages of the Comte de Châteaubriand—which he laughed at—in spite too of the jealous rages of his mother, which he disregarded.

Notwithstanding the element of immorality supplied by the presence of the fair but frail Françoise de Foix in the King's camp, there were not wanting various dignitaries of the Church to lend their splendour to the French King's suite.

No less than four Cardinals, each with a magnificent train, repaired to Ardres, while Du Prat, the Chancellor, and all the *grands seigneurs* of the realm were present. All the Princes of the Blood Royal had of course followed the young King. Of these, by far the most important and most imposing was the proud Connétable de Bourbon, at this time much beloved by the ardent Louise de Savoie.

The career of this Princess, who was passionate, violent, and sensual, had by no means been devoid of adventures when, neglecting all other lovers, she became violently in love with Charles de Montpensier-Bourbon. It will

be remembered that she had been married as a child, and was only a half-grown girl of sixteen when her first child, Marguerite, came into the world. She was still comparatively young and handsome when she centred all her ardent aspirations upon the Constable, who, for his own objects, was not averse to humouring her passion, although he was a good deal younger than herself. As the years rolled on and Bourbon lost his wife, Suzanne de Beaujeu, Madame, or the Queen-mother, as Louise was sometimes called, made up her mind that it would be impossible for her to live without Charles, to whom she proposed matrimony.

He could not well refuse the gold ring of affiance with which Louise presented him, but, already tired of her exigent affections, the Constable had no intention of marrying her except under certain conditions. When, after having borne several girls in succession, Queen Claude presented the King first with one son and then with two others, these conditions no longer existed. The Duc de Bourbon had no object in becoming the father-in-law of the King unless he should become at the same time heir to the throne, and with the appearance of these Princes his chance of the succession was gone. By espousing the King's mother he could not now even expect to become the father of a future King of France.

This young man, who was half Italian, was, however, by far too politic to show his hand too plainly, although it was an open secret at the Court that his affections were far more interested in Marguerite, the daughter, than in Louise the mother.

Should the Duc d'Alençon die—as well he might—Bourbon might reasonably expect to obtain the hand of his widow. In the meantime, like that *viveur* Bonnivet, he aspired in that day of facile morals to become some day, at all events, the successful lover of the lively authoress of the "Heptameron."

Failing the still married Marguerite, the ambitious Constable had another card up his sleeve, by which he might obtain a daughter of France for a bride. This was

to demand the hand of the so often promised young Princess Renée, daughter of Louis XII. and sister to Queen Claude.

Lest we should forget to mention it later, we may as well mention here that this charming and *spirituelle* Princess, who was even more inclined to the Reformed religion than her cousin Marguerite, was eventually married into Italy—to the Duke of Ferrara.

The camp of the King of France was pitched outside the small town of Ardres, not far from the banks of a little rivulet. It consisted of more than three hundred splendid tents covered with cloth of gold and silver. The side-walls and linings consisted of velvet and silken hangings. Upon these were worked the Royal arms of France, or the heraldic escutcheons of the Princes and lords of the French King's noble following. The huge golden Royal tent was placed in the centre of the camp. It was higher than the others, but could scarcely be described as being more brilliant. It was, however, surmounted by a golden statue of St. Michael, which, like the burnished coverings of the tents, dazzled the eyes in the rays of the glorious sun of a perfect June.

The bodyguard of François consisted of a picked body of a hundred Swiss, magnificently attired, and under the command of that hero of many battles, the Seigneur de Fleurange, son of Robert de la Marck. It is from the *Mémoires* of Fleurange that one of the best descriptions of this famous meeting has been preserved. Some twelve years previously, Fleurange had been left for dead at the battle of Agnadello, with no less than forty-two wounds. He lived, however, to figure in many another conflict, and married one of the two daughters of the celebrated Diane de Poitiers. Eventually, after many vicissitudes, this Duc de Bouillon et Sedan died, not on the field of battle, but of poison in Paris. The camp of Henry, which was erected at some distance from the dividing stream, was, like that of François, placed on the slope of a hill. It was almost, if not quite, equal in magnificence to that of France—we have the authority of

Shakespeare for saying that the French outshone the English.

Behold, then, the two friendly Kings and their Courts in presence of each other, and quite ready to shake hands if only they know how it is to be done. It might have been thought a simple enough matter—but no, nothing of the sort. It seemed rather that two hostile armies were in position, each in fear of being attacked by the other, such were the precautions taken on either side to avoid a surprise. And meanwhile, for a whole week, negotiations were carried on as to when, where, and how the two young Monarchs should give to one another the kiss of peace. Fortunately the weather remained fine, but as “Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do,” so in the French camp jealousies and quarrels broke out between the followers of the saturnine Duc de Bourbon and those of the gay Bonnivet.

Had it not been for the actual presence of the King, the retainers of the Duc would undoubtedly have attempted to cut the throats wholesale of those of the Amiral de France. As a matter of fact, only one life was lost, when M. de Pompéran, to please his master the Constable, killed one of the Knights belonging to Bonnivet.

By the following day, June 7th, 1520, satisfied etiquette at length allowed the two handsome young Kings to meet.

Each rode down the slope of his own hill, followed by an armed force of four hundred men. These forces were halted at such a distance as not to be dangerous to each other. Especially had it been stipulated in the long *pourparlers* that the English archers should keep out of bow-shot of François I., while the men-at-arms of François were not to come within charging distance of Henry.

Down the slope to the little stream rippling in the bottom of the valley rode, on one side, the King of England, large-built, rosy-checked, strong and robust, and, on the other, the tall, sinewy, handsome and knightly King of France.

This latter was preceded by the Constable of France, holding the Royal sword drawn in his hand. Henry perceiving this from a distance was all in a fluster. His Constable was also preceding him, but the English noble's sword was not drawn. He was ordered to make haste and whip out his blade in a hurry, so as not to be outdone by the Frenchman, to whose haughty looks Henry took exception. He afterwards remarked to François: "If I had a subject like that I'd soon have his head off his shoulders." As the two Kings, both perfect horsemen, advanced towards each other on their curveting steeds, they formed a splendid picture in the rays of that summer sun. The King of France was attired in cloth of gold, while his Majesty of England was resplendent in cloth of silver, spangled with pearls, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. Upon his head he wore a toque of velvet, splendid with jewels, and surmounted by magnificent white plumes.

As they got near to each other the Kings spurred their respective steeds to a gallop; then, as they checked their chargers suddenly side by side, each saluted the other with his hand to his cap. This was followed up by an embrace, given on horseback. After this they dismounted, and arm in arm they walked together to a splendid golden pavilion over which floated the English and French standards, while within were Cardinal Wolsey and Admiral Bonnivet, each waiting to do obeisance to the King of the other's nation.

Other courtiers from each side followed, a banqueting table, richly laden with gold and silver vases, was found spread before them, and the Englishmen and Frenchmen pledged each other in a cup of wine.

Presently, with all courtesy and humility, François placed all his Kingdoms and Seigneuries at the disposal of Henry, to which compliment the latter replied: "Sir, neither your realms nor the other places of your power is the matter of my regard, but the steadfastness and keeping of promise comprised in charters between you and me. That observed and kept, I never saw

Prince with my eyes, that might, of my heart, be more loved." That, at least, is how his words were recorded in English, but Henry was well acquainted with the French language.

A treaty was brought out for the two Princes to sign. As a matter of course, it contained one of the usual deceitful contracts of marriage never to be fulfilled. This time it was a renewal of the contract of the infant François, Dauphin of France, with the Princess Mary of England, now four years old. In the preamble of the treaty, Henry VIII. was described among his other titles as "King of France," a title which continued in use by the English Kings until the reign of George III. As it was read aloud, Henry smilingly apologised to François. "I will omit it, since you are here, for I should lie." None the less, not long afterwards Henry endeavoured once more to prove, arms in hand, that it was no lie but a reality.

On the following day the lists were laid out for jousting on the green sward of the valley. They were nine hundred paces in length and three hundred in width. At the ends were trees formed of cloth of gold, with leaves of green silk, from whose branches depended the joined shields of England and France. Around, immense stands were erected for the ladies and the nobility. Here and there around the lists were also refreshment tents and improvised palaces of unheard-of magnificence. The greatest care was observed during the tournaments, which took place daily, to do everything to exaggerate etiquette and thus prevent any real friendship being engendered between the two Kings. This was chiefly the work of Wolsey and Du Prat, who wished for no friendly understanding to which they were not personally parties to be entered into. Also the Kings were not allowed to tilt with each other.

Nevertheless, both entered the lists, and ran several courses with other knights. François made an exhibition both of elegance and strength, and broke his lances with accomplished regularity.

Henry, however, forgetting that the tilting was only a game and not actual warfare, charged the first poor devil to whom he was opposed with such headlong impetuosity that he struck him on the head with his spear with such force as to leave him stretched for dead on the field.

If François excelled with the lance, King Henry astonished all the ladies of the French Court by his wonderful skill at archery. With the long bow, he shot with surprising swiftness and exceeding accuracy, even at a great distance. At wrestling he was not, however, so lucky. One day, just before a dinner at which both the Queens were present, after they had been witnessing some wrestling matches, in which the English had won everything, Henry suddenly said to François: "Come, you have a turn with me." At the same moment he threw his arm around the French King. François, however, could wrestle. Although Henry's strength seemed to be superior, suddenly, by an adroit twist of his leg, François tripped his opponent and threw him on his back. The Englishman was up in a moment, red with vexation, and rushing at the Frenchman collared him for another bout. Each of the Queens, however, got hold of a King, and Catherine of Aragon and Claude de Valois, assisted by other ladies whom they called to help them, pulled the combatants apart as though they had been separating a couple of fighting terriers.

The Queens had far, far better have let the Kings have the regular three bouts of the match. As it was left unfinished, it was a far more unlucky throw for François than for Henry, since the latter never forgot it and it cost the former many lives. Had François, who so wanted Henry's friendship, been only a little more diplomatic, he would never have used that unlucky twist of the ankle, but allowed himself to be thrown. He could not, however, forget that he was being watched by the bright eyes of the fairest women of the day, and so exerted all his skill with fatal success.

One pleasant incident of a real friendly nature has, however, been recorded as taking place during the four weeks' encampment upon the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

Getting tired of the eternal etiquette, by which he was kept apart from Henry, François rode out early one morning without any guard, to where Henry was still sleeping within the Château de Guines. The archers on duty at the gate were astonished when the French King suddenly appeared, declaring merrily that he had come to take them all prisoners. He penetrated to Henry's bedroom, woke him up and offered to bring him his hot water. The pair exchanged rich presents of jewellery, and for a time after that there was real cordiality and friendship between them, in spite of Wolsey and Du Prat.

CHAPTER XIII

Anne Boleyn and her Effect on Henry

1520 AND LATER

WE have mentioned in what manner the two Cardinals, Wolsey and Du Prat, endeavoured to keep François and Henry apart. So successful were they in keeping up the mutual distrust during the meeting at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, that the wives of the two Kings became in a sense the hostages for their husbands. Accordingly, usually when Henry VIII. went to dine with François I., the amiable Queen Claude went over to the English camp, to pass the afternoon with Queen Catherine, while, on the other hand, should François spend the day at Guines, Catherine of Aragon would employ the time in a friendly chat on some religious subject with Claude at Ardres.

The followers of the two Kings, and the Kings themselves, had contrived to get closer together, in spite of the ambitious Ministers, after a daily communion extending over several weeks, and, even in spite of the unfortunate wrestling bout which was never completed, had but the Cardinals been removed altogether from the counsels of their masters, France and England might have entered into a solid union.

Although the commerce of the Low Countries was of such great concern to England, which imported hides and wools, it was evident enough to all the thinkers of the English Court that a political union with France was more to be desired than one with an Emperor who was

at the same time a King of Spain, and who, as such, would be certain to oppose the secularisation of the Church.

The idea of the two peoples, springing from the teachings of the German Reformers, was that the State in each country should succeed to the Church, and profit by complete emancipation. The smaller ideas of Wolsey and Du Prat were, on the other hand, while remaining subject to Rome, to obtain as much from Rome as the Pope could be induced to give. A few years later, while France continued to follow Du Prat, Henry VIII. broke away from Rome altogether, and the commencement of this severance can be traced back to the four festive weeks passed in June 1520 between Guines and Ardres.

Then it was that the seeds of a fatal passion first took root in the inflammable heart of Henry, a passion of a young man for a woman, which later in its effects revolutionised half of a world, and of which we still feel the effects to-day.

While Catherine of Aragon, then aged thirty-five, was averse to frivolity and fond of reading religious books, in which the sanguine Henry took but little interest, among the gay ladies of the French Court her twenty-eight year old husband found an altogether different tone prevailing. Love, gaiety, impassioned glances, freedom of speech and manners, were the rule in a society of merry women over which the lively Marguerite d'Angoulême and the frivolous Françoise de Foix reigned supreme.

Frequently in the company of the former Henry found a young girl who, although only fourteen years of age, had learned all the graces and attractive arts of the French ladies. A Frenchwoman in all but name, the girl was of English parentage.

Henry's skittish sister, Mary Tudor, who married Louis XII. in his last days and, by the late hours which she forced him to keep, killed him off in three months, had taken over with her to France a little girl of six, whose name was Anne Boleyn.



From a photograph after the painting by an unknown artist in the National Gallery.

CATHERINE OF ARAGON,
First Queen of Henry VIII.

When Louis XII. died in January 1515, and Mary, the widow, was at once married again, to the brilliant Duke of Suffolk, she left this beautiful child behind her in France, where the youthful Queen Claude took charge of her, and eventually handed her over to Marguerite, the sister of François. This Princess did all in her power to make of her an accomplished pupil. With Marguerite's known ideas on the subject of Reform, it is no wonder if the little Anne acquired at an early age similar views, and distrusted monks, priests, and even Cardinals, as much as her gay and talented mistress.

The youthful Anne was presented to Henry VIII. as a young lady who, although one of the brightest ornaments of the French Court, was nevertheless of British parentage. As such, Henry took an interest in her at once. When he met her laughing eyes and was entertained by her frolicsome manners, he forgot all about Catherine and fell in love with the young girl. When Henry left the Field of the Cloth of Gold, he carried away with him her portrait in his heart, with the results later which we know.

The parentage of Anne Boleyn was of bourgeois origin on the father's side, but noble on that of her mother.

Her great-grandfather, Sir Geoffrey, was a civic dignitary, Lord Mayor of London, while her father, Sir Thomas, was frequently employed as Ambassador to France.

His wife was the Lady Elizabeth, daughter and granddaughter of Dukes of Norfolk, and he eventually became the Earl of Wiltshire. From the time that Henry first began to realise what an impression this handsome child, with her saucy ways and rippling, provocative laughter, had made upon his heart, he was in a bad humour. The attractions of the ladies of the English Court, handsome though they were, could not counterbalance the fact that François seemed to outshine him in everything in the brilliant French circle, where above all he desired to shine. He left Guines at length in an irritable condition, and hurried off to Gravelines to meet Charles V.

When, for the second time within the month, the Emperor attended to pay his respects to the English King and his great Minister, he could not make himself too small, too humble. His modesty was so excessive, his obsequiousness so great, that Henry VIII. soon forgot his ill-humour, and decided that in this young man, eight years his junior, he had at all events found one who appreciated him at his true worth—one who did not wish to pose before the eyes of the world as being more brilliant than his already slightly corpulent uncle.

By the baseness of his humility, Charles easily gained over the good graces of the English King, whose pride was gratified at finding himself thus appreciated at his proper value.

Cardinal Wolsey also was delighted at the deference paid him by the young Emperor. He began to feel that he was looked upon by Charles V., who took such pains to conciliate him, in his proper light—that of arbiter of the fate of Europe.

Moreover, he was convinced that in any new election at Rome for the Papacy, the weight of the Emperor, the Austrian who also owned the Kingdom of Naples, would tell much more in his favour than that of a mere King of France and Duke of Milan. The die was cast accordingly. Charles parted from Henry VIII. with a smile of satisfaction on his features. Marguerite also, for his aunt had accompanied him to Gravelines, and, having neglected nothing to influence both the King and the Cardinal, she felt that her efforts had not been in vain. When the King and the Emperor parted, in spite of the recent treaty made by the former with François, they were firm allies, pledged to assist each other against the King of France.

Meanwhile affairs in Spain had been going very badly for Charles. Upon leaving that country, where already an insurrection was breaking out, called that of the *comuneros*, against his authority, the King of Spain had left Adrien d'Utrecht, his old tutor, as sole Regent. This appointment had more than ever angered the old

Spanish nobility, who for a time made common cause with the communes against the authority of the Flemish Regent. Speedy concessions made by Charles after his arrival in the Low Countries caused, however, the grandes of Spain to rally to their King's banner, with the result that, after a civil war had raged for some time and many bloody battles had taken place, the insurrection seemed on a fair way towards being suppressed by the nobility.

Advantage of the unsettled state of affairs in Spain had, however, been taken by Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre, secretly backed up by the King of France, at the same time that Robert de la Marck had challenged the Emperor and that his son Fleurange had actually invaded the Duchy of Luxembourg. This Duchy Fleurange claimed from Marguerite, who still remained the Governess of the Low Countries after Charles succeeded to the Empire. Affairs were already looking pretty badly for the young Emperor, who had got no proper forces ready, when he learned that André de Foix, Seigneur de Lesparre, one of the brothers of the King's mistress, had invaded Spanish Navarre. As Lesparre was the first cousin of the Prince of Béarn, Henri II. (d'Albret), there was nothing strange in his action. The inquieting part of the matter was, however, that in addition to eight thousand good Gascon infantry, taken from the territories of Albret and Foix, he commanded three hundred lances, and this cavalry was composed indubitably of Frenchmen subject to King François I. This admixture of French *gens d'armes* in Lesparre's force seemed to betoken beyond doubt the fact that François was already commencing to seek his revenge for his loss of the election, by entering into a state of war with his successful rival.

The invasion of Navarre was carried out with the greatest ease by Lesparre, owing to the fact that the Spanish Governor, the Duke of Najera, had withdrawn the greater part of his forces to aid in the suppression of the *comunidades*. The people of Navarre were, moreover, faithful to their rightful King. The result was,

therefore, that in about a fortnight André de Foix had retaken the whole of that country for his cousin the youthful Henri II. of Navarre.

Charles V. was without money and without an army, but he had secretly gained Henry VIII. and Cardinal Wolsey; and de Chièvres, dying about this time, left a large fortune to the master whom he had trained. He therefore put a bold face upon the matter and exclaimed: "God be praised that it is not I but the very Christian King who has started the war—it is evident that he wishes to make me bigger than I am. For either before long I shall be but a beggarly Emperor, or else he will be a very poor King of France."

At the same time Charles pressed Henry VIII. to cut into the conflict against François, whom he declared had broken the peace. Henry did not see matters in this light. Although he intended on the first opportunity to endeavour to regain several French provinces for himself, he was not ready to begin. Moreover, as a result of the treaty made at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, François was to pay him over a good deal of money. Until Charles agreed to himself pay him the large subsidies which he would lose by declaring war with France, Henry would, therefore, only agree for the present to put pressure upon François, and, by trickery, to prevent him from putting his forces in the field against the young Emperor.

This plan was carried out with great success. François, taken in, and wishing to keep Henry as an ally, disavowed any connection with either Robert de la Marck or the King of Navarre, and by sending no assistance to either lost all the initial advantages which they had gained for him in Flanders and on the Pyrenees. Charles accordingly was able to send Franz von Seckingen to drive back the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, and to ravage his country, at the same time that Lesparre, foolishly advancing beyond Navarre into Spanish territory, contrived to get himself thoroughly beaten, on June 30th, 1521, at the battle of Ezquiros. Here the Duke of

Najera destroyed his army, and the unfortunate Lesparre was not only blinded by a wound but taken prisoner. By this battle Spanish Navarre was lost for ever to the family of Albret, and although the grandson of Henri d'Albret became King of France, as Henri IV., it never was reunited to that kingdom.

When it was too late, François I. found how utterly he had been befooled by the pretended arbitrage which Cardinal Wolsey, representing his master, had gone through the farce of holding at Calais. François had sent word to Robert de la Marck to withdraw his troops from Luxembourg, and Robert had complied, to his great misfortune and loss, and at the same time both François and Charles V. had sent Ambassadors to lay their differences before Wolsey. Henry promised that, as soon as he found out, by due inquiry, which of the two Princes was responsible for the breach of the peace that had taken place, he would give his aid to that one who was not to blame. The whole affair was nothing but a blind to deceive François, and gain time. While he was thus wasting his time, in explaining to Wolsey through his Ambassadors the manner in which Charles V. had failed to fulfil any of the articles of the treaty of Noyon, Charles himself was not only causing Seckingen to punish his old friend la Marck, but sending him, with other troops under the Count of Nassau, to invade France.

Before François became awake to the Cardinal's treachery he had lost the towns of Mouzon, Ardres, Saint Armand, and Montagne, while the city of Tournay was besieged.

The war with the Empire was now to begin in earnest.

CHAPTER XIV

Two Disappointments for the Butcher's Son

1521—1523

THE state of armed rivalry between the Houses of France and Austria that commenced with the outbreak of war in the year 1521 may be said to have continued for a couple of hundred years.

Until the death of Louis XIV., the so-called Grand Monarque, in 1715, the eternal wars, springing from the jealousy engendered between two young men for the possession of an Imperial crown that brought with it no territorial or monetary advantages, were to devastate Europe.

Millions of lives were to be lost, hundreds of thousands of homesteads devastated and burned, endless cities were to be sacked, numberless women violated, men tortured and slain in cold blood. Horror after horror was to be piled up, first in one country, then in another, frequently in several countries at the same time. By land and by sea the work of destruction was to continue, while, fainting by the waysides or limping along the streets all over Europe, were to be seen men without arms, men without legs, or blinded by wounds—all mere parodies of humanity.

The resources of the various States in the meantime were continually so strained, taxation so oppressive, that life for the multitude was one long struggle with starvation. Tax succeeded tax. When no money remained the horse was taken—after the horse the cow, the sheep, the goat that alone remained. During this terrible state

of affairs, which, owing to the ambitions of rulers whom it had pleased Providence to set over humanity for its curse, endured so long, no country suffered more than France.

There generation after generation of mortals suffered untold privations, underwent every kind of horror, merely for the gratification of the ambitions of the Kings. Even by the time of Henri IV. the country was nothing but a living sore.

France was invaded time after time in the north or the south, and with each invasion came a repetition of the same terrible tale of death, arson, plunder, and rapine. The unfortunate peasants lived in constant dread of the appearance of a new army, whether of friend or foe it mattered little : they remembered only too well what had happened to them the last time that soldiers had passed that way. When we think that there were no proper hospitals, no ambulances or efficient medical service for these soldiers themselves, who were left only too frequently to perish miserably where they fell, the horror of it all is the more easy to understand. We can imagine the fearful agonies with the gaunt wolves, the prowling unfed dogs, savage with hunger, preying upon these poor defenceless beings, tearing them to pieces, worrying them, before they were dead !

Then, again, what was the fate of the thousands of prisoners that fell into the hands of one side or the other ? The Knights, the nobles were, we know, held for ransom, but how were the others treated ? What became of them when dragged in the wake of a retreating army ? History is singularly reticent upon this point. We can only imagine their sufferings, since no one seems to have thought it worth while to record them. Must they not, time after time, have been put ruthlessly to the sword, merely to get them out of the way ? Were they not, when food was scarce for an army passing through an already devastated country, left to die of the awful pangs of slow starvation ? Terrible as were these awful and untold sufferings, did the Kings, the Princes, who must have constantly had

them under their eyes, ever on that account abate one jot or tittle of their inordinate ambitions, their thirst for military glory? Alas! no answer is necessary.

Such, then, was the ghastly future that was opening up for Europe; and since no amount of commiseration bestowed by us now upon the unhappy ones who were to suffer and die through the cruelty of the Princes will alter matters, it only remains for us to chronicle the events by which, from time to time, one or the other of them exalted himself and abased his rival.

To return to the opening scenes of these two centuries of warfare: while one brother of the King's mistress was, as we have seen, first successful and then miserably defeated in Navarre, François I., while getting ready to repel the invasion of his province of Champagne, sent back another brother into Italy. This was Odet de Foix, Seigneur de Lautrec, who was the Governor of Milan. In this country, owing to the giddy ambition of the Pope, Leo X., who was trying subtly to take advantage of both the combatants at the same time, and thereby to regain the territories of Parma and Piacenza, a most deplorable state of warfare soon existed.

Since the Medici Pope was treating shrewdly with both the combatants, he had no difficulty in persuading François that he would provide him in his native city of Florence with the sum of four hundred thousand crowns. In the expectancy of this money, wherewith to pay his troops, Lautrec gaily went ahead; but not before, with a considerable amount of forethought, he had extracted a solemn promise from the King that the funds should be remitted to him without delay in Milan.

Not content with the King's promise, Lautrec obtained the word also of the Duchesse d'Angoulême, and of the Treasurer of the kingdom, Jacques de Semblançay, an honest old man upon whom he felt that he could rely. Louise de Savoie did not hesitate to give her assurance that all would be well, and in addition declared solemnly that if the money did not come from Florence it should be raised in Languedoc, and forwarded from that province.

The Treasurer gave similar assurances, but alas for promises! When Lautrec arrived in Milan he received money neither from one source nor from another.

Furious at his deception, Lautrec, who for five years had mismanaged Milan, set about obtaining funds by the most unscrupulous methods—by fines, judicial murders, and confiscations. He was joined by his brother the Maréchal Thomas de Foix, Seigneur de Lescun, to which third brother of Madame de Châteaubriand he passed over a considerable part of the sums which he raised by such unjust means. The discontent among the despoiled inhabitants of the Duchy of Milan was naturally excessive, and they began loudly to cry for the return of a Sforza.

Before long the Pope declared openly for the Emperor; and although the two brothers de Foix had several successes, of which Lautrec very foolishly failed to take advantage, the French troops soon found themselves besieged in Milan by Spaniards under Ferdinand d'Avalos, Marquis of Pescara, and a Papal army under Prospero Colonna. By these the city was captured on November 19th, 1521.

The principal causes of the loss of Milan were the non-payment of his soldiers by Lautrec, for want of funds, and the cruelty of which he had been guilty in order to obtain money. The unpaid soldiers—many of whom were Swiss, some French, and the rest Venetian allies—were discouraged and disinclined to fight, and the more so since Lautrec had failed a short time previously to take an excellent opportunity of attacking the confederated foe, at a place called Robecco, where victory seemed to be certain.

The money, however, which Lautrec had never received had been duly raised in Languedoc. It had been retained—it will scarcely be believed by whom—by the King's own mother! The avaricious Louise de Savoie had secretly diverted the funds required to pay her son's troops, and to ensure the salvation of his much-beloved Duchy of Milan, to her own private purse. One reason

for this disgraceful action was her hatred of the King's mistress, whose brothers Louise sought to discredit and ruin.

Among the political crimes committed by Lautrec had been the recent public decapitation in Milan of the chief of one of the greatest houses of Lombardy. This was the aged Cristofano Pallavicino, suspected by him of being in league with a large number of Milanese malcontents, who had not long since risen in rebellion owing to the Governor's exactions, but had been defeated by Lescun, whom they had besieged in Parma. Lescun, who had for a time governed Milan in his brother's absence, had likewise caused Manfredo Pallavicino, the nephew of Cristofano, to be cut in quarters and his limbs to be nailed to the doors of Milan. Disgusted with these cruelties, while the city was being attacked, its inhabitants rose against the French and opened the gates to Pescara and Prospero Colonna, some of whose troops had already entered the city by an aqueduct. These Generals were, however, unable to capture the citadel, in which, while retiring from the town, Lautrec left a strong garrison well provided with provisions. He himself, with the débris of his army, retired into Venetian territory, while the greater part of the Milanese fell into the hands of the enemy. Lodi, Parma, Piacenza, and Pavia followed the example of Milan, and surrendered to the forces of the confederates.

In addition to desiring Parma and Piacenza, Leo X. had in view the future annexation of the Duchy of Ferrara to the Papal dominions, and likewise the re-establishment of a Duke of the Sforzas at Milan. In order to obtain the assistance of the Spanish forces of the Imperialists, he had suddenly relented in the matter of investing Charles V. with the kingdom of Naples.

At the very time that Leo X. was treating in a friendly manner with the Very Christian King, he, therefore, treacherously accorded the Crown of Naples to Charles V., as his vassal. On June 29th, 1521, the vassal Emperor accordingly presented to the Pope a white hackney, in



From the painting at the Vatican, Rome, Photo by Alinari.

LEO X. RIDING IN STATE.

sign of feudal homage. At the same time he paid Leo X. tribute, which was increased by the sum of seven thousand golden ducats above the usual tribute paid by the Kings of the Two Sicilies.

While the Emperor then agreed to aid the Pope in the objects of his ambition, Leo X. promised to help Charles to expel the French from Lombardy. He also helped largely, with funds raised from the Papal States, in paying the troops of the impoverished Emperor, which would otherwise have been unable to keep the field.

When Leo X. was made acquainted with the occupation of Milan, and the gain to the Papal dominions of Parma and Piacenza, he may literally be said to have died of joy. Always in a bad state of health, the cerebral excitement caused by this good news, which he caused to be celebrated by universal illuminations and rejoicings, had already weakened him, when exposure to chilling night winds while witnessing the blazing of the bonfires which he had ordered rendered him violently ill.

Leo X. went to bed, and died in a few hours, it is said without even receiving the last rites of the Church. He was not yet forty-six at the time of his sudden death, on December 1st, 1521, and appears to have been mourned only by the poets, scholars, painters, huntsmen, and buffoons, upon whom he had squandered such immense sums during his reign.

The Pope's body was cut up after death, in the search for poison, which was not found, although his cup-bearer was imprisoned for a time on suspicion of having administered to him a dose after the fashion of that which had taken off his predecessor, Alexander VI. The funeral of Leo X., who had been so fond of magnificence during his lifetime, was not accompanied by any of the pomp in which he had so much rejoiced. The fact was that this extravagant scion of the family of Medici had left no money in the Papal coffers wherewith he could be suitably buried. As the leader of the movement of the Renaissance in Italy, Leo X. must justly remain famous, but his general character was so ignoble, he was

invariably so cunning, shifty, and unreliable, that when his encouragement of the arts and letters has been mentioned it is better to say no more about him.

By Leo's death, Cardinal Wolsey thought that he saw a chance of attaining his ambitions and succeeding to the Papacy. The Pope's illegitimate cousin had the same ideas in his head. Both were, however, to be thoroughly disappointed at the sittings of the Conclave during the month of December, for there was fierce opposition to Giulio de' Medici among the members of the Sacred College of Cardinals. He, accordingly, only hurried back to Rome from the Imperialist Camp in Lombardy to find that they would have none of him.

As for Wolsey, Cardinal of York, this tricky Prelate, who had for so long past been busily employed in deceiving François I. on behalf of the Emperor, now found himself deceived in turn. For, although Charles V. had solemnly promised again and again that he would contrive to have Wolsey elected Pope, a strange and inexplicable thing happened.

This was that the Emperor's old Flemish tutor, and now his Viceroy in Spain, Adrien d'Utrecht, Cardinal of Tortosa, was elected to the Papal Chair.

When Henry VIII. and Wolsey heard of this, they naturally asked somewhat testily of the Emperor the question: "Now, how on earth has that happened?"

"I assure you that I have not the slightest idea in the world," replied Charles innocently; "but I had nothing to do with it. I am as surprised as you are."

"It seems rather odd—your own tutor too! And now he, of all men, is your Over-Lord in Naples, where you happen to have some interests," replied Henry and the Cardinal of York.

"It is odd, certainly," retorted Charles; "but I will see that it doesn't happen again—it shall be Wolsey who is Pope next time, as sure as I am King of the Romans and Emperor-Elect."

With this reply Wolsey had to be satisfied, especially as the worthy Adrien Dedel, well known for his piety,

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wrote a letter publicly to the Emperor, in which he took care to say that he was in no way beholden to his former pupil for his unexpected elevation to the Papacy—to which he ascended under the title of Adrian VI.

This Pope lasted for only a year at the head of the Church of Rome, and during that period he shone out as a good and just soul in a sordid and selfish age. Without personal ambition, and seeking the reformation of, that sink of iniquity, Rome, Adrian did all within his power to reconcile François I. and Charles V., for the good of Europe and its protection against the Turk. He was, however, too good for his age, and when he died, it was said of poison, in September 1523, he did so utterly disappointed at his wasted efforts.

Rome was openly delighted to see the last of him, and, when the Conclave again met, the Cardinals elected, not Wolsey, but Giulio de' Medici, who ascended the Papal Throne as Clement VII.

Giulio was the illegitimate son of Giuliano de' Medici, the brother of Lorenzo I. (*Il Magnifico*), and was born in the year 1478.

CHAPTER XV

Bayard to the Rescue

1521

WHILE matters were going so badly for Odet de Foix and his master's cause in Italy, François was trying to repair the fault of which he had been guilty in leaving his frontiers on the side of Flanders unprotected. He commenced, however, by a grave error, which was in sending some troops to the north under his brother-in-law, the Duc d'Alençon, when he should by rights have sent the Connétable de France, the Duc de Bourbon. The reason for this error and injustice was apparent. While the credit of his sister Marguerite had commenced to outweigh even that of the lovely Comtesse de Châteaubriand, that of the haughty Bourbon was in the decline, and already Louise de Savoie was commencing to hate her unreliable lover. Marguerite's husband, the Duc d'Alençon, who was by no means a great soldier, did nothing of any account before it was learned that Mézières, the key to Champagne, was about to be invested by the Imperial armies, under the Count of Nassau and Franz von Seckingen.

It was suddenly realised that this important place was in the worst possible condition for defence, and while François himself was busily employed in trying to get an army together, the question arose, who was there who could be trusted to do anything to prevent the town from falling into the hands of the enemy, for at all events the space of one month.

There was only one man upon whose known courage

and ability François knew that he could rely. This was the Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche*.

The gallant Bayard replied with joy and alacrity to the call of his King. "More delighted than if he had received the King's order for a hundred thousand crowns," the Gentil Seigneur threw himself into Mézières, with two companies of men-at-arms, some gentlemen volunteers, and a couple of thousand foot soldiers. Some of those with him thought the place too weak to be defended. "For courageous hearts," exclaimed the bold Bayard, "there is no place too weak to defend."

He set to work at once to destroy the bridge across the river Meuse and to repair the fortifications. He gave away the whole of his own money to those under him, and set them the example of working himself with a pick and shovel.

It was while awaiting the attack of the enemy at Mézières that the brave Knight made one of those notable harangues by which, in times of the greatest difficulty and danger, he was wont to raise the failing spirits of those around him. "Comrades," he remarked gaily, "if we were in a field, having nothing before us but a four-foot ditch, still could we fight for a whole day without being defeated. Thank God! here we have a moat, walls, and ramparts; and I verily believe that before ever the enemies put a foot within them many of their number will sleep in the ditches."

The garrison cheered his words—they believed that under such a man they could never suffer defeat.

Soon Seckingen appeared on one side of Mézières and that able soldier Nassau on the other. These two Imperialist leaders sent a herald with a polite message, inviting Bayard to surrender the town. This herald was charged to say that "they esteemed the great and praiseworthy courage which existed in the Seigneur de Bayard, and they would be greatly displeased if he should be taken by assault, for his honour would suffer in such an unfortunate eventuality, and also, possibly, it might cost him his life."

The Bon Chevalier sent back reply "that he had not the honour of the acquaintance of the Seigneurs de Nassau and Seckingen, but he thanked them for their gracious intentions towards himself. Nevertheless, the King having chosen him to keep the place, he would preserve it so well that the Imperialists would be tired of the siege before himself, and that before hearing any talk of leaving the town, he hoped to make in the ditches a bridge of dead bodies, over which he would be able to pass."

When this defiant answer to their summons was brought back to Nassau, an officer who knew the Knight said: "Do not expect ever to get into the town while the Chevalier lives: he is a man who would inspire the greatest cowards with courage. He and those under him will all die in the breach before ever they let us pass. Better for us if there were two thousand more men in the place and Bayard out of it."

"Come, come," replied Nassau; "he is not made either of bronze or steel. If he is so brave let him get ready to prove it to us, for in the next four days I will send him so many bombs that he will not know which way to turn."

Nassau was as good as his word, and during the ensuing days he kept up the most furious cannonade imaginable. Its effects were so terrible that a number of Bayard's foot-soldiers let themselves down over the walls and escaped. "All the better," remarked the Knight; "I would rather be without such rascals than with them—such *canaille* are not fit to gain honour with us."

When Seckingen's batteries, placed on a hill on the other side of the town, were found to be doing even more damage than those of Nassau, the wily Bayard conceived an excellent ruse whereby he might be rid of the too close attentions of this celebrated free-lance.

Robert de la Marck was in his fortified city of Sedan close at hand, and to him the commandant of Mézières wrote a letter. This was so worded as to make it appear

that a large body of Swiss were about to arrive and fall suddenly upon Seckingen, for whom Bayard said he was sorry, as he had evidently been purposely placed in the post of the greatest danger. The letter further implied that Nassau himself, with his army, was about to come over to the King of France.

The letter was given to a peasant to carry, and Bayard awaited events with a delighted sense of anticipation. The Chevalier did not have to wait long for his expected amusement. When the peasant had been, as he was expected to be, stopped at Seckingen's outposts, there was soon plenty to be seen to offer entertainment for those watching from the damaged ramparts of Mézières.

Within a few minutes after the capture of the bearer of the supposed missive to the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, drums were heard beating and trumpets sounding, in all directions the tents were observed being struck, and the troops falling in by companies on every side. Directly afterwards, Seckingen and all his forces—cavalry, artillery, and infantry—were seen recrossing the Meuse, to the same side of the river as that upon which the Count of Nassau's forces were in position.

Frequent messengers were seen swiftly coming from Nassau, and returning as hurriedly, and then all the drumming and trumpeting was repeated from Nassau's camp, where there was the greatest commotion as the troops of that General took their places in the ranks.

When, after a short time, the Chevalier Bayard saw the army of Nassau all drawn up in battle array, and opposed to the army of Seckingen, now also deployed in fighting formation, he laughed to fits (*rit à gorge déployée*) at the success of his stratagem. Without waiting for the two Imperialist armies to fall upon each other, as they seemed about to do, Bayard caused every gun that he could bring to bear from the walls to be repeatedly discharged into the opposing ranks of his formerly united foes. So angry, however, were Seckingen and Nassau, who had previously quarrelled with each

other, that without waiting to return the fire from Mézières, each drew off his forces in an opposite direction. In this manner, after a three weeks' investment, in which the attackers had lost many men but no assault had been attempted, was the siege of Mézières raised. By a miracle, the peasant who had carried the letter escaped in the confusion without being hanged, and returned to the triumphant Bayard to tell him of all the furious messages which he had heard sent backwards and forwards, between Franz von Seckingen and Nassau, after the supposed letter to Robert de la Marck was read aloud in the presence of a council of infuriated officers at the headquarters of the former.

Such was the distrust caused between these two leaders of the Emperor's forces by this cunning trick of the Gentil Seigneur, that for a long time afterwards they refused to act together. Seckingen retired through Picardy in his rage, and ravaged the country.

In the meantime François I. had got an excellent army together. Putting d'Alençon in command of the advance guard, which belonged by rights to Bourbon, and keeping the latter with him with the main body, he advanced to meet Nassau. The Emperor himself now came to take command of Nassau's forces, but while he sent the Count forward to oppose the passage by François of the Meuse, Charles prudently remained within the sheltering walls of Valenciennes. Now it was that the result of the French King's distrust of the warlike Constable proved most disadvantageous to France. For after having crossed the river Escaut, in spite of Nassau's opposition, François found himself in a splendid position to give battle. Had he done so with his superior forces, it is more than probable that he would not only have crushed the Emperor completely but taken him prisoner also. On October 22nd, 1521, François was between Cambrai and Valenciennes, when the Constable pointed out to him that the decisive moment had come and success was certain. François was brave enough, but he had no grasp of a situation. He turned coldly from

the capable Bourbon and preferred to listen to the advice of the Duc d'Alençon, who said that with an army chiefly consisting of recruits it was better to risk no pitched battle. Charles V. accordingly made his escape with barely a hundred horsemen, while Nassau retired hastily, followed by François, who took several of the Emperor's cities in Flanders.

At no time was the influence of that brilliant woman the Archduchess Marguerite more *en évidence* than at about this period. At one time she was personally treating with Wolsey, who repaired to meet her at Bruges; at another she was to be found addressing the States-General and inveighing against the treacherous conduct of François. Again she made personal appeals to the patriotism of the people, through the assembled States of Ghent, begging them to give their lives and their purses to her nephew the Emperor. Her eloquence and arguments were equally convincing, and Charles owed his aunt everything, since it was entirely through her efforts that an army of over twenty thousand men was placed at his disposition.

She busied herself at the same time with various affiances and marriages in that year, 1521, when the nuptials of her nephew Ferdinand were successfully carried out with the young Anne, soon to become heiress of Hungary, almost at the same time that Marguerite was signing a contract with Wolsey for the espousal of the Emperor to his cousin Mary of England. This marriage, according to the arrangements made by Marguerite at Bruges, was not to take place until Mary should be twelve years old. The astute Archduchess stipulated, as one of the terms of this alliance, that Henry VIII. should join the Emperor with forty thousand men, to invade the dominions of the French King, whose conduct, in endeavouring to protect himself against her machinations, Marguerite had denounced publicly as being so "perfidious."

This same perfidious King was, however, causing the vindictive Marguerite considerable heartburnings before

the end of the year, as he amply revenged himself for the ravages of Seckingen in Picardy by laying waste a considerable part of the border countries over which the Archduchess ruled.

After taking the cities of Bouchain and Hesdin, however, François found that the heavy autumnal rains made it impossible for him to follow up his successes. Marguerite therefore had her revenge in a measure, when the French town of Tournay fell into the hands of the forces which she had raised for her nephew.

On the southern borders of France fortune seemed, however, to smile on the Very Christian King, as the gay Bonnivet, usually as incompetent in war as he was gallant and rash, having been entrusted with command of the army of Guienne, was attended with unusual good luck. He took Saint-Jean-de-Luz, recovered all of French Navarre, that is to say, the part of that country north of the Pyrenees, and particularly distinguished himself by capturing from the Spanish troops of Charles the important town of Fontarabia.

Whether successful or unsuccessful, Bonnivet—the Admiral of France, who probably never even saw a ship-of-war in his life—was always a favourite at Court. One reason for this fact was that he had been the intimate friend of François from boyhood. To such an extent was the friendship carried that, apart from the never resented attempt upon the honour of the King's sister, Marguerite, which we have mentioned, the King on several occasions had cause to complain that Bonnivet successfully contested with him the favours of some fair lady. By Louise de Savoie he was always strongly supported, for the reason that he was closely leagued with her against Bourbon—the man who would not marry her when she asked him. The alliance of Bonnivet with the King's mother was, indeed, one of the chief causes of the ultimate defection of the Constable, who hated the Admiral and rightly accused him of instigating the King against himself.



*From a photo by W. A. Mansell of a lithograph after the stained-glass window in the church of
Notre Dame de Brou (Bourg-en-Bresse).*

MARGUERITE, ARCHDUCHESS OF AUSTRIA.

CHAPTER XVI

How Marguerite d'Angoulême Influenced François I.

1517 AND LATER

THE three Monarchs who throughout the first half of the sixteenth century were so constantly employed in trying to cut one another's throats had a common ancestor. Henry VIII., François I., and Charles V. were all descended from Louis IX. of France, called Saint-Louis. So also were the Duc d'Alençon and the Duc de Bourbon, the Constable—all were cousins.

This fact is interesting to note, as showing how little the ties of marriages, about which so much fuss was made, served to promote any real friendly feeling, any kind of faith and loyalty to one another, among the common descendants of those marriages, when they happened to be of the great ones of the earth.

On the contrary, the strain of the same blood in them only seemed to make them the more treacherous to, the more bitter against, one another, the mere fact of the relationship generally involving the claim of one to some possession which had fallen into the hands of another.

Of all the open claims to which we could refer as existing between the personages of Royal blood mentioned above, none was the cause of such deadly strife as that of the Duchy of Burgundy, claimed by the Emperor from "his dear brother and cousin," François I.

In spite of all the Kingdoms that he possessed, this one Duchy was apparently of greater value in the eyes of Charles than all the rest of Europe put together. Its ownership was one of the principal subjects laid before Wolsey to decide upon in his mock arbitration at Calais, which commenced before the nominal beginning of the war, and continued for some time after the troops of Charles had actually invaded France.

There were half a dozen other places asked for by Charles, towns and counties which, if yielded up, would have established him in the heart of France, within striking distance of Paris. His claim to these, founded on old treaties, was probably just as good or better than that to Burgundy. Had but the latter Duchy been yielded by François, however, there might have been peace at once and for ever between the rivals, and they might have become firm friends. For in all other matters Charles's ambition was not so much at stake but that there might always have been found a means of mutual accommodation.

Had the Emperor but obtained his precious Burgundy, François would in all probability never have had any complaints to make about Imperial molestation in Milan. Instead of aiding the Pope to put the King of France out of Italy, Charles would then more likely have suggested to François that together they should put the Pope out of that country, and divide the Papal dominions between them.

What a deal of trouble there might have been saved ! Even, in all probability, François, if he had bargained for it, could have had Spanish Navarre back for his friend and ally, Henri d'Albret, and thus have secured his frontiers permanently from attack on the side of Spain.

There was, however, at the beginning of 1522 not the slightest chance of François giving way, and as he, on his side, thought more about the recovery of Milan, recently lost by Lautrec, than the defence of his own realms, he devoted all his efforts towards sending more

troops to Italy, where not only did the citadel of Milan still hold out, but the French retained a number of fortified places.

Meanwhile money was wanted, and money was hard to obtain as—owing to the ravages of Seckingen in the north of France, from which François had failed to protect his unfortunate people—the King found himself very unpopular.

François had up to this time lived triumphantly upon his glory as the victor of Marignano, but his subjects were beginning to see through him—he had ceased to be for them the Paladin, the modern Roland, as which for a time he had shone in the popular eye.

A feeling of despair, of want of reliance on the King, pervaded the land. Men of the various Parliaments of Paris and the provinces, the clergy, and the nobility, saw all places and emoluments given into the hands of that newly established institution, the Court. Men raged when they saw the incompetent brothers of the King's mistress entrusted with the highest commands, while Bourbon, a warrior of worth, was neglected. The people cried out in their despair: "Our King does not help us! Have we no redress?"

The teachings of Reform were commencing to spread in France, especially in the industrial centre of Meaux, where the Bishop Briçonnet encouraged the movement. These teachings said: "Yes, there is redress to be found. Redress is to be obtained, but only from God, who will, without the intervention of either King or clergy, afford you protection."

With this feeling implanted in the heart, immense numbers of the people began to incline more and more towards the doctrines of Luther, while the movement was encouraged by Marguerite, the King's sister, who was constantly in communication with the Bishop of Meaux. The Duchesse d'Alençon even endeavoured, for a time it seemed with success, to incline her brother and her mother towards listening with a favourable ear to the new teachings. She also without much difficulty

induced François to encourage what was called "the new learning" of the Renaissance, which new learning was merely the revival of interest in the ancient classical writers, the reversal of the musty and stupid tenets of the clergy of the Middle Ages, men who looked upon anything Greek as absolute heresy. How ridiculous were these teachings, as still carried on by the doctors of the Sorbonne¹ in Paris, can be judged by a letter written about this time by Glaréan to that brilliant scholar, but by no means too reliable savant and humanist, Erasmus. The writer's scorn is evident, as he says :

"What a disillusion ! There is no one here who explains, either in public or private lessons, an important Greek author. The numberless cohorts of sophists block all progress. I was lately present at a disputation in the Sorbonne, where I heard frequent applause. They were not a little out of temper with Adam, our first father, for having eaten apples instead of pears ; those grave individuals could scarcely restrain their indignation. But the gravity of the theologian entirely outweighed the anger—not a single soul laughed."

Marguerite d'Angoulême was constantly stirring her brother up to do away with this condition of idiocy in the schools. She was backed up in her efforts by the Cardinal Jean du Bellay, who was privately married to her old friend and instructress, the lively and learned Madame de Châtillon. There were also several well-instructed men about the Court whom Marguerite encouraged to go ahead. Guillaume Budé, an excellent Greek scholar, was one of these, and Guillaume Petit, the King's Confessor, was another. François was easily influenced in the right direction where the restoration of classical learning was concerned. He longed to shine as the protector of letters, to earn fame for the encourage-

¹ The Sorbonne was the most famous of the colleges of the medieval University of Paris, originally exclusively devoted to theology. It was founded in 1253 by Robert of Sorbon, in the diocese of Rheims. Its dogmatic decisions controlled the intellectual life of Europe,

ment of science and learning in France, as much as did Leo X. in Rome.

He commenced to talk of forming a new Royal College, one richly provided with funds, in which every branch of human learning should be taught by instructors famed for their erudition, who should be summoned from all parts of the earth. Marguerite had no difficulty, therefore, in persuading her brother to send for Erasmus, as one who would form a brilliant nucleus for others to gather around. The clever but shifty Erasmus, a man born of illegitimate parentage in the Low Countries, who had acquired much knowledge but was never too sure of what his religious opinions were, was, however, too wary to place himself in those ticklish times anywhere within reach of the jealous doctors of the Sorbonne. He was wise in his generation, for had he not translated the Greek Testament, and was not that in itself a crime against religion? The Sorbonne distinctly forbade the reading of Greek a little later on, and of Hebrew also. This was, however, when the King happened to be out of the way, in a Spanish prison, and when the doctors were, in spite of the efforts of Marguerite and of the King's orders, sent from afar, beginning to burn people in Paris on account of their heresies.

It was not until after his return from Spain that, for one reason or another—such as having a Spanish wife or a desire to keep in with Pope Clement VII.—François definitely turned his back on Reform, and, greatly to the disappointment of his sister, after having saved some of her protégés from the Sorbonne, allowed the burnings to continue.

Marguerite's influence nevertheless prevailed in the end against the savage ferocity of the Sorbonne in the matter of the formation of a Collège de France. In this, although it was in no way established on the scale of magnificence originally intended, there were chairs for Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Medicine, and Philosophy. Even Arabic and Physiology had their instructors in this establishment; but it was a long time before all of these

different teachers were installed. One of the greatest opponents of the *spirituelle* authoress of the "Heptameron" in the matter was the bigoted Maître Noël Bédà. This fanatic could not be restrained even by the King; he even dared to denounce the amiable Queen of Navarre as herself a heretic, and forbade the reading of the mystical book she published called the *Miroir de l'âme pécheresse*. Not long before this Marguerite had begged of her brother, the life of Calvin, the young cooper's son from Noyon, and Bédà was all the more anxious to be revenged on the King's sister. François caused the doctors of the Sorbonne, who had placed Marguerite's name on the "Index," to make a public apology and retractation, which they did in the most abject manner.

It was not likely, however, that Bédà, a bigot who openly maintained before the King that "Hebrew and Greek would be the cause of numerous heresies," could be subdued so easily. His next move was to cause a farce to be performed by students, in which Marguerite was shown as receiving a translation of the Gospels direct from Hell. Then François sent Bédà and three of his *confrères* to prison, but the good-hearted Marguerite begged their release from her brother.

She had better, however, have left these bitter opponents of learning in the Conciergerie, as not long after their release they took a terrible revenge. For some time Marguerite, become Queen of Navarre, had been defending from the Sorbonne a rich and amiable gentleman from Picardy, named Louis de Berquin. She had already succeeded in tearing Berquin once from the doctors' clutches. Now, in the absence of the King, they condemned the unfortunate gentleman to be imprisoned for ever between four walls in a dark dungeon. Then, when he appealed, fearing that the influence of the King's sister might cause his release, they took Berquin out and, before orders to the contrary could be received from the Court at Blois, burned him alive in the Place de Grève at Paris.

After this insult to his sister, François ordered the

imprisonment for life of the truculent Bédarides, and he died in a damp dungeon. The King himself, however, owing to the inflammatory notices nailed by the Reformers to the walls of the Churches, now ceased to protect them any longer, and also, as we have said, for political reasons he ceased to listen to his sister's intercessions on their behalf. Nevertheless she herself continued to give refuge to many so-called heretics at her Navarrese Court, at Pau or Nérac.

To return to the year 1522, when all of this religious commotion was commencing in France. The King found himself so unpopular in Paris that he had actually to humble himself before the Provosts at the Hôtel de Ville in order to induce the Parisians to raise the troops that he required. He did the same thing at Rouen, where his prayers for assistance were listened to with a better grace. At length, having obtained what he required, François left for Lyon, always preoccupied with the idea of Italy, and not troubling his brain about the defence of France.

CHAPTER XVII

The Luck of Charles V.

OCCUPIED in his usual fashion with the delights of love and the chase, François did not commence his new campaign in Italy in person, but once more confided the command of the newly raised troops to the inefficient and cruel Lautrec, the influence of whose sister, Françoise de Foix, not yet having reached the vanishing point which had been foretold by her enemies.

The chances for the recovery of Milan seemed pretty good, for, while the new Pope, Adrian VI., did not appear hostile to France, and Florence, no longer at the beck and call of a Medici, seemed also neutral, the Venetians were again ready to cast in their lot with François I.

An additional advantage was that the Swiss, who had previously been divided for and against France, now determined to enrol their mercenary bands only on the side opposed to Charles V.

With Lautrec were associated in the command of the united French forces the young Maréchal de France, Anne de Montmorency, and the Bastard of Savoy, the illegitimate brother of Louise. René the Bastard had not forgotten his former harsh treatment at the hands of the Archduchess Marguerite, and was anxious if possible to take his revenge upon her nephew.

On the Imperialist side the principal commanders were the cautious and capable Prospero Colonna and, a very obstinate and determined soldier of Spain, Antonio da Leyva. With them was a considerable body of

German lansquenets, under the leadership of a tough old soldier named George von Frundsberg: these had been raised in person by the young Francesco Sforza with the object of recovering for himself the Duchy of Milan. More German troops had also been raised by Jerome Adorno, who was seeking to take advantage of the occasion in order to oust the French from Genoa, and establish himself as ruler in that city, of which François I. was the Seigneur.

The army with which Odet de Foix took the field for the campaign of 1522 was of formidable dimensions. In addition to being joined by the Venetians and thousands of the warlike Swiss, he had the good luck to be able to engage the services of a noted Florentine leader, one who had in the time of Leo X. fought with the Holy League against France. This was Giovanni de' Medici, the noted commander of the Black Bands of Italy, who with his three thousand followers now enrolled himself under the banners of France.

With his splendid host, Lautrec made a bold dash upon Milan, the city from which he had been ousted but a few months earlier, and in whose citadel he still retained a strong garrison which Colonna had been unable to reduce. The inhabitants of Milan had, however, far too lively a recollection of the tender amenities of Lautrec's rule to allow him once more to enter their city. They formed themselves into military companies, and gave such excellent assistance to Colonna's Imperial troops that Odet de Foix not only was unable to communicate with the citadel but lost great numbers of his men. He fell back disheartened, and retired to await the arrival of his brother Lescun, the Maréchal de Foix, with more troops from France.

In spite of his efforts, while thus waiting to keep Francesco Sforza, who was in Pavia, from joining Colonna, he was outwitted, and Sforza entered triumphantly into Milan at the beginning of April 1522.

There he was acclaimed as their rightful Duke with the most tumultuous joy by the fickle population, while

Lautrec marched off to besiege Pavia, held by Antonio da Leyva. His ineptitude now became more than ever apparent, for, although his brother's reinforcements left him in possession of a magnificent fighting force, he allowed Prospero Colonna to throw a large body of men into Pavia under his very eyes.

This prudent Italian now came out of Milan and threatened Lautrec in rear from a very advantageous position, whereupon the brother of the King's mistress marched back once more to Milan. Again, however, Colonna circumvented him, and took up an excessively strong post, in the immense walled park of a villa called La Bicocca, to cover Milan.

At this place everything was in favour of the defenders, who were at least twenty thousand in number. The spacious gardens, placed on a height, were covered with trees, rivulets divided them in places, and the only easy access was by a bridge. Colonna did all that military art required to improve the advantages of nature : he dug deep ditches, raised batteries of artillery upon platforms, and placed his troops with the greatest skill so as to resist attack.

Lautrec, who had superior numbers, conceived the idea of starving Colonna and his army out of La Bicocca, and forcing him to fight in the open ; but he was reckoning without his Swiss. The weather was miserable, rain being incessant, and the Swiss, who had received no pay, were perfectly disgusted with a campaign which consisted chiefly in marching up and down a flooded country. They reminded Lautrec of Robecco, where he might have fought with advantage but would not, and said that now they must either have their pay or a battle, otherwise they would go home. Odet de Foix saw that a battle must inevitably mean defeat : he begged the Swiss to have patience, as he was expecting every day four hundred thousand crowns from the King of France. He further explained to them that to attack such a position as that of the Bicocca would be madness.

Nothing but the money which did not come would

have made the fiery Swiss listen to reason. They said, however, that just to prove to France that they were more faithful at keeping their engagements than the French, they would attack the Bicocca without pay—but fight they would, and at once, or else go home.

Rather than lose his Swiss, their commander had to give in and agree to assault the fortified position on three sides at once. His brother, the Maréchal de Foix, was to attack with the French men-at-arms and Italian foot-soldiers from the side of Milan; the Swiss were to endeavour to scale the walls in front, while Lautrec himself expected by a trick to deceive the defenders while attacking the position on the right face. His ruse consisted in causing his troops to wear a red cross, in imitation of the men of the Imperial forces; and it was agreed, further, that the army of Venice was to support him.

Of the defending forces, Francesco Sforza, with Italians, was opposed to the Maréchal de Foix as he strove to force the bridge; the German lansquenets, under George von Frundsberg, were face to face with the Swiss, whom they hated bitterly, as they had often been vanquished by them, while Colonna, who commanded, among others, the disciplined arquebus-men of Spain, held the walls in front of Lautrec. After the fight commenced Prospero had not been long in finding out the trick of Lautrec, but, lest in the *mêlée* it should prove of some avail, he checkmated it by a counter-order of a similar nature. This was that every man of the Imperial forces should stick in his helmet, or in some conspicuous part of his accoutrements, a sprig of a tree or a bunch of green wheat, so that they should recognise one another for friends.

The Swiss, who were commanded by Arnold von Winkelried and Arnold von Stein, behaved with the most magnificent courage in this ill-fated battle brought on by their own obstinacy. Although their scaling ladders were too short, and the artillery of the defenders knocked them over wholesale, they made effort after

effort to storm the walls. Von Winckelried, recognising George Frundsberg, shouted defiance to his old enemy, swearing to kill him with his own hands. The tough old commander of the lansquenets answered in similar style, swearing that he was only waiting for Winckelried to cut his throat. Unfortunately, the two commanders were deprived of the pleasure of a personal combat, as a Spanish arquebus-man, thinking that they had abused each other in the ancient Homeric style long enough, cut short the colloquy by shooting the unlucky Winckelried dead. His body rolled over into the ditch, and thus perished a man whose name had been noted in every combat in which the Swiss mercenaries had taken part during more than a quarter of a century.

The death of their commander only enraged the men from the land of William Tell. They clambered up the walls time after time, and killed many of the detested Germans ere at last they had to fall back, leaving three thousand of their number dead and dying behind them.

The courageous Lescun was more lucky for a time. With his French men-at-arms he took the bridge and charged home right into the camp of the Imperial forces. He drove back Antonio da Leyva, who had come from Pavia with his Spaniards, overthrew also Francesco Sforza, fighting bravely for his Duchy at the head of his Italians. Unfortunately, however, for Thomas de Foix, the lansquenets, after seeing that there was nothing more to fear from the Swiss, rushed to reinforce the retiring troops of other nationalities. They by their charges decided the battle on this side. Slowly Lescun and all the chivalry of France were driven backwards, and at length the bridge was retaken. As for Lautrec, the incessant cannonade and the fire of the arquebus-men of Colonna proved too much for him. In spite of fighting with bravery worthy of the name of Foix, as the Venetians faithlessly failed to support him and remained inactive, he could not force the enclosed position on the right, and was compelled to draw off his men.

Lautrec was a bad commander, but he had the merit

of his race—he was brave and, moreover, loyal to his King. It was with despair in his heart that he withdrew, but he still did not give up hope of retaining the Duchy even if he could not for the present regain the city of Milan. His efforts now were directed towards retaining the surviving Swiss, in order to fight again, offering to dismount all the men-at-arms to renew the conflict with them, indeed, to lead the van on foot. The men of the Cantons, however, said no. They had had enough; they had not earned the increased pay which would be due to them for a successful combat, and they were not going to take any more chances for a King who did not keep his word—they were going home.

Lautrec had been defeated but not routed. He retired unmolested from before the walls of La Bicocca, and escorted the retiring Swiss until they had reached a safe distance from the foe and were able to retire in safety to their own country; which they did immediately.

After this everything went wrong for the French. The Venetians, less brave than the Swiss, retired without fighting, and Lautrec, after losing the city of Lodi and other places, returned to France, leaving his brother, the Maréchal, behind him in Cremona, where after a time he had to capitulate. The Citadel of Milan and that of Novara also yielded—and all was lost in Lombardy. When Lautrec got back to Lyon he found François I. still amusing himself hunting and carrying on his usual dissipations. The King was so enraged with the loss of Milan that he refused to see Odet de Foix. The Constable de Bourbon, however, although in bad odour at Court, had sufficient generosity to take the man who had succeeded him as Viceroy of Milan almost by force into the presence of the King.

“You have lost my Duchy of Milan!” exclaimed François furiously.

“It is your Majesty who has lost it and not I,” boldly retorted Lautrec. “How many times have I warned you that the *gens d’armes* had not been paid for eighteen

months, and that without pay I could do nothing with the Swiss ?”

“Money ! Did I not send you four hundred thousand crowns ?”

“You sent me letters, sire, in plenty, certainly, but not a ducat have I received.”

“Send for de Semblançay at once,” exclaimed the King. “I must hear more about this.”

The Superintendent of the Finances arriving, he was asked what he had done with the money for Lautrec.

“The Duchesse d’Angoulême retained it for herself just when I was sending it off,” replied de Semblançay.

Almost out of his mind with rage, François rushed off to his mother, and, quite forgetting his usual courtesy, reproached her bitterly for causing him the loss of Milan.

Louise de Savoie, however, gave the lie to the Treasurer, and vowed that the money she had retained was her own revenue—part of her own savings. When the old Semblançay stuck to his story—which was the true one—the infamous Louise determined to be revenged upon him. So great was her power over her son that in this she was successful, as not long afterwards the innocent Jacques de Semblançay was strung up on a gallows at Montfaucon.

In spite of this miserable action of the King’s mother, it is not to her fault alone that must be attributed the loss to François of the inheritance of the Viscontis. In the first instance, the King was to blame for having withdrawn the able Bourbon from the Viceroyalty of Milan, and, after that, the cruelties of Lautrec, by which the people had become disaffected, were answerable for the return of a Sforza ; and with the return of a Sforza there was a tangible head to the resistance to France.

Merely the want of money wherewith to pay troops did not in those days prevent Generals from winning battles. The armies of Charles V., which conquered Lautrec, were as badly paid as those of France. Lautrec had, however, succeeded in setting the whole country against himself and the French, so that, while doing everything in their

power to injure the armies of François, the inhabitants made it all the more easy for Colonna, Pescara, and Antonio da Leyva to live in Lombardy until they had reconquered the country for the Emperor and established his nominee in Milan.

By this conquest Charles V. was able once more to assume the position of the Emperors as Suzerains of Lombardy, and since he had already been invested with Naples he became supreme in Italy. Nor was he the only foe whom François had now to dread, for while, waking up from his lethargy at Lyon, he was preparing for a new invasion of Italy in person, he learned that the tricky Henry VIII. had at last openly declared himself as the Emperor's ally and the foe of France.

This, then, was all that had been gained by the meeting at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. It was a bitter pill for François to swallow, especially after the manner in which he had done all in his power to keep on friendly terms with Henry, for whom he seems, oddly enough, to have conceived a real—if unreturned—affection.

It must now be taken into consideration how lucky a man was Charles V. Almost without doing anything to deserve it, fortune seemed always to be playing into his hands, and especially in all matters where his rivalry to François was concerned.

In Spain, where he had done everything to insult and antagonise the whole Spanish race, the nobles had come over to his side and practically subdued the insurrection of the *Comuneros*. At Rome, without, so he declared, any assistance from himself, his old tutor, Adrien d'Utrecht, had been elected Pope. In Northern Italy his commanders, aided by the people of the country, had turned the French out of Lombardy. Even had Adorno contrived to obtain possession of Genoa, where he was elected Doge. And now, to crown the Emperor's triumphs, Henry VIII., who had been promising his daughter to the King of France, whose money he had been pocketing, declared himself in his favour.

Luck was on his side again in having such a capable

aunt as Marguerite, one to whom he was always able to entrust the government of the Netherlands with every confidence, while knowing that she would make any personal sacrifice on his behalf and do all in her power to humble France. Even once more was he lucky in his young brother Ferdinand, upon whom he could always rely as a true and staunch ally, as ruler in Austria and the adjoining soldier producing Duchies of Styria, Carniola, Carinthia, and the Tyrol, lying so conveniently to the debatable land in the north of Italy.

In Germany his luck had perhaps been more remarkable than anywhere else. For there not only had the Electoral Princes, who had promised their votes to François, come over to him and made him Emperor, but, for the present at all events, he found his authority unquestioned, in spite of his known dislike to the Reformed religion professed by many of the ruling Princes.

He now established an Imperial Council of Regency in that country, and in the middle of May 1522 started off for England, to arrange with Henry for a combined attack upon François I. After a couple of months in England, Charles re-embarked at Southampton, taking a large force of Germans with him to Spain, and also plenty of artillery. With these troops he proposed to complete the pacification of the Peninsula, while replenishing his pockets with Spanish gold.

CHAPTER XVIII

Unholy Love of François for Marguerite

THE blood of the passionate Louise de Savoie was radically impure, and it ran more strongly than any other in the veins of her son. How it affected him to the point of reducing him to the level of the beasts of the field can be judged by his behaviour towards his sister, not long before the events detailed in the last chapter. She was two years the senior of François, and from his earliest years had treated him not as a younger brother, but with the adoration of a deity. Marguerite called him "her sun," and adopted for her emblem a sunflower, with the legend *Non inferiora secutus*—it will follow no lesser orb.

In return for this adoration François gave a little love, he allowed himself to be touched sometimes. More often than not, however, he allowed himself to be worshipped, merely accepting the worship as his just due. Sometimes he tyrannised over his sister; he recognised her as his thing to do with what he chose, to trample upon when he felt so inclined. While demanding everything from her, her heart, her life, it rarely seemed to occur to François that he owed anything in return to the woman who gave him so much devotion, and whom it seemed that nothing could change.

Marguerite was, however, a woman who was for many years surrounded by adorers. Not only the Duc d'Alençon and Henri d'Albret, but a crowd of others, such as Bourbon, Bonnivet, and the poet Clément Marot, were for ever throwing themselves at her feet. It

gratified the pride of François to think that he should remain the only sun of this admired beauty, this loving creature, whose superior intelligence shone out above all her contemporaries. His vanity was doubly gratified when she wrote to him in strangely extravagant terms, and, as if she had no husband of her own, that "he alone existed for her—that he was her father and her son, her brother, her friend, and her husband."

It was indeed strange how this passion of Marguerite for her brother resisted the onslaughts of time, the diseases which sapped his life and marred his manly beauty. The fact, however, remains that nothing changed it—neither old age nor the illnesses brought on by his own dissipations ever affected her unalterable and passionate affection.

When François I. was in distress of mind, about the time that Lautrec was compelled to evacuate the city of Milan; when he found that Paris was hostile to him and that money was hard to obtain from the subjects, who had ceased to admire his chivalrous virtues, he was also getting tired of his brilliant mistress, Françoise de Foix.

This daughter of the princely and warlike race of Gascony had for years outshone all rivals—queened it over even the Queen-mother herself. Before the radiance of the Comtesse de Châteaubriand, Marguerite had likewise perforce been compelled to occupy but a secondary position. But towards the end of 1521 François seemed suddenly to remember his sister's existence, he turned towards her and gave to her husband, d'Alençon, the command of the advance-guard of the army of Picardy, a command which belonged by right to the Connétable de Bourbon.

At that same time the brother of the mistress, André de Foix, Seigneur de Lesparre, was given the command of the troops for the invasion of Spanish Navarre: therefore honours were divided between the two leading ladies of France.

François, however, threw himself more and more

upon the counsels of his sister, so that we find her writing in a perplexed frame of mind to her friend the Bishop Briçonnet: "For I am obliged to meddle with many matters which may well give me cause to fear."

The fact was that the King was commencing to understand that he was being misled by his mother's minion, the Cardinal du Prat; he realised that the relations and hangers-on of his mistress were but so many broken reeds to lean upon; he recognised that Charles V. was laughing at him up his sleeve, and could not but perceive that he was being thoroughly deceived by Cardinal Wolsey.

In his mother he found no real support. Much as François had been accustomed to rely upon her, he was clever enough to understand his mother's grasping and selfish character, to see that if she had advised him to a certain course it was merely for her own ends. Louise de Savoie was, in fact, his evil genius, whereas in Marguerite he found more clearness of vision, while no image existed in her mind but his own.

She, at this time, was endeavouring to guide her brother's conscience into the way which she believed the right one. She believed, poor, deceived creature, that she was actually leading both her mother and her brother towards the worship of God in the right way, as she commenced herself to see it. She wrote to the Bishop again, that they were both "becoming inclined towards the Reformation of the Church, and beginning to understand that the truth of God was not heresy."

Finding François unhappy, she but increased in tenderness towards him, tried to console him for the want of money, condoled with him over the loss of Milan. When he had fresh cause for grief and disappointment in the appointment to the Papacy of the Emperor's tutor, Adrian VI., when Picardy was invaded and ravaged, and when Henry VIII. was threatening to make a descent in France, the sister's tender bosom was ever open to receive her brother's woes and to give him consolation in his hour of trial.

All of that autumn and winter François sought to get rid of his black thoughts by indulging freely in the chase. But black care sat behind the rider, and followed him into the leafless forests of Fontainebleau and Compiègne ; nowhere could he obtain relief.

His wife Claude was engaged in her usual occupation of adding to the number of Princes and Princesses of the House of Valois ; in her society he took no pleasure. His mistress was commencing to weary him more and more ; where then could he seek for relief if it were not in the company of the sister who followed him everywhere, the attractive Princess whom he now called his *mignon*—his darling ? She alone knew how to drive black care away. Now, in what manner did François reward this touching, this all-enveloping love ? Shocking as it is to relate, it was by treating Marguerite with a baseness that humiliated her, an ingratitude that caused her to shrink from him with reddening cheeks and horror in her heart.

He thought that he would see to what an extent he could compel his sister's will—a will that seemed to be nothing but a reflex of his own. Possibly it was but merely the King's inordinate vanity which caused him to desire to succeed where such brilliant cavaliers as Bourbon and the gay Bonnavet had failed ; perhaps it was mere brutish desire on his part which caused his infamous action. Whatever the inspiring cause of his infamy, François pretended to disbelieve in the real tenderness, the deep affection of Marguerite ; he was sufficiently without shame to tell his sister that unless she would give him the tangible proof of her love, allow him to make its "definite experience," he would not credit its actual existence.

The reply of the terrified and trembling Marguerite—ever heretofore accustomed to blindly obey his slightest whim—astonished the brutal brother. "Pis que morte !" ("worse than death !") she exclaimed, and fled from his presence. Terrified at what she had done—more terrified still at what she might expect from the violence of



From an engraving by Charles Heath after a painting by R. P. Bonnington.

FRANÇOIS I. AND HIS SISTER MARGUERITE.

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François should she remain, Marguerite left the Court at once and hurried off to rejoin her husband in their Duchy of Alençon.

In flying she left behind her a touching letter of excuses, calculated, she hoped, to appease the wrath of the King, raging at his disappointment. He replied cruelly, striving by every means to make his sister's tender heart bleed, saying that since she withdrew herself from him, he too would go off—perhaps to his death. In his cruelly selected words François spared his sister nothing; it was evident that his unholy passion was only the more inflamed by her flight. Marguerite feared to return; she recognised that her virtue would not be safe from this tyrant, whom for so long she had set up upon so high a pedestal.

The strange thing about this matter is that, although Marguerite for a time kept out of her brother's way, she never seems in the least to have felt any anger towards François for his intended crime. Perhaps, in her heart, she did not think it so very dreadful after all in a Prince—whatever it might have been in a more ordinary mortal. All those who have read the disgraceful history of the Duc d'Orléans, Regent of France, and his daughter the Duchesse du Berry, and likewise that of Louis XV. and his various daughters, will easily realise that those of the ruling race believed, to quote the words of the Princess Adélaïde, that there was "one law of morality for those of the Royal House, and another for the rest of the world." We have described the shocking events that these perverted ideas led to in our works "The Regent of the Roués" and "The Real Louis XV.," the readers of which cannot fail to draw a parallel with the case of François I. and Marguerite d'Angoulême.

Instead of showing anger to her brother, after she had got away from him Marguerite wrote to François the most humble and self-humiliating letter, in which she apparently seemed to give way, to surrender and place herself at his feet. She wrote in ambiguous verse as well

as in prose, but the real sense of the letter would seem to be that, while she yielded to his power, she hoped that he would not take advantage of her weakness. The letter, which is still in existence, although Marguerite begged her brother to burn it, ends up with the words: "Not that I ever distrust you." In spite of this, it is evident that the real meaning of the epistle is that Marguerite begs for mercy from her brother's brutality, but that she will be in the future, as she has been in the past, his slave.

Slave she ever remained, but, so far as history relates, François never demanded from his sister the sacrifice which, rather than lose his love, she expressed herself as willing to make. She, however, lost her influence over him by degrees, and never succeeded in leading the King into the real paths of enlightenment and Reform.

In this instance of his unholy passion for his sister it was, as we have said, probably more the King's vanity which was at stake than anything else—a vanity which was proved by his showing her letter to his associates in token of her submission to his will. That he was, however, notorious as a man to be feared by modest women is to be gleaned from the following anecdote, related by a French historian.

In the year 1524, just after he had gone into mourning for the young wife whom he had neglected while living but pretended to deplore when dead, François was advancing to the relief of Marseilles, at that time besieged by the Imperialists under the rebellious Bourbon and Pescara. He paused at the town of Manosque, in Provence, where the municipal authorities came to present the King with an address.

With the mayor, who headed the deputation, was his daughter, a young and lively *demoiselle*. While the speech was being read aloud to him, François fastened upon the girl a look so full of meaning that she took affright. The unhappy maiden, conscious of her good looks and fearing the worst outrages, that evening applied a violent corrosive to her cheeks and ruined her features entirely.

On the following day she had nothing more to fear from the King, and history has not recorded if she found any faithful suitor, for whose sake she may perhaps have sacrificed her beauty, to marry her.

Without having the data to refer to, it seems to us that we have heard a somewhat similar story of the less hot-blooded but equally unscrupulous Charles V. He saw at Ratisbon the beautiful daughter of an honest German magistrate, was taken by her appearance, and sent for her the same evening. Her name was Barbara Blomberg, and this young lady, although equally virtuous, did not, like the French girl, think it necessary to destroy her beauty. The Emperor, who was travelling, kept her with him for a night only, and by some the child that she bore him is said to have been the famous Don Juan of Austria, about whose mother there has always been so much mystery.

CHAPTER XIX

Madame's Lawsuit

1522

IT was not long after François had behaved in such an abominable manner to his sister, and been forgiven by her, that "the trinity" of the Royal family were together at Lyon, when Lautrec returned after having lost Milan. Louise de Savoie, knowing how greatly the King's anger would be aroused should he learn the truth of the manner in which she had pocketed the money intended for the troops, did her utmost to prevent the unlucky Odet de Foix from gaining access to her son.

Any love that the Constable de Bourbon had ever had for either Louise or her daughter had, however, by this time turned to hate under the continual persecution to which he had been subjected. He imagined that he would very greatly discredit the King's mother in her son's eyes when, taking Lautrec by the hand, against all orders to the contrary, he led him by force into the King's presence. Although he had himself been removed from the vice-royalty of Milan on most frivolous pretexts, Bourbon had a fellow-feeling for Lautrec, who had replaced him, when he saw him like himself the victim of the evil passions, the greed, of the Duchesse d'Angoulême.

"Who would have believed such a thing of my mother?" François cried out in his despair; and for a time it seemed as though the King would not forgive Louise de Savoie. Marguerite was, however, at hand to mend the breach, and although she now ceased to

hold her head as high as before, or to dominate the King as previously to her written submission to his will, her weight was sufficient to obtain her mother's forgiveness.

Thus the only one to suffer for the Queen-mother's crime was old de Semblançay, and although the Seigneur de Lautrec was perforce forgiven, Bourbon was baulked of his revenge for the many slights to which he had already been subjected.

The time had, however, now come when the action of Louise de Savoie, and the King's injustice owing to his mother's instigations, were to drive this puissant Prince into open rebellion against his King. Save for the accident of the premature betrayal of his plans, the Constable might well have supplanted François on the throne of France, where, judging by the force of his character, his talents both in the Council and on the field of battle, he would probably have made a better King than the son of Louise de Savoie. Charles de Montpensier, now thirty-two years old, was the First Prince of the Blood; he was the senior representative of the junior branch of the Bourbons, the Montpensiers, and his mother was a Gonzaga, daughter of the rulers of Mantua, whose Marquisate had been elevated into a Duchy in 1433. From his youth up he had been greatly beloved by his kinswoman and godmother Anne de France, daughter of Louis XI. When that foreseeing King had consolidated the power of the Monarchy by crushing the great feudal lords of France, he had left unmolested his two kinsmen the Bourbons of the elder branch. Of these he knew that the elder, the Duc, was a dying man, while his younger brother, Pierre, Duc de Beaujeu, seemed unlikely either by his health or his talents ever to cause any anxiety to the Crown.

To make sure of Pierre de Beaujeu, Louis XI. married him to his daughter Anne de France, while leaving him for life in possession of all the mighty fiefs which the Bourbons held under the Crown. Louis made Pierre sign an engagement on his marriage, that on his death

all of these immense territories, comprising perhaps as much as a fifth of the Kingdom, should revert to the ruling line. That he hardly expected any children to be born to his daughter by the decrepit Pierre is evident by his remark : "To keep the children that will spring from them won't cost much."

He was, however, reckoning without his daughter—the forceful Anne, who, after giving birth to a daughter, Suzanne, completely ruled her brother Charles VIII. after her father died. While Charles VIII. was still young, Anne compelled her brother to sign documents which entirely reversed the arrangements of her father ; and in this manner she preserved the almost Kingdom of the Bourbons to her daughter. This daughter Suzanne was fragile and partly deformed ; nevertheless Anne de Beaujeu married her, at the age of thirteen, to her favourite Charles de Montpensier, who became, by the death of Anne's husband, Duc de Bourbon. This marriage took place in 1504 during the reign of Louis XII., who had succeeded Anne's brother Charles VIII. on the throne, and Anne de France (or de Beaujeu) caused her little humpbacked daughter to convey by deed of gift all the inheritance of the Bourbons to her husband.

The daughter of Louis XI. might not have been able to carry out this arrangement, by which all the Bourbon fiefs were definitely diverted from the Crown, had she not always cultivated the closest intimacy and friendship with the other forceful Anne, the ruling Duchess of Brittany, who married first Charles VIII. and then Louis XII. With the support, however, of Queen Anne de Bretagne the matter was carried through at the time when, as we have mentioned, Louis XII. being sick, Anne of Brittany had likewise made (at Blois) a treaty whereby her daughter Claude was affianced to the child-Charles V. The two Annes had thus mutually supported each other in their pet projects, but, although Louis XII. on his recovery managed to break the treaty which would have given France to the Emperor, nothing was ever done to upset the arrangement by which the immense territories

of the Bourbons had legally passed to Charles de Montpensier, who became the Connétable de Bourbon.

When in 1519 the Constable had reached the age of thirty, he became a widower and the absolute ruler of no less than seven provinces of France, and from that date the King's mother, who was some fourteen years his senior, determined to marry him. Long before this—in fact, from before the date of her son's accession—Louise had shown in many ways her marked partiality for Charles de Montpensier. He, half an Italian, had, while he still had a wife living, been clever or cunning enough not to reject her advances, of which he reaped the benefit. By her good will it undoubtedly was that François on his accession confirmed his kinsman in the rank of Constable which had been verbally conferred upon him by his predecessor Louis XII. The passionate Louise treated him in fact almost as though he were her husband even during the lifetime of his wife Suzanne, placing a gold ring upon his finger and procuring for him the following pensions. As Constable, Bourbon had twenty-four thousand livres; as Chamberlain, fourteen thousand. Twenty-four thousand more he received in his capacity of Governor of Languedoc; while from the taxes of Bourbonnais he was paid annually fourteen thousand. As though these pensions were not enough, the Constable had, moreover, the right to levy taxes for himself in a regal manner. Thus, upon one occasion, when he found himself a little short of cash, the Duc de Bourbon caused the States of Auvergne, by no means a rich country, to vote him fifty thousand livres. Since money in the days of François I. was at least of ten times as much value as it is nowadays, some idea can be formed of the riches of the Constable de Bourbon. Indeed, so rich and so powerful was he that François scarcely required the incentive of his mother's displeasure with her lover to become jealous of him, especially as his actions seemed often to be as kingly as those of the King himself.

For instance, after the battle of Marignano in 1515, in which he had particularly distinguished himself,

Bourbon founded a convent in commemoration of the victory, close to his castle at Moulins. Again, when his child was christened, the King, who came to act as godfather, found himself being waited upon at table by no less than five hundred gentlemen clad in velvet, retainers of the Duc de Bourbon, drawn from only one part of his feudal sovereignty. Uniting in his own person two Duchies, four Counties, two Viscounties, and an immense number of Seigneuries, the Constable was indeed a force to be reckoned with, and one, moreover, whose power did not only lie in the great central position of the Bourbonnais, but was scattered about in various directions throughout the kingdom. The cause of this diversity of the territories of the Constable was that Louis XI. had granted the results of many confiscations from other great nobles to his daughter Anne and her husband, Pierre de Beaujeu.

The eldest son of François I. was François the Dauphin, born, after several girls, in 1518. From the time of the birth of this boy, whatever may have been the views of "Madame," Bourbon had made up his mind that he required something younger than the King's mother for a wife. His flirtation with the married Marguerite did not count for anything. Every one flirted with that Princess and made up to her. Even those of far humbler station than the Constable were in the habit of throwing themselves at her feet, while she would laughingly encourage them in their folly—to a certain point, but no farther. The wife that the Constable had in view was the so-often promised Renée de France, the daughter of Louis XII. and sister of Queen Claude. With Renée, the daughter of the elder branch of the Valois, as his bride, the Duc de Bourbon might well have some day laid claim to the throne through her, by maintaining that the junior Angoulême branch to which François belonged had no right to the Crown.

It is true that the Salic law existed, by which females could not succeed to the throne in France, but with

the assistance of his cousin Charles V., and other Princes related through the female line to the Crown to back him up, that would not have been a difficult law for Bourbon to traverse.

It is more than probable that, from the year 1521, when the King deprived the Constable of his right of commanding the vanguard of the army in Picardy, this haughty Prince had some such idea in his head. From that moment the Constable began, if not actually to plot against the Crown, at all events to enter into secret negotiations with the enemies of the King. There was the more cause for his defection from the fact that—seeing that Bourbon not only would not marry her, but made light of her pretensions of being affianced to him—Madame persuaded the King to discontinue the payment of the Constable's pensions. He had his opportunity when he captured the town of Hesdin, held by the Flemish troops of the Archduchess Marguerite. In that city he captured a lady of the family of Croy who was a cousin of his own. This lady was the Comtesse de Rœulx, whose husband was a Flemish noble deep in the confidences of the Emperor. The Constable gave Madame de Rœulx her liberty without demanding any ransom, and at the same time gave her to understand that he was being so badly treated in France that he soon might be compelled to seek for support elsewhere. The members of the family of Croy were not long in going to the Emperor, to endeavour to get up their own credit by representing that they were to be the means of bringing over to his cause a man who was of all others the most desirable ally. The First Prince of the Blood, the last of the great vassals, the Constable, and, above all, the most popular man with the various Parliaments in France, who looked upon him as the apostle of liberty against oppression—such was the great personage whom the Croys now informed the young Charles V. that he could have for the asking. We can imagine if he received the information with pleasure; it was not, indeed, long before both he and the King

of England had taken means to enter into direct negotiations with the Duc de Bourbon.

In the meantime Louise de Savoie, upon the advice of the Chancellor Du Prat, had proceeded to take very much more drastic measures, to either ruin the Constable or force him to marry her. When he definitely refused to Du Prat to make the King's mother his wife, the enraged Princess commenced her long-threatened lawsuit to deprive the Duc de Bourbon of the whole of his territorial possessions, which she claimed as her own. The claim of Louise de Savoie to the territories of the House of Bourbon was founded on the fact that her mother had been Marguerite de Bourbon, sister of Pierre de Beaujeu. She was herself, therefore, the niece of the last Duc de Bourbon and first cousin to Suzanne de Beaujeu who had married Charles de Montpensier, and in marrying him conveyed to him the possessions which Louis XI. had so distinctly stipulated should revert to the Crown when Pierre de Beaujeu should die. This conveyance Louise declared illegal.

It is difficult to see what better right Louise de Savoie should possibly have to these possessions than the Constable, if it was in the first instance illegal of Charles VIII. to break, in his sister Anne's favour, the act of Louis XI.; but Bourbon did not pause to argue about the rights of the matter. He said that, right or wrong, it was quite evident that the King's mother, with the King on her side, must win in the end in any lawsuit which she should choose to bring against him before the Parliaments, and that he was therefore doomed to be ruined, to be reduced from the position almost of a King to that of a beggar. None the less was he determined not to marry this woman of forty-six, but rather to rebel against François I., whose slights and injustices he had borne with great moderation and without murmuring for some years past.

By the advice of Du Prat, the great lawsuit was commenced in August 1522, when a great part of the estate of the House of Bourbon was claimed for Louise

as the nearest heir, while all the rest was claimed in the King's name as having fallen to the Crown.

The judges of the Parliaments were, however, in favour of Bourbon, and with many a legal quibble and delay they, for a time, thwarted the King's will, the spirit of their opposition being chiefly caused by antagonism to the favouritism of the Royal Court, where all gifts, places, and emoluments seemed to be in the hands of the various women who ruled over this newly established institution. As the great body of the nobility excluded from Court favour were of the same mind as the Parliamentarians, Bourbon had no great fear of being immediately dispossessed of his estates, although he felt certain that he must lose in the end. In the meantime, the impatient Louise induced the King to send the parliamentary judges to make inquiries on the spot, at the Duc de Bourbon's great feudal Château de Moulins. The Constable took care to be at home to receive them, and he entertained them so generously and profusely, flattered them so adroitly upon their views as to the public welfare, that they returned to Paris more than ever impressed in his favour.

In that city during the winter of 1522-23, the "men of the robe" found the most universal misery prevailing, when they took upon themselves to complain to the King, through the Chancellor, and to ask him to do something to alleviate the public burdens which caused the general distress.

The only answer of François to the Parliament was promptly to clap into prison the deputies who had been sent to bear their complaints to the Chancellor Du Prat.

In the month of March, Bourbon himself repaired to Paris, to plead his cause in person, and at that time found some of the noblesse imitating the magistrates in the matter of complaining of their wrongs to the King. The nobles, finding no relief from the Crown, were most discontented, and notably so a great baron named Jean de La Brosse, whose fiefs had been annexed to the Crown by Louis XI.

Although La Brosse had pleaded from the three Kings Charles VIII., Louis XII., and François I. for the restoration of his estates, he could gain no redress other than that of an inadequate pension. At length he angrily remarked to François: "Very well, Monseigneur, I must look out for myself outside the kingdom."

"Do as you like about that, La Brosse," drily replied the King.

This La Brosse and many other discontented nobles rallied around the Constable, who continued to hold his head high. Among the most important of these was Jean de Poitiers, Comte de Saint-Vallier, the Captain of a hundred gentlemen of the King's Household and father of the celebrated beauty known to history as Diane de Poitiers, who was to become the mistress of two kings, father and son. She had been married at the age of fifteen to Louis de Brézé, Grand Sénéchal de Normandie, who was himself the grandson of Charles VII. and his talented mistress Agnès Sorel.

At the time of the commencement of Madame's lawsuit against Bourbon, the "Grande Sénéchale," as Diane was always called, was twenty-two years of age and in the early flower of that marvellous beauty which never faded so long as she lived—that is to say, for another forty-five years.

Unfortunately for the subsequent affairs of the Duc de Bourbon, the husband of Diane de Poitiers was not of the same way of thinking as her father Saint-Vallier, since he preferred the cause of the King to that of the Constable.

CHAPTER XX

The Constable's Conspiracy

1523

WHILE the lawsuit of Louise was slowly dragging out its length, various friendly messages had been passing backwards and forwards between the Constable and the Emperor Charles V. When the Emperor asked Bourbon to become a traitor and co-operate with him against François, he made no objection, but asked for the Emperor's sister Éléonore, the now widowed Queen of Portugal, as a wife. Charles willingly promised the hand of his sister Éléonore to the Constable, and a large dowry into the bargain.

Matters had gone no farther than this when, according to a story told by the Emperor Charles V. to Sir Thomas Boleyn, the Constable one day visited Queen Claude, the neglected wife of François. Claude was very favourable to his cause, and she would willingly, had she been able to do so, have accorded to him the hand of her sister Renée.

As the Queen was about to dine alone when the Duc de Bourbon happened to make his visit, she cordially pressed him to sit down and dine with her.

The *tête-à-tête* repast was proceeding very comfortably when the King unexpectedly arrived to trouble the feast. The Constable instantly sprang to his feet.

"No, Monseigneur, pray remain seated," remarked François ironically. Then he added with a sneer: "Well, is the news true? are you going to get married?"

"Not that I am aware of," answered Bourbon.

"Oh yes, you are; I am sure of it. I know all about your dealings with the Emperor, and do not you forget what I say," retorted the King angrily.

"Sire, you menace me! I have not deserved to be treated in this manner by you."

The Constable finished his dinner with the Queen, but after it was over he left Paris, and nearly all of the nobility left the capital with him.

When Charles V. related this circumstance to the father of Anne Boleyn, Sir Thomas expressed his astonishment that the King of France should have allowed the Constable to leave. "He could not help himself," replied the Emperor; "everybody of any consequence is on the side of the Duc de Bourbon."

The Constable gave as his pretext for leaving Paris that he was going off to hunt down the bands of armed brigands who harried the northern parts of France and prevented provisions from reaching the capital. He actually did reduce these scoundrels, but afterwards, instead of returning to Paris, he repaired to his own provinces of Auvergne and Bourbonnais, which were likewise infested by bandits. The principal of these was a regular brigand King, a gentleman of the name of Montholon, who was suspected by many of being a follower and partisan of Bourbon's own party, one who had, however, risen in arms too soon. This King of the bandits had a regular Court of his own—he appointed his Ministers and collected his own taxes.

Whatever his relations may really have been with *King* Montholon, the Constable, not to alienate his friends the Magistrates in the Parliaments, determined to attack and suppress him, which he did with the promptitude which he always displayed when carrying out any military operations. Before long Montholon, who was nicknamed "le Roi Guillot," was taken prisoner, and sent to Paris for trial by the Parliament.

Thereupon there took place a struggle between the King and the Parliament of Paris. Already before this

event there had been existing a very disordered state of affairs in Paris, where the streets were utterly unsafe, free fights and massacres being of daily occurrence.

François I., at this time most unpopular, caused a number of gibbets to be erected close to the gates of his palace, but armed persons came in force and removed them in the night-time. Thereupon the King attacked the Parliament for its incapacity, he repaired in person to the Palais de Justice and held a Bed of Justice, wherein he angrily rated the Magistrates. When Montholon was tried, these offended *conseillers* chose to treat the brigand King as a simple bandit, one who happened by chance also to be a gentleman—they refused to attach any political importance to his crimes. They therefore sentenced him to be beheaded, as a gentleman, not hanged as a common criminal, and to be cut in quarters after his death.

The King, however, insisting upon the brigand being a traitor, guilty of treason in arms against himself, gave orders to the executioner to reverse the sentence of the Parliament and to quarter the unfortunate Roi Guillot while alive! After this the Parliament of Paris flatly refused to try Bourbon's case any further. It declared insolently that it was quite incompetent, in a time in which there was no justice, to adjudicate upon such a weighty matter, and referred the matter of the Constable's estates back to the King's own Council.

While matters remained thus, the Constable retired to his castle at Moulins and continued to treat with all the enemies of François. During the summer of 1523 he was frequently also in the territories of the Duke of Savoy, who was at this time on unfriendly terms with France, in spite of his close relationship with the King's mother. From Savoy the Constable sent messages to Wolsey, and at Bourg-en-Bresse he received the accredited envoy of the Emperor, who was Adrien de Croy, Seigneur de Beaurain, the son of the Comtesse de Rœulx.

The Duc de Bourbon did not by any means find it

all plain sailing in his dealings with either Henry VIII. or Charles V. For while both of these Monarchs made considerable offers, they were cunning enough, and selfish enough, not to wish to make them good until Bourbon on his side should have done something first.

Henry VIII., for instance, would only pay a subsidy to Bourbon wherewith to raise troops after he should have sworn an oath of fealty to him as his vassal, while recognising Henry as King of France. The Emperor would only hand over his sister, with two hundred thousand golden crowns, after the Constable should have actually risen against François I. The followers of Bourbon in France, again, had views of their own, and these were not at all in accordance with those of either the Emperor or the King of England. The Parliamentary party, for instance, which might not have been at all averse to seeing the Constable himself on the throne, in place of the King who had lately so much browbeaten them, would not at all have approved of the idea of an English King being once more established and wearing the Crown of France. The hatred of the foreign yoke was indeed much more active than formerly, in the days when Henry V. and Henry VI. of England were practically as well as nominally Kings of France. Henry VIII. did not understand this fact, nor realise that since the consolidation of the kingdom by Louis XI. a national as opposed to a merely provincial spirit had sprung up throughout the country.

Bourbon for a time flatly refused to agree to acknowledge Henry VIII. as his King or liege lord, and thereupon the negotiations languished with Wolsey, while Charles V. acted in a tricky manner about his sister—using a saving clause which might enable him to get out of his bargain later. When Beaurain came to draw up the treaty with Bourbon at Bourg, the words “if she will agree to it” were found to be dovetailed into the bond, much to the disgust of the Constable, who was by no means averse to obtaining possession, not only of the person of the widowed Queen of Portugal, but also

of Éléonore's jewels, valued at considerably over half a million of crowns.

Charles V. was, however, ready to accept the Duc de Bourbon as his ally upon an equal footing with himself, willing also to dismember France and to give a piece of it to the Constable with the title of King. He proposed to keep a large slice of it himself, notably Burgundy, and to allow Henry VIII. to help himself to the rest.

When Henry, who wished to grab the whole of the country for himself, continued to insist upon Bourbon swearing fidelity to him as his vassal, the Constable got out of the matter by saying that he was in the Emperor's hands, he would leave him to decide about it.

The terms agreed upon by the three conspirators against François I. were that Henry was to invade France from the side of Calais, while Charles should at the same time do so from the side of Spain. Bourbon, in the meanwhile using the money supplied by Henry and Charles, should enter France with ten thousand Germans on the east, and at the same time raise his own followers in the interior of France. It was hoped that he could raise among his vassals and retainers and other discontented persons no less than forty thousand men wherewith to war upon his Sovereign.

The Constable understood, however, very well that if he should bind himself to England in the manner desired by Henry VIII., he would lose all the support of the men of the Parliaments, to be given merely in favour of the Bourbon against the Valois ; while if he showed himself in the light of the servant of Charles V., he would likewise render himself unpopular and lose his expected following. He had therefore a very difficult game to play in endeavouring not to bind himself too deeply with either, and he accordingly refused to accept the Order of the Golden Fleece from Charles V., as its acceptance would seem to imply an acknowledgment of having sworn fealty to Spain. However, being very anxious to obtain the hand of a sister of Charles, the Constable asked that, failing Éléonore, he should be

given the Emperor's youngest sister Catherine to wife.

The Archduchess Marguerite was, of course, deeply involved in the plottings with the Constable, and was preparing an army to invade the France that she detested on the side of Picardy, in conjunction with Henry VIII., who at length obtained a merely verbal promise from the Constable to recognise him as his liege lord. She arranged that everything should be ready by September 1st, 1523. The only fear of Marguerite was, however, lest the Constable should be ready and strike too soon. To start with, she gave Henry two thousand horse, twelve guns, and four thousand infantry, and promised more. The Archduchess need not have alarmed herself. Instead of being too soon, circumstances took place which not only made the Duc de Bourbon long behind his confederates in taking the field, but very nearly caused him to become the prisoner of François, and to lose his head instead of gaining the hoped-for crown.

While the German lansquenets levied by Bourbon duly entered France, by the neutral province of Franche Comté,¹ and reached the borders of Champagne by the appointed time ; while the English troops disembarked at Calais on September 4th, and the Spaniards entered France by the Pyrenees on the 6th of the same month, the Constable alone did nothing—he wrote that he was not ready, that he could not rise for another ten days at least. Everything accordingly hung fire, the English remained inactive at Calais, while the Germans retreated towards the frontier.

Meanwhile, in face of all the dangers with which he was being threatened, how was François behaving? Strange to relate, instead of preparing to resist the invasion of his frontiers, he was calmly getting himself ready for another invasion of Milan. At the same time, as a means of disconcerting Henry VIII. in

¹ Franche Comté, part of the old Burgundian possessions, was, by express stipulations made by the Archduchess Marguerite, neutral ground in the wars between France and the Empire.

his own dominions, François prepared a French fleet to sail with troops for Scotland under the Scotch Duke of Albany. His idea was to let loose Scotland on England, and so to keep Henry busy at home. His design, however, proved a failure, as the English made short work of the French fleet and carried out their design of descending on France.

Knowing that François was about to march into Italy, the Constable was waiting until he should have got past the city of Lyon with the army before rising behind the King so as to prevent his return. This army, however, consisting in a large measure of Swiss levies, took a long time to assemble, and while putting the Admiral Bonnivet in command of the advance guard and sending him forward, the King only moved forward himself by slow daily marches across France. Bourbon meanwhile was in despair, and the more so as François, having recognised the Constable's strength, was determined to take him with him into Italy willy-nilly. To do this the King endeavoured to obtain a reconciliation with his cousin Bourbon, by offering him back again the fiefs of which he was being so shamefully deprived, on condition of his serving him faithfully—and *marrying his mother*.

Before leaving Paris the King had informed the Parliament that he appointed his mother Regent of the Kingdom, and at the same time that he was leaving the Duc de Bourbon Lieutenant of the Kingdom. This latter title was of course purely honorary, as the King was intending to take the Constable off with him—if he could get him. In order to do so, the King directed his march towards the Château de Moulins, to which place the Constable, after meeting the Emperor's agent Beaurain and many discontented nobles at Montbrison, had recently repaired. The Duc de Bourbon immediately played the sick man—went to bed and stopped there; when the King arrived he declared himself unable to rise.

Before the King's arrival he had received a letter from his mother, the Regent. In terrified language she informed him that “a great person of the Blood Royal”

was about to deliver up the State and that his own life was in danger. What had happened was that two Norman gentlemen who had been invited to join Bourbon's conspiracy had given the whole thing away. Their names were Jacques de Matignon and Jacques d'Argouges ; they had served the Constable on several military expeditions and received great benefits from him. Thinking that he could rely upon them, Bourbon had sent a very indiscreet follower of his named Lurcy to propose to them that they should facilitate the invasion and occupation of Normandy by the English Admiral.

Without waiting to make sure of the two Normans, or feeling his ground at all, Lurcy seems to have blurted out to Matignon and Argouges the whole of the details of Bourbon's plot, not forgetting to add a few improvements of his own calculated to enhance his own importance in the eyes of his hearers. Such, for instance, was the statement that there had been a question of arresting the King on his way through Bourbonnais and locking him up in the Constable's castle of Chantelle. Lurcy even boasted that his own advice had been to kill the King, but that the Constable had repudiated any such an idea with horror.

Lurcy having perfectly horrified the two Norman gentlemen, they went straight off and, under the seal of confession, related everything that they had learned to the Bishop of Lisieux. The Bishop in turn told everything to Louis de Brézé, the Grand Sénéchal de Normandie, who wrote off the news at once both to the Regent and the King, notwithstanding the fact that his own father-in-law, Saint-Vallier, was involved in the conspiracy.

Forewarned, François surrounded himself with precautions while approaching Moulins, and sent orders to the Bastard of Savoy, who had gone past Moulins, to come back with his lansquenets. It was only surrounded by a large body of his guards that he entered the capital of the States of the Bourbon. He took possession of the keys of the Castle, in which he installed himself, and

caused strong picquets to patrol the town of Moulins during the night. The Constable was really sick, although not so ill as he pretended to be. When the King accused him of holding criminal relations with the enemies of the State, he did not deny the fact, but strove to place matters in the most favourable light, saying that he had received messengers from the Emperor, but had rejected his overtures. He denied his engagement to the sister of Charles. Apparently François did not feel himself strong enough to listen to those who now advised him to arrest the Constable as a traitor, for he pretended to believe him, offered to share the command of the army with him if he would accompany him into Italy, and further promised that, even if the Parliament should finally decide the lawsuit against Bourbon, he would restore to him his possessions. But the feelings of the Constable had been too deeply hurt for him to forgive his wrongs ; moreover, he was suspicious of the King.

The King left Moulins after having obtained from the Constable his promise to follow him into Italy and to join him at Lyon as soon as he should be well enough to travel. The King, however, did not trust alone to the word of the Duc de Bourbon, but in departing left behind him a noble named La Roche-Beaucourt, with instructions never to leave the Constable until he should reach the Royal camp. Subsequently he also sent an equerry named Warthy, who narrowly escaped being hanged by Bourbon's angry retainers.

In vain the King waited for a fortnight at Lyon for the Duc de Bourbon, whom never more was he to see serving under his command, but would next meet on the field of battle, as his deadly foe in the moment of his own capture and disgrace. As for the Constable, the tricks that he employed and the adventures that he met with before he actually got clear of France would fill a book by themselves, but eventually, after undergoing the greatest dangers, he got away in safety to Italy. This was after remaining for no less than three months in the Burgundian province of Franche-Comté, of which Marguerite of

Austria was still clever enough to maintain the neutrality, notwithstanding the fact that the German lansquenets had recently marched through it into Champagne. Bourbon did not leave Franche-Comté until November 1523, and when at last he reached Italy, he received a very kind and brotherly letter from Charles V., to congratulate him on his escape from his enemies.

"Anxious as I am," wrote the Emperor, "for your safety, you may rest assured there is nothing which the King of England, my good father, and I, as well as all our friends and allies, will not be ready to do for your succour and assistance, and that, faithful to my promise, you will ever find me a true Prince, your good brother, cousin, and friend, who, come what may of good or evil fortune, will never abandon your interest, as I am sure you will never cease to feel and do the like for me."

Long before this François had caused the seizure in France of many of the adherents of the Duc de Bourbon, including Saint-Vallier, father of the lovely Diane de Poitiers.

As for the remainder of all those who had promised to rally to the standard of the Constable, save for a few of his most faithful adherents who followed him into Italy, they were too frightened or faint-hearted to rise—his long delay in hiding with a price upon his head had been fatal to his interests.

At the request of the Emperor, his Aunt Marguerite wrote to her old lover the Duke of Suffolk, who was in command of the English troops operating with her own Flemish in Picardy, to ask him to retain the persons of all nobles whom he might capture, and not to let them go for ransom. It was doubtless intended to hold these captives as hostages against the vengeance that François I. might be expected to take upon the prisoners whom he held of the Constable's party.

The successes of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, were not, however, great after the first few weeks of his invasion. Although he had ten thousand English troops, and twenty thousand Imperialists under the Comte de Beuren,

all the north of France rose against him and, under La Trémouille and Créquy, opposed a constantly harassing resistance to his advance.

Moreover, the allies were at loggerheads with one another. The Governess of the Netherlands wanted to take all the strong places in Picardy for the Emperor. Henry VIII., on the other hand, merely wished to capture Boulogne, to keep it for himself, not being content with the port of Calais—he did not care for the Imperial interests in the least.

Cardinal Wolsey, who was on the look-out to obtain the Papacy in the place of Adrian VI., just dead, thought that it would suit his book better to keep in with the Imperialists than to follow out his master's wishes. The weather was awful, and while the Cardinal remained with the allied army in Picardy, to keep up the courage of the soldiers, who were losing their limbs from frost-bite, he gave them free leave to pillage and ravage the country as they chose. Burning everything that could not be removed, at length the English and Flemish army arrived within eleven leagues of Paris. It is quite possible that the city would have fallen into their hands had they pushed on. It is true that François had sent back some few troops, and various leaders to arrange for the defence, but Paris, although alarmed, did not welcome these warmly.

But suddenly, without any apparent reason, the English army turned round and marched straight back to Calais. There was, however, a reason for this retreat. Wolsey had found out that in leaning upon the Emperor for his election to the Papal chair he had been trusting to a broken reed, and Giulio de' Medici had become Clement VII. He was utterly disgusted, and did not choose to work with the Imperialists any longer. The Cardinal took his pen and wrote to the Emperor: "It is too cold; neither man nor beast can stand it. Moreover, your Germans who were coming from the Rhine have now vanished." The fact was that, for want of a leader in Bourbon, these Germans had been cut to pieces by the Comte de Guise. The Lorraine ladies looked on from

the walls of a castle and applauded the carnage, clapping their hands with the greatest merriment as Guise drove the lansquenets across the Meuse into Lorraine at Neufchâteau.

In the south of France, at Bayonne, the Spanish armies of regular troops were likewise driven back. The whole border populace rose up in arms, the invasion was a failure. Lautrec and his brother Lescun had been at the head of the defence on the side of the Pyrenees, and on this occasion they made up for previous misfortunes in Italy.

Thus by the end of the year France was out of danger. For one reason or another, the projected combined triple invasion had fizzled out and only resulted in three separate incursions by bodies, having no cohesion with one another. The King, however, who, from fear of Bourbon, had remained in France, at Lyon, while sending Bonnavet on into Italy, was most unpopular. He found the Parliaments so much against him that he could not get them to convict the accomplices of the Duc de Bourbon, the Magistrates declaring that they had not enough evidence.

Meanwhile, Bonnavet's irruption into Italy had proved a failure, entirely owing to his own incompetence. He might easily have taken Milan had he pushed straight on at first through Piedmont and Lombardy, as the Imperialist forces were weak and unprepared. He delayed, however, shamefully, with the result that the eighty-year-old Prospero Colonna was enabled to put Milan in an excellent state of defence. After trying to starve the city out, owing to the terribly snowy weather Bonnavet was compelled to retreat and encamp upon the banks of the Ticino. There he and his men shivered for four or five months at the foot of the Alps.

François meanwhile had, through the Constable's sister the Duchess of Lorraine, been trying to make up his quarrel with Bourbon. The Constable sent him back word that it was "now too late." As for returning the Constable's sword, that, he said, had been taken from him when the Duc d'Alençon had replaced him in command of the advance-guard in Picardy.

CHAPTER XXI

Saint-Vallier and Diane de Poitiers

WHILE Bonnivet and his army were in such a bad case in Piedmont, that splendid old Roman soldier Prospero Colonna died. He had been Commander-in-Chief for Charles V. in Italy, and acquitted himself well to the last.

The Emperor, who knew that the old man was dying, sent word to his Flemish Viceroy of Naples to move up to the Milanese to replace him. This was one of the family of Croy, Charles de Lannoy, a man of not much ability as a soldier, whatever he may have been as a politician. He was, at all events, devoted to his master's interests and a useful servant.

Ferdinand d'Avalos, Marquis de Pescara, a tricky Italian who had become entirely Spanish, was a much rougher blade and one who was now to be associated with Lannoy in the command ; while as supreme chief, as Lieutenant-General of the Emperor in Lombardy, the Duc de Bourbon was appointed.

Bourbon, now no longer Constable of France, was at Genoa when Beaurain came to him from Charles to ask him to accept this post. He could not well refuse, but Bourbon felt the humiliation of being yoked with a Lannoy and a Pescara, with whom he was requested to consult.

The Emperor was, however, afraid of Bourbon proving too strong, and from jealousy he purposely hampered him in his command, to his own eventual disadvantage when Bourbon, a little later, invaded the south of France with the Imperial army.

Two Great Rivals

In addition to six thousand new lansquenets, whom by his energy Bourbon brought in person from Germany, the Venetians, who had been holding off, now joined the Imperial army, being under the command of that very cautious and extra-calculating leader the Duke of Urbino. Duke Francesco Sforza, who still retained the Duchy of Milan, likewise raised troops for the army of the Emperor, while Giovanni de' Medici, the famous leader of the Italian Black Bands, also enrolled himself under the banner of Bourbon.

From a defensive war the combined Spanish and Italian forces now assumed the offensive, the leagued Italians being as determined as were Bourbon and Lannoy to bundle the French neck and crop out of Italy.

Only one member of the league, and that a formerly bitter enemy of France, was not now over-anxious to see the last of the French troops. The Florentine Cardinal, Giulio de' Medici, having become Pope Clement VII., was now violently alarmed lest the young Emperor should become too strong a neighbour in the Italian peninsula. He began to talk about the necessity of the rival Monarchs burying the hatchet and combining to fight against the Turk. But nobody listened to him, and while Bourbon and his army now commenced the pushing out process, and day by day violently drove the unfortunate Bonnavet back a little nearer to the Alpine passes, Charles V. went in person to join his army in the Pyrenees, and after a siege succeeded in retaking the town of Fontarabia in Spanish Navarre from the French.

François seemed to be in no hurry to assume command of the army of Italy, which was being so rapidly reduced to a vanishing-point. Having remained in France at first on account of Bourbon's insurrection, he was now amusing himself continually with the delights of love and the excitement of the chase. From Lyon he transferred his head-quarters to the Castle of Blois, from which place he endeavoured to rule France.

His most strenuous efforts were directed against the

Magistrates of the Parliament of Paris, whom he vainly endeavoured to induce to hurry up and inflict adequate sentences upon those fellow-conspirators of the Constable who had been captured in various parts of France. Just in the same way, however, as the lawsuit of Louise de Savoie still languished, so did the Magistrates throw every possible legal delay in the way of the trial of the rebels.

It was in vain that the King raged and fumed. At length, on January 15th, 1524, the Parliament condemned Jean de Poitiers, Comte de Valentinois and Seigneur de Saint-Vallier, to be beheaded, but that was all the satisfaction which the King could obtain. While the arrest of a dozen other nobles who had escaped from the kingdom was vainly decreed, the Parliament either released or let off with light sentences those whom it held in its hands.

Aymard de Prie and Baudemanche, two of the guilty ones, were set at liberty, merely with the understanding that they were to remain in Paris and come before the judges if ever they should be required. Desguières and Brion, who were proved to have been aware of the Constable's plot, but not to have revealed it, were merely condemned to make the *amende honorable*, and to remain for three years in any place that the King should designate.

The angry François wrote to the Chancellor Du Prat from Blois to have all these sentences suspended until his arrival. He ordered the degradation of Saint-Vallier from the Order of Saint-Michael, and his severe "questioning"—that is to say torture, before his decapitation.

Jean de Poitiers had been a valiant soldier and good servant to the King until he had been driven into rebellion by the injustice of Marguerite, the King's sister. The Duchesse d'Alençon, without any reason, had taken possession of his County of Valentinois, of which she enjoyed the revenues. Nor, in spite of many applications, would she restore the said County. It is the only arbitrary or dishonest action that remains

on record against the fair and versatile authoress of the "Heptameron." Of course there may have been others, however, which have not been heard of, whereas the importance of the case of the treason and trial of Saint-Vallier brought to light this particular little confiscation on the part of the fair "Marguerite des Marguerites."

Although condemned to die, Saint-Vallier was not above asking the King's mercy. He wrote to his son-in-law, Louis de Brézé, the S^{én}échal of Normandy, who had revealed the plot in the first instance, and to his daughter the handsome Diane de Poitiers, to go to François I. and plead for him. Louis de Brézé did not repair to the Court, but his beautiful young wife went in person to Blois, where, according to all accounts, she found the now thirty-year-old François to be highly inflammable. The King and Madame la S^{én}échale appear to have struck a bargain. She became his mistress and he promised to spare her father's life. Diane remained awhile at Blois, and after leaving to see her father in prison, returned there. Saint-Vallier in the meantime was having a hard time of it, for the King was determined to keep up to the very last a pretence of carrying out his execution and even that of having him tortured.

While Jean de Poitiers was very ill of fever in prison, the Duc Charles de Luxembourg was sent, with a President of the Parliament and seven *conseillers*, to degrade him. Upon their arrival in the Conciergerie, where the prisoner was found in bed, the sentence of degradation before execution was read out to him. The Captain of the King's Gentlemen was indignant at this insult and protested:

"The King cannot deprive me of the Order of Saint-Michael, except in the presence of my brethren duly convoked and assembled."

"Where is your collar, anyway?" demanded Luxembourg.

"The King knows well enough where it was lost, and that it was in his service," was the reply.

As Saint-Vallier had not got his collar of the Order, one was produced, and twice it was endeavoured to be

placed on the sick man's neck with the intention of degrading him by removing it. This indignity the prisoner succeeded in resisting, when instruments of torture were brought into the chamber and he was pressed to make further avowals.

The unhappy man said that he had nothing more to add, beyond the fact that he had always served the King at his own expense and that he had never agreed to any attempt upon the person of either the King or his children. He was allowed to confess to a priest, and after he had said that the priest was at liberty to repeat all that he had said, the judges decided that it would be both useless and dangerous to administer the torture before his decapitation.

Saint-Vallier was now taken from the Conciergerie, placed on a mule with an archer mounted behind him to support him, and taken to the Place de Grève to be beheaded. The farce was carried out to the end. As the executioner was about to deliver his blow, an archer of the guard was seen fighting his way through the crowd, shouting out "Reprieve! Reprieve!"

The sentence had been commuted to imprisonment for life between four walls, with only a small window through which Saint-Vallier was to receive his food.

The interest of Diane de Poitiers with the King was, however, by this time too great for this cruel sentence to be carried out. In a few days she obtained the release of her father, who was allowed to retire for the rest of his life to one of his castles, where he lived in peace for the period of twelve or fifteen years.

The friendship or intimacy of the ever-calculating Diane was maintained for long after this with François I. Some of the autograph letters between the couple are still in existence.

From them it appears that she wished to keep secret from her husband's relatives the real nature of her relations with the King. When François I. showered benefits upon her husband, Louis de Brézé, apparently with the intention of keeping him in a good humour,

Diane wrote to the King, to request him to be good enough to make it appear to her father and mother-in-law that it was for some other reason. In later years, as we know, when François found his elder surviving son the Dauphin to be *gauche* and unmannerly, Diane undertook to the King to form his son's manners for him.

The story of the connection which then commenced between Diane and the Prince who became Henri II., with all its consequences, belonging as it does to a later period in the history of François I., need not be gone into at present. Diane had become a widow long before the Constable, Anne de Montmorency, commenced facilitating her meetings with the Dauphin at his house at Écouen, as the Grand Sénéchal of Normandy died in the year 1531.

CHAPTER XXII

The Death of Bayard

APRIL 1524

IN no particular did that for the Admiral Bonnivet prove his ineptitude in warfare more than by his unsoldierly conduct towards, his comrade in arms, the Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche*. This is very clearly pointed out to us by the admiring historian of Bayard, who simply designates himself under the modest cognomen of "Le Loyal Serviteur."

An instance which this loyal servant gives us took place in the early part of 1524, when Bonnivet was occupying a fortified place called Biagrasso. He then ordered Bayard to occupy the open village of Robecco, near Milan, with two hundred men-at-arms and two thousand foot soldiers, the latter under the command of the Seigneur de Lorges.

Bayard, having received instructions with this small force to harry the defenders of the strongly fortified Milan, to prevent them from obtaining food or fodder, and to keep himself informed as to their movements, felt that to use such a small force in such a weak position was purely futile and exceedingly dangerous. He did not hesitate to speak out very plainly on the subject to the incompetent favourite of the King. He told him that half of the army would not suffice to hold such a position, and that nothing but shame was to be gained by going there.

When Bayard emphatically impressed upon the

Admiral that he would do well to think twice before risking the lives of the King's soldiers in such a foolish way, Bonnivet would not give way, but vowed that if only the Gentil Seigneur would occupy the position, he would soon send him large reinforcements of infantry. Relying upon the Admiral's word, Bayard repaired to the wretched village of Robecco, which was so situated that no other defences than a few barriers across the entrances could be made.

For a time he held the place successfully, but when, in spite of his repeated letters to Bonnivet, the latter failed to keep his promise to send more men, Bayard became angry, and said that it was evident that from jealousy the Admiral must have sent him there on purpose to cause him if possible to perish. And he vowed that, sooner or later, he would cause Bonnivet to fight him, man to man.

Prospero Colonna being sick at that time, Pescara was in temporary command of the Emperor's troops in Milan, and he possessed in his immediate service a soldier possessing both immense strength and great swiftness of foot. This man, whose name was Lupon, contrived in the night time to surprise, seize, and carry off upon his back a French sentinel from Robecco, whom he brought as a terrified prisoner into Pescara's presence. From this captive the Marquis speedily found out all about the weakness of Bayard's position, and he determined to attack that valiant soldier with an overwhelming force on the following night, his primary object being to obtain the person of the redoubtable Chevalier himself—alive or dead.

The ever-vigilant Bayard had been up on watch and going the rounds in person for three nights preceding that upon which Pescara, with about eight thousand men, attacked the village. On that night, sick with cold and fatigue, he had remained in a house to rest, after giving strict orders to his captains to keep good watch and to relieve each other at regular intervals during the night.

No sooner had Bayard gone to sleep, however, than

all of his careless officers promptly followed his example ; only three or four archers were left as sentries to protect the whole enceinte of the village.

The Spanish soldiers, surrounding the place quietly and finding no one on foot, imagined that Bayard must have learned of their plan of surprising him, and retired in time.

He was, however, merely sleeping with one eye open and fully dressed, and at the first cry of "alarm!" rushed with five or six men to the threatened barrier and held it until the Seigneur de Lorges came to his assistance with a company of foot-soldiers.

Soon realising the overwhelming forces of the enemy, Bayard, with his usual bravery, told de Lorges to make good his retreat while he remained behind with a few men to cover the retirement. "Companion, my friend," he said, "this match is unequal; if they get past the barriers, we are all lost men. Let us leave our spare horses and outfits and save the men. You retire with yours and march in close order; as for me, with my men-at-arms I will form the rear-guard."

So well did the gallant Chevalier perform his share of the dangerous retreat that he got off with only the loss of about ten men and a hundred and fifty horses. While the Spaniards were still searching the houses in the hope of securing this famed commander, he contrived safely to reach Biagrasso, where he told Bonnivet in very plain language what he thought of his conduct. On account of the necessity of their services to the King at this time, Bayard did not, however, force the issue of his quarrel with the commander of the forces to a personal combat, especially as the French army was in the greatest state of misery and the efforts of all the superior officers were required to preserve order during the retreat to the rushing river Sesia. This stream was in flood, and had to be crossed under the harassing attacks of Bourbon and Pescara combined.

Fighting bravely with the rear-guard, Bonnivet was badly wounded by an arquebus-shot in the arm, and

had to be carried across the river. The Admiral then begged Bayard, for the sake of the honour of France, to try to save the artillery and the ensigns. He told him that he trusted entirely to his fidelity, and added: "There is no one in the army of the King who for valour, experience, and good counsel is as capable of doing so as yourself."

Bayard said that he would rather have been entrusted with such an honour at some more favourable moment, for the situation was now desperate. But he added that so long as he remained alive, they should never fall into the hands of the enemy.

The good Chevalier kept his word. Staying behind and fighting desperately with the rear-guard, Bayard saved the artillery, the ensigns, and the army itself. But this most wonderful soldier lost his own life in the process. When all except himself and a few companions had crossed the Sesia, the noble Bayard was shot through the spine by a stone ball from an arquebus.

"Jesus!" he cried, "I am done for"; but he would not be carried away out of the *mêlée*. "No!" he exclaimed. "I am not going to turn my back on the enemy for the first time in my dying moments. Put me down against a tree with my face to the foe, and charge the Spaniards once more."

The Spaniards having been driven back temporarily by the gallant charge made by those desirous of avenging the Chevalier, he begged all his friends to leave him and save themselves, since they could do him no good, and it would grieve him that they should be made prisoners for his sake.

"Assure the King," Bayard said to his friend l'Allègre, "that I die his faithful servant, having no other regret than to be unable to continue to give him my services. Adieu, my good friends; I recommend my poor soul to you."

At this moment we are told that the Spanish General, the Italian Marquis Pescara arrived, with tears in his eyes. "Would to God, Seigneur de Bayard," he ex-



After the engraving from Thevet.

PIERRE DE TERRAIL,
Chevalier de Bayard.



claimed, "that I might be able to give you sufficient of my own blood to ensure your recovery and keep you as my prisoner in good health."

Pescara seems indeed to have behaved very well. He had his own tent pitched for the dying warrior, and caused him to be placed on his bed while a priest was called to hear his confession. Never was an enemy so honoured in his dying moments. The whole of the Spanish forces defiled before the dying warrior with every sign of grief and respect. When the Duc de Bourbon arrived in turn in the presence of the dying man, he exclaimed: "Alas! Monsieur de Bayard, how I regret to see you in this sad condition, you who were such a virtuous Knight."

The Gentil Seigneur replied: "You need not pity me, Monseigneur; I die as a man of honour, serving my King. You rather require pity yourself, who carry arms against your Prince, your country, and your oath."

The Duc de Bourbon departed thoughtfully, without making any reply to this biting reproof, and Bayard remained listening to and repeating the psalms, and occupied with prayer until death overtook him at two o'clock on the afternoon of the day upon which he had been wounded, which was April 30th, 1524. Having lived a hero, he died a Christian.

After the Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche* had departed to "that bourne whence no traveller returns," his enemies still showed the respect to his remains that they had shown to him while dying. It indeed convinces us to how great an extent, in those bloodthirsty and heartless days, the doughty Knight must have enjoyed the admiration of the whole world, when we learn the circumstances attending his decease. A Spanish guard of honour, which had been posted over his tent, bore his remains solemnly to a church, where funeral services were celebrated for two days. Then his coffin was remitted into the hands of his own servants, who appear not to have deserted him, and who were given permission to carry the body off with them into France.

On the journey through the Duchy of Savoy the Duke of that country received the remains of Pierre de Terrail with the same honours as though they had been those of his own brother; and upon its arrival in Dauphiné, the country that gave birth to the Gentil Seigneur de Bayard, all the nobility and the entire population escorted the coffin from the top of the Alps to Grenoble, where the virtuous hero of so many wonderful conflicts was buried in a convent of the order of Minimes.

The description of the death of this *preux chevalier*, as written by one of his enemies to Charles V., is interesting as bearing out the respect with which he was looked upon by his adversaries.

Adrien de Croy, Seigneur de Beaurain, wrote to the Emperor on May 5th, 1524, as follows :

“The Captain Bayard returned with some French riders and four or five ensigns of the foot-soldiers, and drove back our people and rescued the pieces of artillery, which it would have been better for him if he had allowed to be lost, for just as he thought about returning he received the shot of a hackbut, from which he died the same day.

“Sire, no matter how much the said Seigneur Bayard was the servitor of your enemy, his death has been a great pity, for he was a gentle Knight, much beloved by everybody, and who had also lived as well as ever did one of his condition. In truth, he showed it plainly in his last moments, for his death was the most beautiful of any that I have ever heard of. The loss is not little for the French, and indeed they have been stunned by it, and all the more so since the greater number of their captains are killed, sick, or wounded.”

CHAPTER XXIII

The Useless Bravery of Bourbon

1524

HAVING driven the French entirely out of Italy in the summer of the same year in which Bayard died, the Duc de Bourbon invaded France at the head of the Imperial army.

Chafing at the restraint to which he was subjected by Lannoy and Pescara, he had first communicated with England. While pressing Henry VIII. to make a fresh invasion of the north of France, and to head it in person, Bourbon asked for money wherewith to act on his own account. For reply from Wolsey, he had a determined message to the effect that not one sou should he receive until he formally acknowledged Henry VIII. as King of both England and France. For fear of angering Charles V., and likewise his own partisans in France, it was only in the strictest secrecy that he at length gave the required oath. Henry VIII. then remitted to Bourbon a hundred thousand ducats by the hand of Sir John Russell.

The two Monarchs with whom Bourbon was allied had agreed to give him back all his own vast estates, and also to hand over to him the whole of Provence, of which he was to assume the title of King. Provence had formerly been an independent Kingdom, and even ruled Naples and Sicily. Bourbon, under the suzerainty at the same time of Henry VIII. and Charles V., proposed to make it an independent Monarchy once more under himself. It would seem as if the Duc was not without

confederates and friends in the Provençal Parliament of Aix-les-Bains.

When he wanted provisions for his army and summoned the city of Marseilles to furnish them, that town consulted the Parliament at Aix, which body sent one of its number to request Marseilles to give Bourbon victuals. This Marseilles promised to do, but in small quantities only.

The invasion of France by the former Constable seemed to promise every chance of success. It was entirely unopposed as far as Aix, as François I. had got no fresh army together to replace that of Bonnivet, which had been entirely dispersed. All that Bourbon had to do was to march directly into Dauphiné, advance on Lyon, and penetrate into his own province of the Bourbonnais. There the weight of his authority, especially with an army behind him, would have been sufficient for him to raise in immense numbers all his vassals, retainers, and partisans. Nothing could have prevented him from marching forward at once upon Paris.

A bold and determined soldier, above all, a skilful soldier, like Charles de Montpensier, saw his chance and was ready to take it. Whether fighting for the Emperor or merely for his own hand, everything seemed to bethoken a wonderful triumph for his forces; a splendid revenge upon François and Louise de Savoie was certain. The Emperor, it is true, was, as he always was, short of money to pay his troops; that, however, would not matter. Bourbon proposed to make the France from which he had been compelled to fly pay for everything with the spoils of the big cities, the ransoms to be inflicted, the subsidies raised. The cup of triumph being thus raised to his lips, who or what was it that prevented the Duc de Bourbon from quaffing it?

Not the French King certainly—he was helpless. No, the enemy whom Bourbon now had to encounter was his employer, his cousin, friend, and prospective brother-in-law, Charles V.

Charles was now in Spain, where he had shown cold-

blooded cruelty in punishing the people who had lately been in a state of insurrection, even causing many to be executed without trial who had been promised immunity by the nobles who had come over to his side and had conquered in his name. The nobles of Spain were disgusted and furious with their King, while the Cortes showed their disgust at the want of honour shown by their Flemish Prince by refusing to vote him money. The meanness of the ruler was also too apparent to those grandees whose Spanish ideas of honour had been deeply offended by their pledged word being disregarded. Charles had allowed these nobles not only to fight and conquer in his name, but also to have the pleasure of paying the bill of the expenses of the civil war. There was no greater grandee in Spain than the Constable of Castile, who could not resist saying sarcastically to Charles: "Am I, then, to be allowed to pay for the expenses of having won a couple of battles for you in two months?" Charles, who even at his then early age cultivated an excessive gravity of demeanour while in Spain, quite forgot himself for once and lost his temper. He replied furiously: "What if I threw you over the balcony?" The Constable of Castile, not in the least awed, chuckled in reply: "You couldn't do it; I am too heavy for you."

Having aroused this feeling of antagonism against himself, Charles, as we have said, found it a matter of great difficulty to extract from the country any more of those golden doubloons to which his Flemish followers had formerly helped themselves so freely. He therefore had the excuse when, in his jealousy and mistrust of Bourbon, he did not want him to be too successful, of saying that he could not remit funds sufficient for the projected onward march through France.

Pescara, with whom Bourbon found himself hampered just at the very time in August 1524 when he wanted a free hand, flatly refused with his Spaniards to obey Bourbon, giving the Emperor's wishes as his excuse.

Pescara calmly stated that the Emperor required more

Two Great Rivals

than anything else a good port in France on the Mediterranean, that therefore, before anything else could be thought of, it was necessary to capture the city of Marseilles; he refused to budge in any other direction. Marseilles, he pointed out, was a most excellent place for the Emperor's purpose, as it formed a connecting link between Spain and Italy. It was useless for Bourbon to resist; he was forced to resign his golden opportunity, he had to remain on the coast of the Mediterranean and invest Marseilles.

In spite of his disappointment, receiving no money from Charles and not enough from Henry VIII., the Duc de Bourbon set about loyally to do his utmost to carry out the Emperor's intentions. He invested the city, and everything that a bold and determined commander could do to reduce it was done by him. The Marseillais, however, who might have yielded to Bourbon had he come alone, hated the Spaniards as they did the devil. In former days the place had been surprised and put to the sack by the Aragonese Kings of Naples. Not if the inhabitants could help it should a Spaniard again place a foot in the city. Moreover, Marseilles was full of proscribed Italians in the French service, refugees from various places in Italy against which the Emperor had vowed vengeance. The chief of these was a very gallant captain, one of the ancient noble family of Orsini, Renzo da Ceri by name.

This "Capitaine Rance," as the admiring French called him, had already done valiant service to France; he now became the heart and soul of the defence of Marseilles. Noble gentlemen of France sent by the King managed to penetrate to the city and enrol themselves under the command of Renzo; the inhabitants rose as one man and formed themselves into military companies; the women—who, above all, felt that they had all to fear should the city fall—lent a hand, and toiled day and night on the fortifications. It was in vain that Pescara promised to the Imperialists the sacking of the city; their courage failed when assault after assault,

led by the gallant Bourbon in person upon the walls, was repulsed with heavy losses. Instead of working loyally with Bourbon, Pescara commenced to sneer at him, to jeer at the confidence which he had at first expressed to the effect that the city would yield to him personally.

When one day the cannon-balls from the city came tearing into a church where they were hearing Mass together, and killed several priests at the altar, Pescara taunted the Duc de Bourbon: "Here they come then, your Marseillais, with their ropes round their necks and the keys of the city in their hands."

The siege languished, but Bourbon captured Toulon and took all the French artillery at that place. He also reduced the whole of the Riviera. In front of Monaco he distinguished himself by great personal bravery, behaving indeed in a manner worthy of a Bayard.

The Imperial fleet was off the port of Monaco, which then belonged to the young Prince Honoré Grimaldi. Bourbon was encamped with his troops in the neighbourhood of Nice, when the Spanish fleet sought to disembark stores and artillery at Monte Carlo. Suddenly the famous Genoese Admiral Andrea Doria, then in the service of France, appeared with his fleet, to which was joined the French fleet, which had already captured the Prince of Orange, in the service of Spain, while on his way to join Bourbon.

These combined fleets fell suddenly in superior force upon the Emperor's fleet commanded by Ugo de Moncada, and three of the ships of the latter were run ashore and basely abandoned by their crews, who took to the mountains behind Monaco. Learning what had happened, Bourbon arrived in a hurry with some Spanish arquebus-men, with also Pescara and the Seigneur de Beaurain.

The enemies' fleets were about to seize the three abandoned vessels when the Duc cried out: "Let us save the honour of the camp and of the Emperor." He boarded one of the deserted ships with one party, and

ordered Pescara and Beaurain to man the other two. All three fought valiantly, and during the whole of that day they were under the fire of the artillery of the combined Genoese and French fleets. Inspired, however, by the courage of their leader, the arquebusmen resisted successfully all attempts to board the stranded vessels, which were saved with all their stores.

Bourbon, in his account of this affair to the Emperor, wrote most modestly. Beaurain, however, in a letter written to Charles at the same time, was most enthusiastic.

“If you could have seen Monsieur de Bourbon you would have esteemed him one of the bravest gentlemen that exists in this world; and seeing all the galleys of France coming to take the three of yours, he commanded the Marquis and myself each to save one, and that he would keep the other, and to do that he showed us the way.”

From the time of his entry into Provence, Bourbon had assumed the old sovereign title of Comte de Provence; he had also caused the Magistrates to swear an oath of fealty to him, which, the French Maréchal la Palice having retired before Bourbon without fighting, they had apparently been ready enough to do.

After being for a considerable time in front of Marseilles, however, he commenced to see that his chances of ever becoming King of Provence were pretty low. The fortifications had been placed in an excellent condition by an engineer named Mirandel, while all convents and other buildings in the neighbourhood of the town likely to form a shelter for the attacking party had been levelled with the ground. Even most of the gates of the city had been built up solid with masonry, while strong works were constructed in rear of those gates that still remained open. The port was, moreover, open for a time, and the Marseillais able to receive provisions from the sea, while also the city was well provided with heavy guns. One of these, named “the Basilisk,” was immense for those days. It fired a ball weighing a

hundred pounds, and sixty men were necessary to replace it in position after the kick caused by each discharge.

The Duc de Bourbon, however, by his well-placed batteries, drove off the French fleet and closed the port, and he also caused heavy losses both in killed and prisoners to the besieged. Even after he found, by Pescara's ironical speech on September 10th, that the Spaniards' confidence in him was shaken, he did not give up hope of reducing the city. Above all, he expected the speedy arrival of the Emperor by land from Catalonia in Spain, with an army. Wolsey also sent word that Henry VIII. was about to make a descent into Picardy, which information was encouraging.

All of this time François I. was gradually assembling an army in the valley of the Rhone. It was composed in a large measure of Swiss, of German lansquenets from the Moselle, and of other lansquenets from the Duchy of Gueldre. The remainder consisted of French adventurers. As neither the English nor the Flemish troops of the Archduchess Marguerite made their expected appearance in the north, François thought at length that he might safely withdraw all troops from that region and march to the relief of Marseilles. He called, moreover, to his assistance the young King of Navarre, Henri d'Albret, who brought to his standard a fine force of Gascons. Having got this splendid army together, François wrote a letter full of warlike ardour and bombast to the Maréchal Anne de Montmorency, to tell him, in case he would like to have his share in the fighting, to come and bring with him all the men-at-arms that he could obtain to join him in his camp near Avignon.

We cannot describe at length the fury of the attacks of Bourbon and the courage of the defenders at Marseilles. At length the Duc found that he could get none of the Imperial army, neither lansquenets nor Spaniards, to follow him in the breaches when he strove to press his assaults home.

Time wore on, Charles V. did not keep his promise to come from Catalonia, and Pescara became facetiously mutinous in his remarks to Bourbon.

“Go to the table prepared for you by the Marseillais if you want to sup in Paradise ; but, if you do not care to, you had better follow me into Italy.” As the Italian troops in the Imperial army likewise refused to follow him any longer, Bourbon was at length compelled to abandon his idea of taking Marseilles by storm. He would have liked, if forced to abandon the siege, to have advanced boldly to attack the army of the King of France, of which the advance guard under la Palice was not far distant.

His troops, however, were discouraged and, including Pescara, mutinous. Lannoy, Viceroy of Naples, had not kept his word to send reinforcements ; the Emperor had not come according to his repeatedly pledged word. The King of England had not kept his engagements either. The unhappy Bourbon felt himself to be deserted by everybody—what was he to do ? He determined on holding a council of war. He assembled his captains, and found them as disinclined to follow him to fight a battle with François as they were to follow him in the great final assault that he had planned on Marseilles. They all said that probably François would decline a battle and waste time while keeping them there in France ; that the best thing, therefore, was to evacuate Provence and march back to Italy.

Regretfully Bourbon made ready to retreat. He threw away useless ammunition into the sea, sent off by ship from Toulon some of his guns to go to Genoa, and buried four large cannons.

On September 29th, 1524, Bourbon commenced his march back along the Riviera towards the Maritime Alps. In spite of his boasting, François I. was too prudent to put himself in front of the retreating army, and so risk a battle. He contented himself with sending Montmorency and all the mounted men to harry the Imperialists in their retreat. The peasants in the country

of Provence likewise rose and harassed the flanks of the Imperial army, whose retreat, although remarkably speedy, was by no means disorderly or of the nature of a rout. Pescara commanded the rear-guard, and did uncommonly well in preventing stragglers from falling into the hands of the enemy, even if his methods of preserving them were somewhat drastic to those of his men who disobeyed orders. Upon one occasion when the time came to march he found it impossible to arouse a quantity of lansquenets who were asleep in a barn. They had drunk themselves stupid with the wine of the country. Already could Pescara see the light horse of the King of France appearing in the distance. Rather than that they should slaughter the sleeping Germans as soon as the rear-guard should have moved off, Pescara preferred to do so himself. He gave orders to his men to set fire to the barn on all sides, and so to burn alive the sleepy soldiers whom he could not induce to come out.

Montmorency pressed the rear-guard hard, and at the passage of the river Var destroyed a large number of that body, who had remained posted in order to keep him back with his men-at-arms. The remainder of the force which Bourbon led back into Italy were in rags and without shoes. When any animals were slaughtered for food, the soldiers pounced upon the skins and cut them up in order to turn them into sandals. All the time they murmured against Bourbon, who had promised them slippers of gold brocade as soon as they should have captured the cities of France.

François I. had in the meantime reoccupied Provence, where he lost no time in cutting off the heads of those Magistrates who had sworn fidelity to the Duc de Bourbon.

When the King had altogether re-established the Royal authority, he prepared to follow the discomfited Imperial army into Italy, and make yet once again a conquest of his beloved Duchy of Milan.

It must be admitted that Charles V. had well deserved his reverse, owing to the way in which he had treated the

Duc de Bourbon, whom he had delivered over bound into the hands of Lannoy and Pescara. After starting him off on a career which could but have been one of conquest, he suddenly pulled his able lieutenant up with a jerk as from a rope. Moreover, the rumour of the cold-blooded severity with which Charles had treated the Spanish insurgents had reached the many proscribed Italians fighting in Marseilles, who knew therefore what to expect if captured, and preferred to fight to the last gasp. The result was what we have seen. And thus, in two successive years, instead of Charles remaining triumphant, with Burgundy recaptured in his hands, the troops of Charles V. and Henry VIII. had first retired from the north of France with nothing accomplished, and then the Imperial forces had been ignominiously flung out of the south of France, in shame and disgrace.

The position of François, who had himself done but little to deserve his good fortune, was now better than it had been for several years. While able to triumph over his rival, his success in the south had likewise completely restored his popularity throughout France. Had he been wise he would now have remained at home to preserve the kingdom which was so providentially delivered from all its enemies. Wisdom, however, was not a quality to be expected from the brilliant and showy François I.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Preludes to Pavia

1524—1525

IT took François merely three or four days to settle up matters according to his satisfaction in Provence, and then he started off with his army for Italy. His generals—all, that is, with the exception of Bonnivet—were strongly against the King undertaking an Italian campaign so late in the season. His mother also, after writing to urge him to give up the idea, hurried off from Paris to try to join him in time to prevent his starting, but arrived too late. François had purposely avoided Louise de Savoie, while leaving behind him powers constituting her once more Regent of the Kingdom.

A curious reason has been assigned both for the anxiety of Bonnivet to return to Italy and for the obstinacy of the King in following his advice. It seems that during his last ill-fated expedition the giddy Admiral had discovered a lady of exceptional beauty at Milan, of whom he had made a conquest. So great was his passion for the beauty that he was dying to see her again. The King, as we know, at times shared his own conquests with Bonnivet, and now the intimate descriptions given to him of the charms of the Milanese lady had aroused the inflammable heart of François to such an extent that he determined at all costs to see and appreciate them in equal measure with his bosom friend.

Such is the story that is told, and when the unstable, pleasure-loving nature of François is taken into consideration, it does not seem in the least improbable.

The King had, at all events, a splendid army under his command, and, while Bourbon and his forces hurried back by the way of Monaco and the Maritime Alps, he took a shorter route over the Alps by the pass of Mont Cenis and two other passes, and, owing to the favourable weather, arrived in Italy at the same time as the fugitive Imperialists.

These, under Bourbon and Pescara, had been instantly joined by Lannoy, with those reinforcements of both foot and men-at-arms which had been awaited in vain before Marseilles. Want of money was the excuse that he gave for not having sent them on, and now there was no money either wherewith to pay the discouraged and worn-out veterans who had returned to Italy almost at a run.

It must be confessed, however unfortunate it had been for Bourbon hitherto to be tied by the leg and restrained by the Marquis Pescara and Charles de Lannoy, that the Emperor was lucky in the possession of all three of these leaders at this juncture. For each of the three vied with the other in leaving no stone unturned in order to raise money, and to keep together the remnants of the army with which they now had to endeavour to preserve the Emperor's interests and save his possessions in Italy.

Pescara (who, although an Italian by birth, was Spanish in all his feelings) was adored by the Spanish troops; and to them he spoke in such convincing terms of the necessity of retrieving their lost honour that they consented to go on serving for a time without pay. Lannoy, Viceroy of Naples, contrived in some manner to mortgage the revenues of Naples, and in this way to raise sufficient money to supply the most pressing necessities of the troops. The Duc de Bourbon, thirsting for vengeance upon François, generously pawned all of his jewels and started off to Germany to raise fresh troops at his own expense for Charles V.

Previous to this, however, the three commanders, after disposing of the bulk of their men in various strong places, had hurried off together with the remainder to

endeavour to reach Milan before François could get there.

In this effort they were successful, and they had occupied the place and re-garrisoned the citadel just before the Maréchal Theodore Trivulzi, sent on by François, arrived with some eight thousand men. The King of France was not, however, going to fall into the error of Bonnivet in the preceding campaign, who, owing to his foolish delays—caused, it is said, for love-making en route—had lost Milan. François did not pause a moment, but hurried on rapidly after Trivulzi with the whole of his army. Marching all night long, he arrived before Pescara and Bourbon, who had found Milan decimated by the plague, had time to restore the fortifications. The people in the meantime, by the advice of Girolamo Morone, the Minister of Duke Francesco Sforza, had sent to present the keys of the city to François I., but, fickle as ever, no sooner had the Imperial troops made their appearance than they commenced shouting “Viva!” for the Duke and for the Empire.

With so few men in the place to work upon the walls, Bourbon, Pescara, and Lannoy made up their minds that it would be wiser to abandon Milan than to stay and fight the whole of the large French army, and so risk defeat.

Accordingly, they marched out of the city by two gates, while François marched in by a third. In one point, however, they scored a signal success over the French King. By a brilliant march the three Imperial commanders contrived to throw a considerable garrison into the important city of Pavia on the river Ticino, under the command of one of the toughest captains who had ever fought for either King or Emperor. This was Antonio da Leyva, a man of great experience in war and as courageous as a lion. He was full of resources, a splendid leader, with a brain as active as his arm was doughty. After establishing this notable warrior in Pavia, the Imperialist forces split themselves up and were lost for a time. To such an extent was this the

case, that in Rome pasquinades, such as "lost and cannot be found—an Imperial army," were posted upon the famous mutilated statue in front of the house of the sarcastic tailor Pasquino, who had lived in the preceding century.

The moral effect of the second capture of Milan by François was very great. All of the small States of Italy, and likewise the unstable Pope Clement VII., immediately began to turn towards the King. From the repeated reappearances of the French arms in Italy, these various States, with reason, began to argue as follows: "These French have come here to remain; they will not be put out; they always return, no matter what happens to them. They are surely stronger than this young Emperor, who has so many countries but no money; it will be wiser by far for us to throw in our lot with them."

That is accordingly what they did, and Venice among the rest, and François, determined to take advantage of the situation accordingly, just as the Emperor was in the habit of doing when he could, commenced to make the various States pay up for the support of himself and his army. From the towns of Tuscany he commenced to receive subsidies, from the warlike Duchy of Ferrara he was supplied with munitions of war. The Pope, going back upon the Emperor, whose power he was anxious to see abased, formed a treaty of neutrality with François, in which he included the city of Florence, and by this treaty the French King was accorded the permission to march at will through either the Papal or the Florentine dominions. Clement VII. differed in his tactics from those of the previous Medici Pope, Leo X. This latter, it will be remembered, had formed the design of getting rid of both the rivals at once, and clearing Italy of the French and the Imperialists, but had failed. Clement thought that it would be a far simpler plan to employ one of the rivals to get rid of the other. As François, who had a brand-new army, and had arrived in great force and reconquered Milan, seemed to be decidedly the stronger, Clement did not

attempt to conceal the satisfaction that he felt, and determined to make use of him in any possible way in order to get rid of Charles.

Having this object in view, making use of his old cry of the necessity of the Christian Monarchs combining in order to resist the aggression of the Turk, Clement subtly, as he imagined, now endeavoured to bring about a peace favourable to François, one by which he should retain all his conquests in Lombardy. The tenacious Charles, who, however slow, never gave up any project upon which he had set his mind, listened to these proposals with scorn. He did not forget that it had been the Cardinal Giulio de' Medici himself who had formerly instigated him to invade the Milanese. He conceived a violent hatred of the Pope, which hatred was before very long, by a strange turn of Fortune's wheel, to result in the most signal discomfiture to the august Pontiff who held the tiara and keys of St. Peter.

François meanwhile, while foolishly dividing his forces by sending off a body of ten thousand men, under John Stuart, Duke of Albany, to invade the Kingdom of Naples, went with the rest of his army and sat down before the city of Pavia, which was placed between two branches of the Ticino.

In this city there were as garrison under Antonio da Leyva five thousand Germans and five hundred Spaniards, who, for want of pay and from shortness of provisions, were so discontented that on several occasions they were on the point of giving themselves and the town up to the King of France.

It was on October 28th, 1524, that the investment of Pavia commenced, and for four months François seemed to enjoy himself thoroughly in the neighbourhood of the city that his troops, and notably his engineers, were doing all in their power to capture. While his soldiers fought, he amused himself. According to Guicciardini, he gave "all to pleasure, nothing to business." It is only reasonable to suppose that he had either found the lovely lady of Bonnivet's fancy, and been allowed by his

favourite to supplant him in her affections, or else that some other and equally lovely houri had been discovered, with whom the King's idle moments were fully and agreeably occupied.

Meanwhile his troops remained encamped under the stars throughout the long and inclement winter season.

CHAPTER XXV

The Battle of Pavia

1525

DURING the four months that the siege of Pavia continued, the King of France installed himself first in the luxurious Abbey of San Lanfranco, where the wines and accommodation were of the best, and then in the beautiful ducal villa of Mirabello. He divided his time between the two residences, and indeed, could not have chosen one more beautiful, more richly furnished and adorned with statues and pictures than the latter. In this resort the artistic soul of François I. was satisfied, while likewise, although scenes of war were daily present around the walls of Pavia, he was not debarred from the pleasures of the chase. For Mirabello was surrounded by an immense park enclosed by a stone wall, and it was one of the most favourite hunting resorts of the Dukes of Milan.

The so-called villa was adorned like a palace and at the same time fortified like a castle; streams of water flowed through the grounds between woods and meadows, while the hills and undulating nature of the immense park made it at the same time more beautiful and more easy to defend.

Nothing could have been more different from the melancholy old feudal residences of France than this delightful Italian villa, luxuriously furnished with rich silks and splendid brocades, in which François had installed himself with his bosom crony Bonnivet and other

favourites of both sexes. While with his big siege cannons he was daily pounding away at the walls of Pavia, and the French engineers were erecting dams to turn one of the branches of the river which swept by the walls of that beleaguered city, François seemed to take it for granted that everything would take place as he wished, that he had merely personally to take things easily and all Italy would soon be his. He was all the more encouraged in these ideas from the fact that the large body of men he had detached from his army under the Duke of Albany had made its way into the Emperor's territory of Naples unopposed, and further, because he had been successful in engaging the services of that famous *condottiere* of the Black Bands, Giovanni de' Medici, who was harrying the defenders of Pavia day and night with his accustomed bravery.

Another of the more energetic of the commanders on the French side was the Maréchal Anne de Montmorency, who, with a mixed force of Germans, Italians, Corsicans, and French men-at-arms, contrived to effect a lodgment on an island between the two branches of the Ticino to the south of Pavia. There was a bridge, connecting this island with the city, defended by a tower. When Montmorency at length took this tower, which had been most bravely defended, he cruelly hanged all of its garrison. This barbarity was, so he facetiously declared, merited, "because the defenders of the tower had dared to defy the armies of the King in such a hen-roost."

Antonio da Leyva threatened Montmorency with bloody reprisals before long, and at the same time by breaking down the bridge he effectually kept Montmorency on the other side of the river. The French, however, could cross both above and below the town, and thus their various camps could communicate.

On Antonio da Leyva and Pavia hung for the time being the whole onus of maintaining the Imperial arms in Italy, and nobly he fulfilled his trust. Although breaches were made in the walls, and the troops of the Maréchal de la Palice bravely endeavoured to storm them

on one side at the same time that other breaches were being stormed on another side, Leyva was ready in all directions. Wherever the danger was greatest he was to be found, and, aided by the German Count of Hohenzollern, he flung back the assailants after the most desperate hand-to-hand conflicts. Two thousand men were lost to the French on November 8th, 1524; and although François gave orders for a second attempt to storm the city on the following day, he thought better of it when he learned that the vigilant Leyva had caused deep trenches to be dug behind the breaches, and had manned a quantity of loopholed houses in their neighbourhood with men armed with the heavy muskets called arquebuses.

It is indeed remarkable to what a large extent the arquebus—an arm which Bayard, who was slain by one, had strongly condemned as ungentlemanly and unfit for honest warfare—was employed by infantry soldiers in Europe from the beginning of the sixteenth century. The use of these weapons was, however, chiefly confined to the Spaniards; the English still used the long bow and the French the *arbalète* or crossbow, while the Germans and Swiss foot-soldiers confined themselves in a great measure to the use of the pike and broadsword. The good use which Antonio da Leyva made of his five hundred Spanish arquebus-men was in a great measure the cause of the failure of the French to storm the city of Pavia.

It was after the failure of the assault of November 8th that François set his engineers to work to dig a new bed for the river Ticino, at the same time as an immense dam of trunks of trees, stone, and earth was made to block the old channel. This hazardous attempt to divert the protecting stream from the walls of the city might have been successful earlier in the year, but François now began to discover that those of his Generals who had told him that the season was too far advanced for warlike operations in Italy had spoken the truth. Tremendous winter rains suddenly caused the river to rise enormously, and, while the defenders chuckled, the

French had the mortification of seeing the whole of their works swept away.

After this failure, François settled himself down and, while easily obtaining all the provisions that he required for his troops, endeavoured to starve out Leyva and his garrison.

Knowing how greatly the defenders of Pavia suffered in that cold winter for want of wood to burn, how short they were of food and munitions of war, François felt certain that he had the place at his mercy. Therefore, while giving orders to Renzo da Ceri to go with a French fleet and a body of men from Marseilles to assist in the subjugation of the Kingdom of Naples, the King of France waited quietly, with an easy mind, in his comfortable quarters until he should see himself the conqueror of all Italy.

While the King of the French Renaissance was enjoying his dreamy Italian existence in the land of Titian and Correggio, and while the former artist was painting his portrait, he failed entirely to perceive the signs of the times. When informed on four different occasions that the fiery Leyva, dashing forth from the city, had destroyed bodies of his troops, he was not disturbed. In the cold weather of January 1525 a large number of his Italian levies, chiefly Corsicans, were recalled by their masters the Genoese, but their loss did not affect François. When provisions were short, and a fowl cost ten francs, while his now hungry army was gradually melting away from sickness, it made not the slightest impression on the *insouciant* King. He was expecting the arrival of some new Swiss troops before long; with that expectancy François was quite content—he did not even take the wise precaution of recalling the ten thousand men whom he had sent off to the south. Thither Pescara and Lannoy had cunningly decided to allow them to go unmolested, instead of, as François had vainly expected, weakening their already weak forces in Lombardy by attempting to follow them into Naples.

In good sooth François I., an athletic young man of

thirty, a gallant Knight, at times so anxious to shine by his warlike feats, proved himself at this period to be an absolute failure as a commander. Not only did he indulge in the extreme folly of despising his enemy just because for the time being he heard nothing from him, but his conduct at Mirabello was more of the nature of some pleasure-loving old debauchee than that of a brave and brilliant young King, one who had already won for himself the reputation of a valiant warrior at Marignano. Being, as he was, even if a voluptuary a man of considerable intelligence, it seems inexplicable that François can have forgotten the fact that Bourbon now had not only all of his old wrongs to avenge, but also to wipe out the recollection of the recent ignominious retreat from Provence. And did he not know the Duc de Bourbon, what kind of a soldier he was? Was it not owing to the gallantry and good generalship of the despoiled First Prince of the Blood that France had been victorious on many a field, not even excepting Marignano, where his courage and skill had not a little helped to win the day for François the boaster? And now had not Bourbon gone to Germany for something else than a pleasure trip? Surely also the supine French King, while devoting himself "all to pleasure," might have paused for a moment to consider the energetic character of Pescara, as it had been made apparent in the previous Italian campaign against Bonnivet, again before Marseilles, and in his rear-guard actions while retiring from that city in the previous October. But no, for all his importance to François I., Pescara might just as well never have existed in Italy, any more than Bourbon might ever have been expected to return from Germany.

While François was writing to the Pope, "I will have nothing less than the whole of the State of Milan and the Kingdom of Naples," his adversaries were showing extraordinary vigour, and making preparations to prevent him from having either one or the other.

Although Lannoy had been weakening, and seeming rather inclined either to take steps to succour Naples or

to treat with François I., Pescara persuaded the Viceroy to do neither the one nor the other, but to wait in the camp that they had formed at Lodi for reinforcements, and then fight the matter out.

These reinforcements came at length. First of all arrived a quantity of lansquenets under George von Frundsberg, sent by the Archduke Ferdinand, the Emperor's young brother; then, in the month of January, Bourbon returned in person. He had been eminently successful. In addition to pawning his own jewels, he had taken his revenge upon the King's mother by making a raid on Savoy and seizing the jewels of her relative the Duchess, which he had pawned in Germany.

In that country he was clever enough also to raise subsidies of men from the Imperial cities, which were nearly all Lutheran in sentiment. Bourbon told them that the King of France was the intimate ally of the Pope who was so much opposed to Luther, and by this means he contrived to obtain a quantity of Protestant German soldiers to fight under the Catholic banner of Charles V.

No sooner had Bourbon returned, than Pescara addressed the soldiers. Appealing to their cupidity, he told them that by vanquishing the French King and sacking his camp at Mirabello they would obtain unknown riches, especially by the ransoms that they would obtain for the persons of all the great lords of France whom they would no doubt take prisoners. The Spanish soldiers were caught by this prospect; but to the Germans, who were more wary, Pescara represented that they should exert every effort to save their brethren shut up in Pavia, especially the son of their beloved chief Frundsberg, who was with Leyva. All the money that he could procure Pescara gave to the men-at-arms, who would listen to none of his reasons but wanted cash down and at once.

Antonio da Leyva was at this time having trouble with his Germans in Pavia—they also were clamouring for pay and wished to surrender. Their unscrupulous

commander got over this difficulty in two ways. First, he poisoned the chief of the Germans ; secondly, he said that all of their long-deferred pay was outside the city waiting for them.

Thus, by one means or another, the commanders of the army of Charles V. contrived to keep their soldiers from deserting and likewise to keep their courage up to the fighting point, but at the same time they were clever enough, by the means of Italian agents and spies, to promote numerous desertions from the forces of François I.

The worst of all these took place after the Imperial Generals, having joined all their forces, advanced from Lodi and took up a strong position only about half a mile from the now fortified park of Mirabello. Five thousand Swiss soldiers then left François, and marched away into their native Canton of Grisons.

The King was at length alarmed. He now closed his troops in nearer together and got his batteries ready behind the walls. The army outside was now as strong as his own, with the exception of men-at-arms and artillery ; but François was well aware that for want of pay, food, and ammunition that army could only be kept together for a very short time. He knew that the Imperialists were in such a condition that they must either fight almost immediately, be disbanded, or rise in mutiny.

Now, if ever, François had an opportunity of winning all by strategy, while he risked all by fighting a battle. He would merely have abandoned the siege of Pavia, to have evacuated also his position at Mirabello, which was too extended, and fallen back with all his forces on Milan, where he had left a small garrison. The Imperial army, of which the newly raised German troops had not received a florin beyond their first engagement money, must have gone all to pieces. He could then have returned, crushed such fragments as remained, and have taken the starving Pavia when it was no longer supported by a large force outside. Of the King's Generals when assembled in a council of war, all strongly urged him to pursue this course except one. Why, they

asked, fight an army compelled to fight from sheer despair, and merely from the hope of plunder, one which will soon cease to exist?

The one exception, the one man who gave contrary advice, was, as might well have been expected, Bonnivet.

The Admiral pointed out to François that his name would be shamed and his honour tarnished if he now raised the siege of Pavia, which he had sworn to take or perish, and if he refused a battle with forces inferior to his own.

François, whom no experience could teach, listened to his evil counsellor, determined to follow the advice of the man who always made mistakes likely to endanger his country.

Already on the night of February 8th, 1525, an immense body of masons, sent by Pescara, had knocked down wide pieces of the walls of the park of Mirabello in several places, and after this Bourbon and Pescara determined to attack by night, and to make the main attack not on the front face of the park, which was most strongly fortified, but by the rear, on the north side. The King of France would then be compelled to come down from the high ground which he held and fight in the plain.

The attack was arranged to take place before daylight on February 24th, which was the Emperor's birthday, and Antonio da Leyva was warned to combine by making a sortie from Pavia.

Owing to the time occupied in knocking down the walls on the side proposed to assault, it was no longer night but a clear and cold morning when a large body of the Imperial troops, penetrating into the park of Mirabello, found themselves faced by the army of the French King, who was full of high courage and confident of success.

The Marquis del Vasto, with three thousand mixed Spanish arquebus-men and German lansquenets, eluding the French army, marched straight upon the villa. This he occupied with but little resistance, as it was merely occupied by merchants and a few stragglers, its

garrison having followed the King. The rest of the Imperial troops with Pescara, following Vasto into the park, were thrown at first into the greatest confusion by the French artillery, which took them in flank. An eye-witness declared that "nothing was to be seen but heads and arms flying among them," until they gained a little valley where they were under cover. Here, however, they were charged by the splendid men-at-arms of the Duc d'Alençon and the Seigneur Chabot de Brion and very much cut up. While the shaken Imperialists fled before the lances and sought cover in wooded ground, Lannoy commenced to talk about the necessity of entrenching themselves, but not so Pescara. This brave soldier sent for Vasto to come from the villa and join him; he urged Lannoy to charge with the advance guard, and sent to beg Bourbon, who commanded the main body, to come to his assistance as soon as possible.

Lannoy, although without much confidence, advanced, being covered by the light cavalry under the Marquis de Civita Sant' Angelo, when suddenly the King of France, at the head of all the noble Seigneurs of his Court and the men-at-arms, charged down upon the leading squadrons.

François encountered Sant' Angelo in person. He ran him through with his lance and killed him, and his followers dispersed the light cavalry like chaff. The following men-at-arms of Lannoy were likewise broken up, and some foot-soldiers carrying pikes and a number of arquebus-men were also dispersed by this brilliant charge and many killed.

Seeing them run, the King of France remarked to Lescun, Maréchal de Foix, who had charged by his side: "Seigneur de Lescun, now it is that I can indeed call myself the Duke of Milan." François thought that the battle was won when it was scarcely begun, for Pescara and Bourbon soon changed the face of matters, after having been joined by the three thousand men of del Vasto. The French were charged in flank and in face

at the same time, and the battle became furious, the French artillery now proving quite inadequate to stop the advance of either the Spanish troops or the lansquenets of George von Frundsberg. Soon indeed the French batteries were masked by the lansquenets belonging to the French side, these Germans, under the leadership of François de Lorraine and Richard Pole, so-called Duke of Suffolk, overlapping both the guns and the Swiss battalions in their eagerness to get at the enemy. A bloody hand-to-hand fight now ensued between them and the Imperialist Germans, but these latter, being reinforced by some Spaniards, the lansquenets of the German Black Bands were destroyed. These unfortunate men, slain by their fellow-countrymen, had formed the right wing of the French army, and now the heavy cavalry of the centre suffered equally from the fire of the Spanish arquebus-men, whose bullets pierced the heaviest armour of the men-at-arms.

As these men-at-arms gave way, they left all the Swiss soldiery behind them face to face with the Imperial Germans and Spaniards, and now ensued the most critical part of this sanguinary encounter. Had but these celebrated Swiss battalions stood firm, all would have gone well for France. Unfortunately, having already been shaken owing to the men-at-arms falling back upon their ranks in disorder, they made but a poor resistance to Pescara and the Marquis del Vasto. They broke and ran just as the King, whose lance had been broken, had drawn his sword and was advancing to make a new charge. Failing in his effort to rally the Swiss, and horrified at this disaster, François got together all of the men-at-arms that he could. With the surviving great nobles around him, with heroic courage the King threw himself furiously into the thickest of the Imperialist ranks. This band of King and nobles were determined neither to give way nor to yield, and for long they cut and thrust savagely and desperately, their ranks getting gradually thinner as one after another went down, many being mortally wounded or killed outright. Among their

opponents was Pescara, bleeding from three wounds, while from another direction arrived Antonio da Leyva. Thirsting for vengeance, he had broken out of Pavia with all his garrison of hungry men, and now appeared dealing death and destruction upon all the broken bands that he encountered.

Bravely the King and his faithful nobles kept up the uneven struggle. The old Maréchal La Trémouille went down : he had fought in every war from the time of Charles VIII., but Pavia was to be his last battle. La Palice fell also ; and near him Richard Pole, a claimant to the British Crown, bit the dust ; while a few yards away died the Bastard of Savoy.

Bonnivet, the cause of the disaster, determined not to survive a day which must bring such disgrace to himself and to France. He raised his vizor so that he might be recognised, and sought the death which he found not far from the King. Next it was the turn of Lescun, Maréchal de Foix, to be mortally wounded ; then Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre, was unhorsed and taken prisoner before he could struggle to his feet. François was slightly wounded in three places, when his horse, pierced by the lance of the Count Nicolas de Salm, fell with him close to a bridge. Several Spanish soldiers rushed upon him, and although the prostrate King still strove to defend himself with his sword, had not the former rebel noble Pomperan, who had for a time followed Bourbon, come to his assistance, he would probably have been killed. While fighting off the Spaniards, Pomperan cried to the King to yield himself prisoner to the Duc de Bourbon, who was near at hand, but to do this he refused.

Lannoy happened to be close by ; he was called, and the King of France said that he would surrender to the Viceroy. Upon his knee Lannoy received the sword of François I. ; then, politely remarking that it was not right that so great a Monarch should be without a sword, the Viceroy handed his own to the defeated and captive King.

CHAPTER XXVI

How Charles V. took the News

THE Spanish soldiers, who were the real captors of the King, expected him to be held for ransom as their proper spoil. They gleefully imagined that the large sum of money to be demanded for his liberation would be handed over to them by their commanders in lieu of their long-deferred pay. Before François had been removed from the field of battle, one of these arquebusmen came forward and remarked in a friendly and familiar manner to the captive King: "Sire, pray accept this golden bullet from me. I had intended to shoot you with it, but now you had better keep it to help to pay for your ransom."

Lannoy and Pescara, however, had their own ideas, and, knowing the vast importance of their prisoner to their master the Emperor, determined to remove the King as soon as possible from the neighbourhood of the troops, who might perhaps take it into their heads to seize his person.

He had two trivial wounds in the face and a third in the leg, but none of these was sufficient to cause any anxiety. Just for a day or two, his place of detention was the monastery of Saint-Paul, which had been in the centre of his own camp on the day before the battle, but the King, to his own surprise, soon found himself removed to a fortress named Pizzighettone, where he was placed under a very strong guard, commanded by one of the strictest of the Spanish captains, an officer named Alarcon, who held the rank of General.

Before being removed to this place, however, François managed to deliver in secret his signet-ring to one of his officers, whom he was given permission to despatch with a letter to his mother. All of his scruples on the subject of religion having fled, the King gave instructions that this ring was to be taken to the Turkish Sultan, with a request for his alliance and assistance against Charles V.

Although the first messenger who was sent with this ring was murdered on the way, the ring itself reached the hands of Ibrahim Pasha, the great Vizier of the great Sultan known as Soliman the Magnificent, and a second messenger named Frangipanni subsequently concluded the first alliance between the Very Christian King and the acknowledged head of the Mahomedan religion in Europe and in Asia.

The King, hoping to secure good treatment from his captors, instead of displaying a haughty or sulky demeanour, indulged in profound dissimulation. While addressing Lannoy with deference, as the Viceroy of the Emperor, to whom alone he consented to yield, François flattered Pescara to the top of his bent, as being the head of the Italian party, from whom he hoped some day to gain assistance.

Pescara, skilful courtier as he was, although covered with wounds, did not neglect to present his homage to the illustrious prisoner, after having first dressed in deep mourning, whereupon François I. embraced the cunning Italian heartily.

On the night after the battle, François even thought it well worth his while to conceal his hatred of the former Constable. He received the Duc de Bourbon affably, and even asked him to dine with the other Generals at his own table. All of these courtesies were, however, nothing but by-play on the one side and the other: the only advantage gained by them was that of François, when he managed to send off his ring to the Sultan.

Meanwhile François himself gave a safe-conduct to pass through France to the Commander Peñalosa, whom

the Viceroy sent off to Charles V. in Spain with the glorious news of the victory.

The Duc de Bourbon at the same time sent off to Charles a messenger of his own, named Le Peloux, by water from an Italian port, and, full of designs of revenge as ever, he instantly despatched messengers to Henry VIII. also, telling him that now was his grand opportunity of regaining the throne of France, showing him the best way in which it could be done, and offering him his personal assistance with an army.

The astute Bourbon was indeed right—all of the French captains were either dead or captive, that is, with two exceptions ; never was France so denuded of leaders. The two exceptions were, that Prince of the Blood, the Duc d'Alençon, husband of the King's sister Marguerite, who made good his escape from Pavia with the remains of the rear-guard, and the Maréchal Theodore Trivulzi, who, after Pavia abandoned Milan with the small garrison under his command, and joined the King's brother-in-law in his hurried retreat into France.

The captive King meanwhile sent off to the Regent, Louise de Savoie, a letter which showed very clearly how terribly he had been cast down by this defeat, which had cost him the lives of over ten thousand men and his own liberty. He ended up his epistle with the words, "Nothing is left me except honour, and my life, which is safe."

A very unworthy side of his character was now displayed by the formerly boasting François in his letters to Charles V. These were such as to excite disgust rather than pity, although pity was what he asked for. Humbling himself, indeed grovelling before the feet of the Emperor, François wrote to Charles that he hoped "that in his clemency he would make a friend and not a despairing man of him, that instead of a useless prisoner he would render a King for ever his slave."

It must be confessed that François presented but a sorry figure in his imprisonment. From libertine he became devout, while he devoted his time to writing

interminable poems on the subject of his amours and his misfortunes. Much of this verse seems but little better than doggrel, although some of the verses, which were probably touched up later by some other hand, show a real poetic spirit. However, throughout them all runs a tone of alternate vaunting and self-pity which displeases the reader.

We can imagine the emotion in the tender heart of his sister Marguerite when she learned that her hero, her Paladin of a brother, was not only a prisoner, but giving himself over to devotion and fasting, so that he actually became thin. The King's neglected wife Claude had died just at the commencement of his expedition into Italy, and now upon Marguerite devolved the care of the six children whom Claude had left behind her—three girls, Charlotte, Madeleine, and Marguerite, and three boys, François, Henri, and Charles. While nursing the occasional gout of Louise de Savoie, and also nursing the children during their respective attacks of measles, which killed little Charlotte, Marguerite did not forget her brother's soul. She sent to him the sacred writings of Saint Paul, with, however, the earnest recommendation not to fast sufficiently to injure his precious health.

We have already mentioned that Marguerite's husband, the Duc d'Alençon, had contrived to bring off the débris of the French army from Pavia. It might have been imagined that, when nearly every other Prince and noble, including Marguerite's old friend Anne de Montmorency, who was a prisoner, had been killed or captured, she might have been glad to see her husband return safe and sound from a terrible battle. In this he had certainly behaved with as much courage as any one else—witness, for example, his brilliant charge in company with Chabot de Brion upon Pescara and Lannoy.

Chabot, who was now to be Admiral of France in the place of Bonnivet, had remained among the captives in the hands of the victors, while d'Alençon had, at all events, the merit, when all was lost, of saving a portion

of the army, that it might be able to fight again another day.

Such, however, was Marguerite's mad infatuation for her brother that, instead of welcoming Charles d'Alençon home alive, she could not pardon him for having escaped when François had not done so. She treated him with scorn and irony, as having basely deserted his King, and was seconded in her cruel behaviour by her mother. The wretched d'Alençon took this conduct so much to heart that he took to his bed and died of grief less than two months after the battle of Pavia. France had joined in with his wife in the outcry against him, and the injustice of the universal abuse to which he had been subjected seemed so great that it broke his heart.

Before he died, on April 11th, 1525, Marguerite, who had never really loved her husband, relented towards him so far as to visit him on his deathbed ; and she even wrote a letter from his bedside to her brother, in which she conveyed his dying messages of adieu to the King. These messages, it may be noted, conveyed no kind of intimation on the part of the ill-used d'Alençon that he had conducted himself in any way unbecoming to a soldier, a gentleman, and a Prince of the Blood.

By thus becoming a widow, the Pearl of the Valois at once assumed additional value in her brother's eyes, for François now thought that he could make use of his sister as a pawn in the losing game that he was playing with Charles V., and, although she was eight years the Emperor's senior, induce him to marry her. She was still good-looking and remarkably attractive, and Charles, who had seen her once in his boyhood, was said to have retained a high opinion of her charms. Charles, of course, was at this time still affianced to the Princess Mary of England, but that was a mere trifle hardly worth being considered in a time when Royal engagements were broken as easily as they were made.

François indeed at this time elaborated a great scheme in his mind of endeavouring to accomplish by matrimony that which he was utterly unable to gain in any other

way. He thought, for instance, that he might be able himself to obtain as his second wife Éléonore, the widowed Queen of Portugal, and with her procure his freedom, notwithstanding that he was perfectly well aware of the fact that Charles had promised the hand of his eldest sister to the Duc de Bourbon.

While the prisoner of Pavia was revolving these schemes in his head, let us see how the Emperor received the news of the great victory which had been won for him by the courage and skill of his Generals.

Charles V. was in his castle in Madrid, in an extremely anxious frame of mind. He knew that his army in Italy was starving with hunger, and that he had no money wherewith to pay the men. He knew that if the troops did not give battle they would probably soon become nothing better than a mutinous mass of dangerous brigands, while if they did venture to attack François I. in his fortified position they ran every risk of a defeat.

While in this unenviable frame of mind, Charles was suddenly informed that a messenger from the Viceroy of Naples was waiting to see him. Trembling at the anticipation of the news that he might be about to learn, the Emperor nevertheless composed his features as he ordered the messenger to be admitted.

With due Spanish ceremony, Peñalosa was ushered into the Royal presence. Placing himself on one knee, he tersely announced : "Sire, the battle has been fought near Pavia, your Majesty's troops have won the victory, the King of France himself has been taken prisoner and is in your Majesty's power."

Such was the emotion of the twenty-five-year-old Monarch that he turned white, and for a minute was unable to speak.

At length he cried, as if doubting his ears : "The King of France in my power ! the battle gained by me !" He did not add a word, but threw himself upon his knees on his *prie Dieu*, and remained for long giving thanks.

His prayers completed, Charles never allowed any

signs of joy to appear upon his features, while, instead of expressing ambitious designs, his words were all of peace. His conduct, moreover, was most humble. Saying that it was unbecoming to rejoice at the capture of the Very Christian King, Charles refused to allow any public rejoicing or the decoration of Madrid: he only permitted a solemn thanksgiving service in the Chapel of Our Lady of Atocha, to which he proceeded plainly dressed and on foot. He distinctly ordered the preacher who officiated at this celebration of the Mass in no way to praise him, and, moreover, not to say hard things against his vanquished foes. To Dr. Sampson, the Ambassador of Henry VIII., who came to congratulate him, Charles behaved with equal modesty of demeanour, talking gravely of human events being all in Divine hands and the prospects of there now being concluded a lasting peace between all Christians, which might permit of the repulse of the infidels and the repression of errors in the Church. As for himself, Charles added, he wished for nothing more than he had already, and said that his intention was to behave with such moderation that no one should perceive in him any signs of a desire of vengeance upon his humbled foe.

In all of this studied moderation Charles was merely playing to the gallery and acting the part of a hypocrite, for he was all the time considering how he was going to get the most possible out of his victory.

He might now combine with Henry VIII. and invade and crush France; he might propose a peace by which he could denude François of half of his Kingdom and reduce him to beggary, or, of course, he might act up to his professions of humility, and earn the eternal gratitude and friendship of the King of France by setting him free.

Needless to say, the latter course was not the one that recommended itself to the Emperor, who was, at all events, determined now to recover Burgundy.

CHAPTER XXVII

Charles Tries to Jockey François

1525

SOME few months earlier than the time of which we are writing, indeed, just after the period when Bourbon had been obliged by the want of Spanish co-operation to retire from before Marseilles, the situation had become very strained between Charles V. on the one side and Henry VIII. and Wolsey on the other.

The Seigneur de Beaurain had then come to England with messages from the Duc de Bourbon and the Archduke Ferdinand, to ask for two hundred thousand crowns to pay for an army which Bourbon should raise in Germany and employ to invade France by way of Franche Comté.

The reply of Henry VIII. was anything but polite. He called the Emperor a liar, said that the Archduchess Marguerite was no better than a courtesan, the Archduke Ferdinand a mere child, and Bourbon a traitor.

These offensive terms fell, it is true, from the lips of the Cardinal, but Henry had told him what to say to Beaurain, and further to add that he was entirely opposed to allowing Charles to obtain the object of his ambition, which was nothing short of the domination of the whole world.

So furious was the Cardinal at the delay and failure before Marseilles, when Paris might so easily have been marched upon by Bourbon, that he even opened negotiations with Louise de Savoie, the Regent. The price

that he demanded for the English alliance was too high, consisting of Boulogne and other places in the north, and of a sum of a million and a half of golden crowns. Louise bargained; she did not wish to yield any territory; one million one hundred thousand crowns was, she said, the utmost that she could possibly pay. Wolsey gave a very insulting reply to the envoys of Louise, for, as we have already seen, the Cardinal was not particular as to language. He further told them to be off at once, especially—and this was news to the French Ambassadors—as François I. had just been defeated and taken at Pavia.

After this defeat, forgetting all the insulting things that he had caused to be said to Beaurain, Henry sent off Sir Richard Wingfield to Spain, to propose to Charles that they should now conquer and divide France. Henry proposed that he should himself be crowned at Paris, and then that he should accompany Charles V. to Rome, to be crowned there with the Imperial Crown by the Pope, so that he might re-establish the Empire in all its ancient dignity. In addition to all the countries that he already ruled, Henry VIII. pointed out that the Emperor by his marriage with the Princess Mary would succeed to the heirship of England and Ireland, to eventual rights over Scotland, and the reversion of the Crown of France. In case Charles V. should not care to head in person the army which was to recover France for Henry, this latter suggested that the Duc de Bourbon should carry out the invasion of France according to his own plan, but partly at Henry's expense, while making use of the army of Italy for the purpose. The Archduchess Marguerite was to furnish an army to combine with that of England, while the Pope, Venice, Florence, and the Duke of Ferrara should all be compelled to give suitable contributions to aid in the despoiling of France. Henry generously said that he did not propose to keep the whole of France for himself, for he would give back Burgundy and Provence to the Emperor. Bourbon also should have Dauphiné given to

him, to add to all his immense patrimonial estates, which would be restored to him with independent Sovereignty. By this plan, if carried out, Charles V. stood a very good chance of eventually succeeding to the Crowns of France and England, as Henry VIII. had at this time no heir but his daughter Mary, and had not yet begun to talk about divorcing Catherine of Aragon. The English King realised, however, that his ambitious views might not be agreed to by his ally, to whom lately he had given no help whatever. He therefore told Wingfield to submit an alternative plan to the Emperor, one by which England would recover her old Duchies of Normandy, Gascony, Guyenne, Poitou, Anjou, and Maine.

Whatever the division that was to be made between the three potentates, the great point was, so urged Henry VIII., to leave to François I. only a kingdom very much reduced in size. France, if left to the Very Christian King, was indeed to become but a shadow of her former self.

As it happened, Charles had at this time a very long-headed Minister named Mercurin de Gattinara, who held the position of his Chancellor in Spain. Gattinara shrewdly pointed out to the Emperor that there was no particular advantage to be gained in helping to make bigger the English King, who was, moreover, an unfaithful ally, who had been quite recently plotting with his enemies behind his back. What was necessary, said Gattinara, was to take advantage of holding the French King prisoner to get what was wanted out of him, without reference to any one else. A good peace could easily be arranged with François, who was held tight in an Italian prison, and who, in his anxiety to get out, would probably yield all that was required.

“As for King Henry VIII.! Well, at present he wants to make himself King of France; supposing that he should succeed, what will there be to prevent him from injuring us in the Low Countries a little later on? Let us leave him where he is, in England and Calais; without him we can lower France sufficiently to make

her perfectly innocuous on the side of our Flemish dominions."

This advice of his Chancellor was entirely in accordance with Charles' own ideas. His usual messenger and negotiator, the Seigneur de Beaurain, had returned to Spain, and Charles now prepared him for another journey to propose terms of peace to François. The pains that the hypocritical young Emperor took to try to keep up the show of moderation which he had assumed were almost laughable.

His written communication commenced with a long rigmarole about not showing ingratitude to God, who had caused the French King to fall into his power, and how, in the interests of Christianity, he intended to show kindness, not rigour.

He then proceeded to ask "the King of France to condescend to reasonable terms of peace." In these, after modestly stating that he might, if he liked, very well have demanded the Kingdom of France, Charles made the most enormous demands of territory upon François, heading the list with a request for the Duchy of Burgundy. The list of Counties and places which Charles asked for in France alone would fill up a paragraph, while he insisted also on the King of France resigning the Suzerainty of Flanders and Artois, which made him the Emperor's feudal lord. In Italy, he asked that François should resign every claim that he had: the Kingdom of Naples, the Duchy of Milan, the County of Asti, the Seigneurie of Genoa, all were to be given up. Nor did Charles forget in this proposed treaty of peace his ally the Duc de Bourbon. For the rebel Constable he demanded an independent Kingdom, consisting of his old possessions and the whole of Provence; he likewise insisted upon the immediate liberation of all the former confederates of Bourbon who were prisoners in France.

With reference to the King of England, to whom Charles V. owed large sums of money, the Emperor calmly requested that François should make these good out of his own pocket. The Prince of Orange likewise,

whose Principality in France had been confiscated, was to have it restored to him. In fact, there was nobody forgotten in this wonderful treaty which was to establish, at least so Charles flattered himself, an universal and durable peace throughout the Christian world.

To finish it all up with, François was requested to constitute himself in a manner the vassal of the Emperor, to lead his own armies under Charles against the Turk.

The Sultan Suleiman I., El Kanouni or the Lawgiver, commonly called Soliman in contemporary literature, was the son of Selim I., and he had been at this time five years on the throne at Constantinople. He was a great warrior, and during the forty-six years that he reigned conducted no less than thirteen campaigns in person into Europe. So much was his power recognised, that for several years before the battle of Pavia he had been in receipt of a tribute of ten thousand ducats yearly from the powerful Republic of Venice. At the time of the battle of Pavia he was gradually advancing farther into Europe, and had now invaded Hungary. This country and Bohemia were ruled by the youthful and spirited King Louis II., the son of Vladislav II., a Pole, and of a French mother.

Young Louis was married to one of the Emperor's sisters, the juvenile Archduchess Marie, while the Emperor's brother Ferdinand was married to Anne, the sister of Louis II. Both of these political marriages had been arranged by that clever woman, the Archduchess Marguerite, and they resulted eventually in the gaining by the Habsburg Ferdinand of Bohemia and Hungary.

From the interests of his brother and sister, both being involved, it will easily be understood that Charles had a very personal interest in keeping the Turk out of Hungary and Austria, to say nothing of his quite possible invasion of Germany. Soliman had, however, at this time strongly established himself in Hungary. In order to hunt him out from that country, Charles demanded from François that after the peace was signed he should assist him with fifteen thousand foot and five

thousand horse in an expedition to which the Pope and other Princes should be requested to contribute, and of which the Emperor should be Captain-General.

The propositions of Charles were first of all taken by Beaurain to Louise de Savoie, by whom they were not received by any means with enthusiasm. The Regent indeed was bestirring herself, not to yield up French territory, but to get together such fragments of troops as she could in all directions wherewith to protect the country. Fortunately for her, the remaining nobles and the various Parliaments now displayed a very patriotic spirit, and did all in their power to assist her efforts.

While so employed, she had written a letter to Charles V. to endeavour to move his heart to deal kindly to her son, but the Emperor in his reply, which he sent by Beaurain, answered very stiffly, and made no use of any of the affectionate terms, such as "my dear mother," which he had been wont formerly to employ in corresponding with the Duchesse d'Angoulême. Without herself making any official response to the Emperor's propositions, she sent them on by messengers accompanying Beaurain to François in his prison, who took with them her own personal notes and observations as to the way in which she considered that he ought to reply.

From these it is evident that Louise was utterly devoid of all feelings of shame. She suggested that they should now fling the widowed Marguerite at the head of the Emperor; that François also, while asking for the hand of Charles' sister, should offer to become his soldier to aid him to take the Imperial Crown in Italy; above everything, that François should promise to help to deliver his old ally Venice into the hands of the Emperor.

Learning from his mother the good disposition of his subjects, François sent back a letter addressed to them, in which he called them "his friends," and expressed his pleasure at their faithful attitude. He concluded this letter in bombastic style, as follows: "As for my honour and that of my nation, I have rather chosen an honest prison than dishonest flight. Be sure that it shall never

be said, if I have not been happy enough to do good to my kingdom, that for the sake of gaining my freedom I should do it evil." He declared that he would much prefer to remain in prison all his life than to injure his country.

While writing in this style and making on the surface a great bluff and show of firmness, François and, that subtle scion of the Croy family, Charles de Lannoy, were laying their heads together. As a result of his consultations with the Viceroy, François, wildly anxious to be free, made propositions which were not far short of those of the Emperor. He offered to marry Eléonore and to give her Burgundy in dowry, to descend to her heirs male, or to the Emperor's second son if she had none, or, if the Emperor should have no sons, to his own second son, who should marry a daughter of the Emperor. First of all, however, François suggested that the Courts of Justice should decide if the Duchy of Burgundy belonged to the Emperor, and said that he would yield it up if the decision should be against himself.

With reference to Italy, François yielded up everything to Charles, including the sum of one hundred thousand ducats owing for the old arrangement that had been made concerning the Kingdom of Naples. In the Low Countries he would restore to him the cities of Hesdin and Tournay. The Suzerainty of Flanders and Artois the King offered, to resign, and he further promised, if Charles should go to cause himself to be crowned in Italy, or should undertake any military operations in Germany, that he would furnish half of the army and pay half of the expenses. If the war should be against the Turk, the King of France vowed that he would go at the head of his own troops, paid by himself, under Charles as Captain-General.

With reference to Henry VIII., François undertook to pay up all Charles' debts to him.

There yet remained to be considered the case of the Duc de Bourbon. François abjectly promised to restore to his rebel cousin all of his estates, his pensions and his

offices, with the charges of Chamberlain and Constable, and to throw in the government of the province of Languedoc into the bargain. As he was himself asking for Bourbon's promised wife, Éléonore, instead of the Queen of Portugal, François offered to the Duc the hand of the Princess Renée, his own sister-in-law, the daughter of Louis XII.

As if this were not enough, the King said that he would allow Bourbon to contest in the Courts his right to the Sovereign title of Comte de Provence, which he claimed. He further said that he would recognise this rebel Prince of the Blood as his own Lieutenant-General, and would place him at the head of the army which he would send to serve under the Emperor, should he not happen to be able to be present in person.

These immense concessions on the part of François surely were but little in keeping with his bold words to his subjects. His mother the Regent, at all events, thought that her son was giving up too much, as she sent a messenger, Pierre de Wartz by name, to the Archduchess Marguerite, who as usual had a finger in the pie, to say that she really could not agree to these terms.

Lannoy, however, who had considerable sense in his head, wrote to the Emperor to beg him to agree to a peace which would make a friend of the King of France ; and both his letter and François' reply were sent by Don Ugo de Moncada, a Spanish Admiral who had been captured by the French before the battle of Pavia, and who had been exchanged against the captive Maréchal de Montmorency.

The greedy Charles, however, was not contented with what he was offered. He wanted Burgundy, now and for himself, without any restrictions and not for any possible sons and daughters, or grandsons and granddaughters, of his sister or himself. Accordingly he began to make preparations to continue the war, and so sent off the Commander Peñalosa, to try through him to get in touch with Henry VIII. once more.

In order to get hold of her dowry of six hundred thousand ducats, although the Princess Mary was not yet of a marriageable age, Peñalosa was told to ask Henry VIII. to send her and her dowry to Spain at once, and likewise himself to invade France from Calais, where the Archduchess Marguerite would send an army to join him. With or without the Princess Mary, Charles asked Henry to send him at once four hundred thousand ducats for the expenses of the coming war.

Henry, however, happened to be both in a bad humour and short of cash, and angrily said that he did not see why the Emperor should obtain all that he wanted with English money. He replied therefore, shortly, that he had heard all about the marriage contract that the Emperor was now arranging with his cousin the rich Princess of Portugal, that he did not rely upon him in consequence, and excused him from marrying his child-daughter Mary, who was for that matter, as he knew, far too young to be sent to Spain. He reminded Charles that he already owed him very large sums, and added that he would very much like to see the colour of his money without further delay.

With this reply the Emperor had to be contented, and he was likewise convinced that in any new plans that he might be forming against France he could not count upon English assistance.

The most remarkable trait of Charles was, however, the grim bulldog determination with which he always held on to any point upon which he had made up his mind. He was not therefore in the least discouraged, but resolved, by hook or by crook, to gain his ends about Burgundy. And as he held such a valuable asset as the King of France in his hands, he seemed to have a pretty fair chance of succeeding in his designs.

CHAPTER XXVIII

François Gets a Surprise

1525

L ANNOY, the guardian, and François, the prisoner, were, as we have mentioned, conspiring together, and it was quite a little romance that they concocted with reference to the Emperor's sister. Although Éléonore was by no means beautiful, François had the effrontery to write that she had been in his thoughts for a long time, that he was deeply in love without ever having seen her.

The better to speed in his wooing, Lannoy suggested to his captive that it would be better for him if he were to be transported from Italy to Spain, where he would have an opportunity of seeing the lady in person. To this François readily agreed, and even offered to facilitate his transportation thither by demanding his own warships for the purpose. In arranging this plan, however, each of the conspirators had an *arrière-pensée*. That of Lannoy was that the King would be safer out of the hands of the army of Italy and in those of Charles V. François, on the other hand, hoped that he might be rescued *en route* by the ships of his Genoese Admiral, Andrea Doria.

Bourbon, Pescara, and Antonio da Leyva were left in the dark as to this project. They had agreed with Lannoy that it would be wiser to transport the King to the Kingdom of Naples, whence the Duke of Albany, with his troops, had hurriedly set sail for France, and

therefore made no objection when Lannoy, with Alarcon, carried off the King, as they pretended, to the south of Italy.

Instead of proceeding south, however, Alarcon and his escort of two thousand men took François to Genoa, whence at the end of May he was transported by sea to Porto-Fino. In June the Maréchal de Montmorency, having joined the King, informed him that the plan concocted with the Regent for his deliverance at sea had fallen through, as the risk was too great. The King was not greatly cast down, as he hoped for great things from his proposed meeting with Charles V., and it was agreed that Montmorency, who was now commanding the French galleys, should give six of them to help the Spanish galleys to convey the Royal captive to Barcelona in safety. All hostilities were to be suspended until a fortnight after the combined fleets should have returned to France and Italy respectively.

Putting Spanish soldiers on the French ships, Lannoy set sail with the King, after hurriedly sending ahead word to the Emperor, who had no idea of the manœuvres of the Viceroy, of what he was about.

The Viceroy wrote: "I am bringing you the King, which will I am sure be agreeable to your Majesty, as it will only depend upon yourself to promptly settle your affairs together."

After a nine days' sail François I. arrived at Barcelona, on June 19th, 1525. Here he was received with the highest honours, and lodged in the palace of the Archbishop of Tarragona.

François, who found himself quite a popular hero, was lionised to his heart's content by the Spaniards, and very pleased at the agreeable change from an Italian prison. Popular sympathy was entirely on the side of the gallant and unfortunate King, who had fought with all the courage of a Bayard upon the bloody field of Pavia. Not only did all the chief officials of Catalonia come to present addresses, but twenty-two beautiful ladies, headed by the widow of the famous Ramon de

Cardona, who had commanded the Spaniards at Ravenna, came in a splendid cavalcade to visit him and offer their sympathy.

On the following day the King was taken publicly to hear the Mass, surrounded by a guard of honour, through the streets of Barcelona, which were decorated in his honour.

After being thus fêted at Barcelona, on the third day François was taken by sea to Valencia. As here he received another ovation, François came to the conclusion that being a captive under such circumstances was far from disagreeable, indeed highly delightful, and he looked forward with pleasant anticipations to his arrival in Madrid and meeting with Charles V. and Éléonore, the young Dowager Queen of Portugal.

At Valencia he was received in the Royal Palace, where he was the guest of his fair cousin, Queen Germaine de Foix, second wife and widow of King Ferdinand of Aragon. This Germaine de Foix, now a woman in the thirties, was still a great beauty; she was the cousin of the King's fair mistress, Françoise de Foix, Comtesse de Châteaubriand. After the death of King Ferdinand, who was three times her age, and whose son by her, named Juan, had died before his father, Germaine had married John, Margrave of Brandenburg, who had been appointed Governor of Valencia by Charles V. After the death of this German Prince, her good looks and high rank procured her yet a third husband, in the person of Ferdinand, Duke of Calabria. At the time of the King's arrival she was a widow for the second time. Everything that could be done by Germaine for the entertainment of her Royal cousin was arranged. While he did not want for the company of the most elegant and noble ladies, all ready to adore the handsome and agreeable young Monarch, he was taken for a hunting trip into the mountains, to the beautiful country villa of Geronimo Cabanillas, then Governor of Valencia; and here he remained for some time enjoying himself to the full.

The only thing to remind François of the fact that he was not a free man was the constant presence of Alarcon and his guards, even on the hunting parties; but here in Spain and under such pleasant auspices, with due Spanish courtesy these rather treated the King as being an honoured guest than as being in any way under constraint.

There was, however, just one little drop of bitterness at the bottom of the cup of pleasure of which François was at this time quaffing so freely. This was that, for some unaccountable reason, the expected letter of welcome to his Spanish dominions did not arrive from his host Charles V. From his unaccountable silence, the Emperor in fact seemed not to be aware of the arrival in Spain of the French Monarch, concerning whom he had not long since, on the advice of Bourbon and Pescara, given explicit orders that he was to be transferred to Naples. It was evident, if he was already aware of the step that had been taken by Lannoy, that he had not as yet quite made up his mind what he was going to do about it. At least, such was the conclusion to which the now slightly anxious François was compelled to arrive.

As a matter of fact, while the Duc de Bourbon and Pescara, who had been left behind in Italy, were raging at having been so unjustifiably deprived by Lannoy of the prisoner of the army, Charles was no less furious at Toledo, where he was holding a session of the Cortes, when he learned of the King's arrival. Although not usually given to swearing, the Emperor indeed now astonished his courtiers by swearing vigorously by the Order of the Golden Fleece that it was a great surprise to him, and entirely contrary to his orders that the Very Christian King had been brought to Spain.

Charles had already received a letter from Bourbon complaining in unmeasured terms of the Viceroy, who, he said, "had put him to the greatest shame," and pointing out to him the fact that by this unwarranted deportation of the King of France, the Pope, the Venetians,

and all the other potentates of Italy might be lost to his cause.

As Bourbon was left without any money wherewith to pay the fresh troops that he was raising, he became more bitter still, and added that he would plainly show the Emperor in the Viceroy's presence how greatly the latter had injured his interests.

Pescara was equally discontented, particularly as, instead of rewarding his brilliant services, the Emperor had declined to bestow upon him the confiscated Countship of Carpi, which he had demanded at his hands. Pescara wrote bitterly to the Emperor, to complain of the Viceroy, and published everywhere in Italy the contents of his letter.

While Bourbon and Pescara were, however, a long way off, in Italy, Charles de Lannoy, who as a Croy was beloved of the Emperor, was in Spain to speak for himself.

The Viceroy hurried off to Toledo to find out his master's wishes. Montmorency was also sent there by François, to request an interview with Charles with a view to arranging first a truce and then a peace, and further to ask that his sister the Duchesse d'Alençon might be granted a safe-conduct to come to Spain in order, so François said, that she might treat of these matters on behalf of the Regent. In his innermost heart he hoped that the arrival of his sister Marguerite might lead to the Emperor marrying her.

When Lannoy reached Toledo he had not much difficulty in persuading his master of the advantages of having the captive King under his own eye, but he found him determined to send him off at once to an almost inaccessible fortress in the mountains of Valencia.

Lannoy advised Charles not to take this course, but rather to get his prisoner in some place close at hand where he could treat with him personally, and, for the present, to arrange a truce, which would be entirely to his own advantage.

Lannoy and all his Croy relations flattered their young

master by telling him that he need not depend upon the assistance of Bourbon to invade France, but that he was quite capable of gaining his own ends in his own way without help from anybody. He could squeeze all that he wanted from his prisoner.

The situation, as they put it, was that the Emperor could not well at present invade France with a small force. He wanted a new army, and a reliable one, which the mixed army of Italy was not, being very little devoted to the Emperor's interests. The money of the Low Countries was also very desirable, the more so as if the Low Countries would only subscribe, Spain might be more likely to follow their example.

Money from the Low Countries was, however, hard to get. In the previous month the clever Governess, the Emperor's aunt, Marguerite of Austria, had convoked the States of Holland and Flanders, begging them to subscribe, if only for their own safety, against the aggression of the rascally brigands of the Duc de Gueldre. Her request had been met with a flat refusal, and a violent accusation of the whole system of levies of money for the past hundred years.

Luxembourg, Hainault, and Artois swore that they were already ruined by the wars, and that they had not a florin left to give. Brabant replied cunningly to Marguerite that if Bois-le-Duc would pay up it would be pleased to do the same; but Brabant was well aware of the fact that Bois-le-Duc, having become entirely Lutheran, was at that time in a state of religious insurrection, breaking open the monasteries and holding the monks for ransom. Amsterdam and Delft were also seething with heresy and sedition, and Marguerite was, in consequence, writing terrified letters to her nephew, who replied to her to make an example of the rebellious Magistrates. He told her further that, if Rome would only raise the money from the priests for the purpose, he would come in person to be the executioner of the heretical Lutherans of the Low Countries.

As Germany, headed by most of its Princes, was

likewise seething with religious discontent, as Spain had scarcely quieted down after its recent insurrection, and as Italy was grimly growling with repressed rage, it must be confessed that the Emperor had not a very pleasant look-out before him, to whichever side he might turn, and that it would be far wiser for him not to commit himself to any further warfare with France for the present.

What really saved France at this time was the serious financial and religious revolution in the Low Countries, when those peoples on the borders of the North Sea, who had been under foreign domination for a century, at last waking up, declared at the same time for liberty, for the result of their industry and for liberty of conscience.

Faced by these difficulties, Charles lost his chance once more of letting Bourbon go ahead, although there seems but little doubt that had the Constable done so shortly after Pavia, most of the thirteen French Parliaments would have welcomed him, and he could have penetrated with the greatest ease into his own countries of Bourbonnais, and thence, if he chose, on to Paris.

Charles was, however, waiting at this time for a dispensation from the Pope to enable him to make a rich marriage. His Spanish subjects, scoffing at the idea of their King marrying the child—Princess Mary of England, wished him instead to marry his own first cousin, Isabella of Portugal. Charles, in spite of all his pretended advances to Henry VIII. for his young daughter, likewise wished to marry the handsome Isabella, thinking that if he could only procure her dowry of nine hundred thousand ducats, he could re-establish himself generally upon a firmer basis everywhere throughout his various Kingdoms and the Empire.

Until this event should be happily accomplished, the designing young Emperor determined to listen to the advice of Lannoy. It was, of course, far easier and less expensive to make war upon a captive King of France than upon the country of France, which was now showing a distinctly warlike spirit.

Charles having made up his mind, François was not left much longer to enjoy himself hunting and flirting in Valencia, but when the Bishop of Avila arrived at length to compliment the King on behalf of the Emperor, he had not the slightest idea of the surprise that was in store for him.

Under the charge of Alarcon, he quitted Benisano quite merrily at the end of July 1525, being accompanied for a considerable part of his journey by a joyous cavalcade of *caballeros* and some great ladies.

Greeted by Lannoy on the way, the journey of François for three weeks across Spain was a magnificent Royal progress. The Duke of Infantado at one place entertained him to feasts and bull-fights, and eleven thousand students greeted him at another.

The surprise came upon his arrival at Madrid. There, by the command of the Emperor, the King of France found himself clapped into a horrible dungeon in the strongest tower of the fort called Alcazar.

CHAPTER XXIX

Marguerite de Valois visits Spain

SEPTEMBER 1525

THE dungeon in which François I. found himself boxed up upon his arrival in Madrid was a small chamber with only one door, and one window placed a hundred feet above the ground. The embrasure of the window formed quite a cabinet, so thick was the wall of the tower. It was glazed, but a double grating of iron bars, firmly set into the wall, prevented any possible means of escape. At the foot of the tower two battalions of soldiers were always on guard. They were under the command of Alarcon, who retained his position as gaoler to the Very Christian King, and slept in the apartments below his prisoner. The outlook from the window, which could only be reached by climbing up several feet, only revealed arid plains with no relieving foliage to refresh the eye.

What a position for the puissant King of France! accustomed not only to the adulation of his own courtiers but to that of the representatives of all foreign powers. The hard-hearted young Emperor knew, however, what he was about, and was determined to tame the caged eagle into submission. There was every reason, with a man of the temperament of François, that he might succeed.

Devoted to sports and out-of-door exercises of all kinds, Charles deprived him of open-air recreations; constantly accustomed to the intimate society of women, Charles compelled his prisoner for many months to live

with the chastity of the cloister. Instead of the headlong gallop, to the merry sound of the winding horn, through the forests of Fontainebleau, François for all exercise could take five paces in one direction and five paces in another ; while the familiar rustle at his door of the silken skirts of some fair Countess of France or black-eyed beauty of Italy was now replaced by the heavy tramp of the Spanish sentinel in the corridor.

Leading a life to which he was so utterly unaccustomed, François commenced to pine and fell sick, but although the Emperor knew of his condition, he took care not to go near him, but left him to mope in his solitude, hoping the sooner to bring his prisoner to reason.

Louise, the Regent, had in the meanwhile sent Ambassadors to the Emperor to talk about a peace. These were the Archbishop of Embrun and Jean de Selve, First President of the Parliament of Paris. Among their propositions was a third one of marriage—that of the child-daughter of Éléonore and the seven-year-old Dauphin of France.

As, in a pompous and boring address which Selve made to Charles at Toledo, he only talked about the magnanimity of former Monarchs, while contesting on legal grounds the Emperor's claims to Burgundy, these envoys received but a short and dry reply. The Emperor said that he was not well versed in legal lore, and turned them over to the tender mercies of his Council, and above all to the rough-and-ready Mercurin de Gattinara. From this latter the Ambassadors obtained no satisfaction, and as, by the instructions of the Regent, they were not even prepared to concede as much as François himself had done, in his reply sent from Italy by the hands of Ugo de Moncada, negotiations were soon broken off.

In general terms, the reply sent by the Emperor to Louise de Savoie consisted of a pitiless refusal to anything that she proposed. He roughly said that if he wanted Italy, he could get it without her interference ; nor, he added, was she required to intervene in the matter of the marriage of François I. to his sister. As for the indecent

offer which Louise made of her own daughter to himself, the Emperor did not even deign to reply to it.

When François found the iron circle tightening around him, and realised that the Emperor evidently intended, without ever coming to visit him, to carry out his designs of splitting up France with Henry VIII. and the Duc de Bourbon, he became more sick and despairing. In his despair he wrote to his mother, to come to Madrid in person to visit him. It was, however, the middle of summer, and the journey would be hot and long; the Regent also did not relish the idea of placing herself in the Emperor's power. Louise therefore determined to send her daughter in her place, while entrusting her with powers to make fresh negotiations for a peace which should restore his liberty to her beloved son—her peerless Cæsar.

When the application was made to Charles V. for a safe-conduct for the Duchesse d'Alençon to come to Spain, he by no means welcomed the idea with enthusiasm. This Flemish Monarch had already viewed with great disfavour the warm welcome given to his rival by the Spanish nobles, whom he knew to detest himself. He had learned that the Spanish ladies had gone crazy about François, that Ximena, the lovely daughter of the Duke of Infantado, had openly proclaimed her passion for the King of France, and he had already conveyed his displeasure to the Spanish nobles for their unseemly gush over the defeated enemy of their King.

The Emperor understood perfectly well that should an amiable Princess, the sister of François, one whose devotion to her brother was well known, now arrive, to make a display of that devotion at his own Court at Toledo, near Madrid, the Spanish interest would revive in the Royal prisoner whom he wished to keep quietly shut up in the background. Should the whole of Spain be carried away with the sister's emotion and indulge too deeply in sympathy, he might wake up one morning to find Spain demanding from him the key of the brother's dungeon. Charles was not even quite sure of his own

sister the Queen of Portugal, who had been heard to say that she admired the courage of François, and that if it depended upon her she would rather be re-married to a brave if unfortunate King of his description than to his rebel subject, the Constable de Bourbon.

François was, however, undoubtedly a sick man, and the presence of his sister might do him good ; whereas if he were to die, all of the advantages to be gained from him would be irretrievably lost. Thinking the matter over, Charles therefore grudgingly decided to give the safe-conduct for the visit to Madrid of the Marguerite des Marguerites—the Pearl of the Valois.

This safe-conduct was, however, couched in but general terms ; it did not even mention the name of “ the person ” who was to be allowed to visit the King. Moreover, it was only made out for three months, and in giving it to Montmorency, who, his ransom having been paid, was allowed to remain in Spain, Charles stipulated in return that he should be allowed to send the Duc de Bourbon as his Ambassador to France.

The promise about Bourbon was given, but it was never kept ; and in the hottest days of August Marguerite started on her long and weary journey to Spain. She well knew that she was taking a great risk in going, as there was no certitude that she would ever be allowed to return, but what risk could possibly be too great for Marguerite d'Angoulême to take where her idolised brother was concerned ?

Before her departure her mother, influenced by that “ worst of bipeds,” as some scoffer called him, the Cardinal Du Prat, had allowed the Parliament to commence proceedings against the Reforming friends of Marguerite : Lefebvre, Roussel, and Caroli. The Duchess d'Alençon contrived, however, to procure an autograph letter from her brother in his prison to stop these prosecutions.

Although François recommended the Magistrates to treat these Reformers as “ men of letters of great learning,” they, when released, wisely thought it as well to fly from

Paris to Strasbourg, especially as they were about to be deprived of the presence of their amiable protectress.

In spite of the weakness of his character, upon one point François, even during his illness, remained firm—he would not agree to give up Burgundy; and his obstinacy on this point only increased his popularity in Spain, the twenty-six year old Éléonore heading the party which declared itself in favour of his release for a large money ransom instead of the renunciation of the great Duchy which had been torn by Louis XI. from the Emperor's grandmother Marie, daughter of Charles the Bold.

We have mentioned that Éléonore was not particularly prepossessing, yet from a picture of her which remains in existence, she does not seem to have been devoid of some attractions. Among these were a childish expression of amiability, hair which was rather golden than red in hue, full, rather sensual lips, and a rosy complexion. Although her eyes were rather dull and expressionless, Éléonore appears to have been capable of very warm feelings, and to have possessed a far better heart than her brother Charles V., whose strength of character she by no means shared. It was no doubt partly owing to her heartfelt cry in a letter to Louise: "Oh! if it were only in my power to deliver the King!" that the idea of a marriage between her and François originated.

Marguerite hoped that upon her arrival in Spain she might find a warm partisan and friend in this amiable Princess; but in the meantime, while being borne along in her litter through the sultry south of France, and then, after a sea voyage, through the arid plains of Spain, she found the journey terribly long, as the later news that she received on her wearying and everlasting journey gave the very worst reports of the condition of her brother's health. While traversing the dusty plains of Castile, Marguerite became perfectly worn out with anxiety. All the freshness of her complexion left her, her face became wan and drawn, while she lost the usual

attractive plumpness of her form. Since the thirty-three year old Duchesse d'Alençon was now on a quest in search of a husband, and was moreover, if only for her brother's sake, particularly anxious to impress Charles favourably, these deleterious effects of the journey were, to say the least of it, unfortunate in the extreme.

Whereas, in his prison, François had been trying to relieve the tedium of the weary hours by indulging freely in versification, so did Marguerite likewise now endeavour to beguile the time in her litter by writing poems, of which her brother was the subject. In these the anxiety of mind of the Princess is very clearly expressed, since she boldly declares her intention to reward with a kiss any messenger who may come to meet her, bringing better tidings of the King's condition.

No messenger came, however, to receive the promised kiss from the Royal and chaste lips of Marguerite, and eventually she arrived at her journey's end, in a very bedraggled condition, in the middle of the month of September. Until the day before her arrival, Charles had religiously kept his determination not to go near his prisoner. Then, however, while out hunting near Segovia, he received such alarming news of the King's condition that he rode all night long, until he reached the Alcazar in Madrid before daylight.

Climbing the endless steps of the tower, Charles entered the King's dungeon and, with a great show of cordiality, embraced the sick man, who was lying on his bed in a great state of weakness.

François endeavoured to rise upon the Emperor's entrance, but the latter threw himself upon his knees beside the couch, and appeared to be really moved at the pitiable state in which he found his prisoner.

When François remarked, with justifiable bitterness in his accents: "Sire, you behold before you your captive and your slave," Charles replied: "No, no, not my slave, but my good brother and real friend, whom I consider as a free man."

"Your slave, Sire," repeated François firmly.

"My good brother, who will soon be free," said the Emperor again, kindly. "I desire nothing more than your health. Only think about that; everything else will come out just as you wish."

The King answered: "It will happen just as you may order, but, my Lord, I beg of you that there may be no intermediary between you and me." He then fell back exhausted, and Charles soon left him.

On the morrow he visited François again, and, keeping up his show of kindness, said everything he could think of to restore heart and courage to his captive, who seemed so low.

François, in return, spoke as if he were sure of approaching death. He begged the Emperor to be kind to his little sons, and not to insist upon having too much from them, and to defend them.

Charles V. replied: "All will be arranged according to your desires when the Duchesse d'Alençon arrives."

Hardly had he uttered these words when a courtier informed the Emperor that Marguerite de Valois had actually entered Madrid, and was on her way to the Alcazar.

Charles descended the stairs to greet the King's sister at the entrance to the castle. He found the Princess, who was wan, travelworn, and in tears, attired in white, which she wore as the Royal mourning for her late husband. These white garments only served to accentuate the pallor of her face and her worn-out appearance. For the time being, at all events, Marguerite had completely lost her good looks, and although Charles greeted her, cap in hand, with every courtesy, he made up his mind on the spot that there could be no question of making her his wife. The subject of a marriage between the Emperor and this weary-eyed woman was, indeed, never referred to again.

The delight of the brother and the sister at meeting was boundless. The Emperor left them together, and for a day or two the King showed great signs of improvement. A day or two later, however, the Emperor received a message that, in addition to the low fever from which

François had been suffering, an abscess had formed on his head, and that he was at the last gasp.

Hearing that he was about to lose the prisoner upon whose life all depended, Charles remarked, with pious resignation, "The Lord gave him to me, the Lord is taking him away from me again."

François did not, however, die on this occasion. The prayers of Marguerite, aided by those of the Archbishops and priests whom she had caused to be introduced into her brother's dungeon, evidently had a beneficial effect.

After hearing the Mass and receiving the Sacrament, the King seemed to be dying, when suddenly the abscess burst. He gained immediate relief, and from that moment began to improve.

Now, thought Marguerite, was the time for the Emperor to remember the kind expressions of which he had made use, and, by changing her brother's prison to some larger and more comfortable apartment, where he could have more and better air, to do something towards helping on the King's recovery. Charles, however, seemed to remember nothing that he had said, either to the King or to the Duchesse d'Alençon upon greeting her. He neither came near the unfortunate François again nor gave any orders for his better treatment.

Marguerite now found herself compelled to leave her brother, in order to follow the Emperor to Toledo, and, in numerous interviews with him and his Flemish Ministers, to endeavour to get him to agree to a peace which should restore the King to liberty and yet not include the cession of Burgundy. It is supposed that, while thus employed, she, doubtless by her mother's instructions, basely gave away the Pope, Pescara and the various Italian States, with whom Louise de Savoie had entered into a sinister conspiracy against the Emperor. This act of baseness, if it really took place, availed her, however, nothing. Charles and his Flemish advisers would not give way an inch; the Emperor would have Burgundy or the King of France might remain in prison until he died.

The rest of the Spanish Court, and especially the great ladies, such as Queen Éléonore and Doña Ximena of Infantado, who was so openly in love with the King, with every courtesy endeavoured to make up to the unhappy Marguerite de Valois for the brutal conduct of the Emperor and his Council.

Every kindness possible was shown to her by these ladies, who treated the Princess as one of their own family. The Spaniards were lost in astonishment to think that, just for the sake of a paltry province, the Emperor should refuse for his sister the hand of a King who was the mirror of chivalry—refuse also, for himself, the hand of that King's charming and adorable sister.

So much was popular feeling on the side of Marguerite, that one of the highest grandees in the Spanish realm told her that, in case the Emperor should leave for Italy, she would find Spaniards in plenty ready to open his prison doors for the Very Christian King.

CHAPTER XXX

The Plot of Pescara

1525

TO such an extent extended the sympathy of the grandees for François I. and his sister, that when, after a time, the Duc de Bourbon arrived in Spain, a great many of them would not recognise or speak to him. When the Emperor ordered a noble to house the Duke, he replied: "I cannot refuse your Majesty's orders to lend my house to the Constable de Bourbon, but, at all events, I can burn it down afterwards." It is not recorded if the grandee ever acted up to this proud boast.

By the Emperor himself the Duc de Bourbon was received with the very highest distinction, Charles riding out in state to meet him, embracing him affectionately, and riding back with him by his side as though he were an equal. This reception of his enemy increased the irritation of François, to whom the Emperor took care that it should be reported. He sent word to Charles that he was determined to abdicate, to cause the Dauphin to be crowned in his place, and pass his own days in prison. He therefore requested Charles to point out a place where he might remain until he died.

This idea of abdication had originated in the fertile brain of Marguerite; she cleverly pointed out to her brother that should he resign his throne in favour of his seven year old son, who would remain under the Regency of Louise de Savoie, he would himself become worthless

as a prisoner. From a King he would revert to the status of a private individual, out of whom the Emperor could get nothing at all. By this means the clever Marguerite thought that France could get ahead of this bargaining Emperor, this false friend, who acted just as might any other Flemish merchant. She had indeed every reason for this action.

In the beginning of October Charles had recommenced his old policy of, with apparent kind words, throwing dust into the eyes of the Duchesse d'Alençon, telling her that "she would soon be satisfied," that "she would be surprised" at the things he would do for her. At the same time, however, she appeared before the Imperial Council, under the Presidency of that crafty and violent Fleming of Savoyard origin, Mercurin de Gattinara. She then saw only too plainly how little the Emperor's protestations were worth. Losing his temper completely, Gattinara shouted at Marguerite and some French envoys who were with her. He browbeat and menaced them to such an extent that the unhappy Princess was terrified, and went off to weep over her sorrows with the gentle Queen Éléonore.

In this manner the autumn wore on, and as the Emperor was by this time in full possession of all the details of the intended disloyalty of the Regent in the matter of Italy, which shall be explained presently, he took a higher hand than ever in his negotiations with Marguerite. Charles now said that the King should not have his sister, and, moreover, that he would not be content with Burgundy, but would have also the whole of the Province of Picardy and the territories on the banks of the river Somme.

By, in this manner, holding the dagger's point to the throat of the fair suppliant, Charles indulged his vengeance upon the King's mother for her secret arrangements for a separate peace with Henry VIII., and, above all, for her crafty conspiracy against his supremacy in Italy at the very time that she was pretending to offer her friendship to himself.

This plot had in a notable way concerned that bold and crafty General, but untrustworthy man, Fernando d'Avalos, Marquis of Pescara.

While, for want of their pay, all of the German troops in the Imperial army in Italy had taken themselves off into their native country, the Spanish left behind, under Pescara, had continued to live by extortion, robbing and fleeing with perfect impartiality either friend or foe.

In the Milanese, of which Charles V. refused to give the Duke Francesco Sforza the formal investiture unless he paid up an enormous sum in return, the inhabitants were ruined by the extortions of these soldiers. They were nothing better than brigands, over whom, indeed, Pescara would have had but little control had he even felt inclined to limit their depredations.

This desire he had not, and consequently the Imperialists continued to hold up and put to ransom the cities of Milan and those of other Italian States at their own sweet will.

The desire, therefore, of all Italy was to bundle all the Spaniards out of Italy neck and crop, to get rid of the domination also of Charles V., who, in addition to his re-asserted Imperial rights in Lombardy, was King of Naples and Sicily.

The former Duke of Milan, Maximilian Sforza, had, it will be remembered, retired long since into France, where he lived comfortably on the banks of the Loire, on a French pension. Acting as the intermediary of the wily Louise de Savoie, Maximilian now proposed a cunning combination to his brother, the Duke Francesco. This was to consist of a league between Italy and France to get rid of Charles V. The offers of Louise to Francesco Sforza included the hand of either of those Royal Princesses the Duchesse d'Alençon or Renée, both of whom, it will be noticed, were now being offered in two places at the same time. The latter of these, the daughter of Louis XII., must, one would imagine, about this period have commenced to get a little tired of being held out as a bait, first to one Duke or Prince and then

to another. The Pope, Clement VII., who was asked to join this league, agreed to do so, and with him the Florentines, who obeyed him as a Medici, and likewise the Venetians, who did not at all appreciate the presence so near their territories in Eastern Lombardy of the Emperor's Spanish ruffians in Western Lombardy.

While turning the Emperor out of both Milan and Naples, of which latter the Pope was Suzerain, the idea was conceived to hand over the Monarchy of this latter Kingdom to some powerful noble who should be an Italian, not a foreigner. Now Pescara, the discontented General of Charles V., was an Italian, although descended from distinguished Spanish ancestors. Who, thought the conspirators, could possibly be a better man to be made King of the Two Sicilies than Pescara, of whose valuable services the Emperor would be deprived if only he could be brought to enter into the plot for his own elevation ?

Pescara, who was himself a poet, was married to a poetess, the most beautiful woman in Italy, Vittoria Colonna, descended from various ruling Princes. It was thought that the offer of a Sovereignty to a man who was married to the daughter of Sovereigns would seem to himself singularly appropriate, if only for his lovely wife's sake, and Girolamo Morone, the Chancellor of the Duke of Milan, was sent to feel him on the subject.

As, after raising various objections, Pescara was casuistically persuaded by the Pope that he would not be wanting in honour to Charles V. if, before accepting a Crown at his hands, he resigned his present employment, the husband of Vittoria agreed to the propositions of Morone.

The matter was therefore arranged : Pescara was to become a King, while Louise de Savoie definitely resigned to Francesco Sforza all of her son's claims on the Duchy of Milan ; Louise promised also a French army to assist in driving out the Emperor's troops, and likewise a navy to convey troops wherever wanted. The Pope at the same time engaged ten thousand Swiss troops, and when

all of this skilful combination was revealed to Pescara, he swore solemnly, on his honour as a Knight, never to disclose the plot to the Emperor, and to be faithful to the league which was to make of him a Sovereign.

In spite of swearing this solemn oath, it was not very long before Pescara proved a traitor to all his friends of the league, whom he basely betrayed. The reasons of his treason are uncertain. Possibly he feared that the plot would not succeed, and that with its failure would come his own downfall, or, as some have suggested, his pious wife Vittoria Colonna persuaded him to betray the Italian cause. She may well have reminded him of the oath which he had given to the Emperor, in whose confidence he had been, and so have induced him to overlook the recent slight that had been put upon him when the Countship which he had asked for had been given to a Colonna, a relation of her own. Another cause, for his defection was very probably that he was at heart too good a Spaniard to join the French, whom he had so often beaten, in fighting against the Spaniards by whom he was admired and beloved. Whatever the cause having determined not to endeavour to replace the Emperor on the throne of Naples, Pescara now went so far as basely to play the spy in his master's interests. He led the agents of the league on, caused them to compromise themselves more and more, and at the same time secretly sent a confidential officer named Juan Gastaldo off to Charles V. to inform him of the conspiracy. In the letter which Gastaldo, who later became a famous General, bore to Charles, Pescara shows very plainly that he feels the ignominy of the rôle he has assumed, in which he is compelled to act traitorously to either one party or the other.

He remarks: "These practices do not suit me. Nevertheless, since necessity has brought them about, it is not without a great deal of shame that I am able to rejoice in serving your Majesty, because I recognise that I am wanting towards some one, although it may not be towards him to whom I owe the most."

While writing thus, Pescara took military precautions, such as occupying several strong cities ; he also begged the Emperor to waste not a moment in remitting to him money to pay the troops, to send him reinforcements by sea, and, above all, to come to terms at once with François I., without insisting on having Burgundy. He added that Antonio da Leyva was of the same opinion as himself. He finished up his epistle by saying with bold frankness : " If your Majesty does not hurry up to finish, you will be sorry for it, and will lament not to have done so when it is too late. There is not a soul in Italy who does not mistrust your Majesty's greatness, and not a soul who does not abhor the yoke of this army. You have not a friend in Italy, where the Duke of Ferrara and the Marquis of Mantua are as antagonistic to you as the Duke of Milan and Genoa, and where Lucca is more French than Paris, and Sienna will soon be the same, and where, moreover, your Majesty has scarcely a servitor who is not tired out and utterly discouraged."

We can easily understand, after having been so fully informed by Pescara of what was in the wind, how little Charles cared when he received the same information from Marguerite, owing to the treachery of Louise to the Italians, in her hopes of obtaining better terms for her son.

The Emperor seemed to be very much pleased at the fidelity of Pescara to himself, and wrote to him to go on watching and spying, and to continue plotting with Clement VII. and the Duke of Milan that they might the better fall into the toils.

Pescara did not shrink from this dirty work, and eventually was guilty of a crowning work of meanness towards Morone. Under the pretence that he was too ill to move, he induced Girolamo Morone to come to meet him at Novara, in order to arrange the final details of the plot for rising against the Emperor. Pescara hid Antonio da Leyva behind the arras in the apartment, while the Duke of Milan's Chancellor unburdened his mind, as he thought in perfect security. The irony in

this consisted in the fact that Pescara had promised to put Leyva to death. As Morone came out, Leyva with some soldiers pounced upon him, made him prisoner, and hurried him off to imprisonment in Pavia. After this Pescara had actually the effrontery to interrogate the unhappy Morone as his judge; he was condemned to die, but for the time being kept in prison.

The Emperor, delighted at the opportunity, now declared that Francesco Sforza had forfeited Milan. He caused Pescara to besiege him in the citadel of that place, and to take possession of all the other strong places in the Duchy.

The Venetians, who had been found out, were at first afraid of the Emperor's revenge, and were about to pay him a large indemnity for their share in the conspiracy. Seeing, however, that Charles was attacking Milan, the wily Venetians concluded that it would be their turn next, and that the Emperor would employ their own money to carry on the war against themselves. They therefore thought better of the matter of paying up, well knowing that Charles, who was always necessitous, could not fight without cash. Instead, therefore, of remitting the promised subsidy, Venice sent a word of advice to the Emperor. This was that it would be far wiser for him not to take Milan, as if he did he would cause the whole world to turn against him. Charles found himself obliged to listen to this advice, and to take it for what it might be worth, as he had no means of resenting it.

Pescara now became sick in earnest, in all probability his mind had affected his body, which was worn out. A great soldier, he had had the opportunity of becoming great in another way, by freeing Italy, the land of his birth. Had he done so, his name would have become as famous in the sixteenth century as did that of Garibaldi three centuries later. He, however, declined to profit by the chance that fate had thrown in his way, he declined the glory and he lost an immortal name. Dying on November 30th, 1525, he only left behind him in Italy

a reputation to which was attached everything that was shameful.

By one person, however, this man who might have become a King was sincerely mourned. To Vittoria Colonna he always remained the King of her heart, for she was inconsolable, and as long as she lived never ceased to weep for his memory.

CHAPTER XXXI

Marguerite and Henri d'Albret

AFTER a month and a half of useless negotiations with the Emperor in Toledo, Marguerite commenced to be in despair, feeling that nothing that she could do would be of any avail to obtain her brother's release. The longer she stayed, the more *exigeant* Charles seemed to become, and, in spite of her ardent desire to see the King at large, she was too womanly a woman to accept some of his extravagant propositions.

While, for instance, the Emperor refused the proposal that François should marry Eléonore, and leave Burgundy to her heirs, Charles demanded from the Duchesse d'Alençon that she should give a guarantee to the effect that the King would abandon both of his allies, Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre, and Robert de la Marck, to the tender mercies of the Emperor—to his justice, as he called it.

While indignantly refusing to agree to this, she assented to the demand that the Duc de Bourbon, with all his allies and friends, should be reinstated in their possessions. Matters came to a deadlock a short time after this, and then, failing all other measures, Marguerite concocted a plan for her brother's escape from his dungeon. Any scheme seemed good enough to evade the ever-watchful Alarcon, and the plan, which was not one very noble or chivalrous to be adopted by a great King, was as follows.

There was a certain black slave who attended to the fires in the King's prison, and who was accustomed to go

in and out of the prisoner's dungeon without attracting any attention from the guards. It was proposed that, after having blacked his face and hands, François should change clothes with this negro, and escape in the dusk of the evening. Horses were to be placed by sympathisers at regular distances, and with the advantage of a night's start, it was felt that the King would have a very good chance of reaching the frontier.

When everything was almost ready for the dash for liberty, the plan was disclosed, owing to an act of vengeance on the part of Clément Le Champion, the King's valet de chambre.

One of the gentlemen who was allowed to be about the person of François I. was named La Rochepot; he was the brother of the Maréchal de Montmorency. La Rochepot struck Le Champion in the face, and, when Montmorency refused any reparation to the insulted valet de chambre, he took his revenge by betraying the King. Mounting a horse, Le Champion rode straight off to Charles V. at Toledo, and revealed all.

When the Emperor heard of this plot, his chief sentiment seems to have been one of disgust that, in order to fly, a Monarch like François I. should have consented to assume such an ignoble disguise. He meted out various punishments, but the negro was only ordered not to enter the King's chamber any more. It was probably lucky for the poor wretch that the escape was never accomplished, as we can imagine how he would have been tortured to death by the revengeful Emperor in such a case. After this, Charles had it under consideration to lock François up in some more disagreeable and remote dungeon than before, but other concerns drove the matter from his head.

Even before the arrival of the King of France in Spain, a state of truce had existed between Louise de Savoie and the Emperor. The time for this was, however, drawing to a close; and before making preparations for renewing the conflict with France, Charles was anxious to go off to Seville to marry his cousin,

the Infanta Isabella of Portugal, who was to provide him with the sinews of war.

Marguerite, in the meantime, was hanging on in Spain, arranging with her brother about the drawing up of his act of abdication, which she wished to take back with her to France. Matters seem to have been delayed owing to the rivalry and jealousy displayed towards her by her former friend Montmorency, of whose constant interference she complained bitterly to the King, begging him to listen to no one but herself. At last, when the time of her safe-conduct had grown perilously near its expiration, she received a secret warning, from her former admirer the Duc de Bourbon, that she had better be off at once, for that if she remained on Spanish soil a day or two longer the Emperor intended to make her a prisoner.

Terribly upset by this well-timed warning, Marguerite had to take her last despairing adieux of her brother in a hurry. Leaving him in his prison, she proceeded with forced marches towards the north of Spain, and without being able to wait for the act of abdication, which the Maréchal de Montmorency said that he would himself bring to France later.

In spite of the danger to herself, she still thought of nothing but her brother. Meeting Chabot de Brion, whom Louise de Savoie was sending to Charles in a final effort to treat for her son's freedom, Marguerite sent back by him a letter to François, offering to return to his side if he wanted her. In this letter she showed distinct signs of weakening in the matter of Burgundy, which she suggested to her brother it would be wiser for him to abandon rather than to remain in a Spanish dungeon for ever.

François, however, knew better than to send for his sister to return to him, and he did not either at that time agree to her advice to give up Burgundy.

Marguerite had rejoined her mother by the middle of December ; her journey had been a failure, her mission uncrowned with success.

The story of the act of abdication arriving with her, the Duchesse d'Alençon appeared before the Parliament of Paris, to put the case before that body, when she was received with considerable discontent by the Magistrates, to whom the prospect of a long regency under feminine rule appeared by no means an attractive picture.

When Marguerite had been a few days with her mother, whom she had rejoined at Lyon, both mother and daughter one day learned the agreeable news that a gallant young man, who was before long to enter very largely into the life of the Princess, had escaped from captivity and arrived in the neighbourhood. This was Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre, then nearly twenty-two years of age. He was the son of Catherine de Foix, who had been in her own right Queen of Navarre, and Jean d'Albret, whose alliance with Louis XII. had in 1512 cost them their Spanish dominions. During the wars between François I. and Charles V. this young Béarnese Prince was the faithful ally of France, but he was only repaid by ingratitude. When in 1525 Henri d'Albret followed François to Pavia he was, as we have mentioned, captured in the great battle at that place. He was shut up in a tower of the Castle of Pavia, and all the more closely watched as it was important for the Emperor to keep him away from his subjects.

The King of Navarre knew well that it would be only by definitely renouncing his rights to his Spanish dominions that he would be set at liberty.

This young Prince had, however, one great failing, which became very plainly evident later on in his career. He was, according to the reports of the chroniclers, "terribly addicted to women," to which fact he owed his release. Such being the case, while in the society of the licentious François I. in the Villa of Mirabello, Henri had not neglected his opportunities of cultivating the society of a beautiful Italian lady of high rank, who loved the young King of Navarre devotedly. After his captivity, this lady obtained from his gaolers, who were not so strict as Alarcon, permission to visit her beloved

Knight in his place of captivity. Owing to her unusual attractions, she succeeded before long in quite overcoming the scruples of two officers who detained him. These were an Italian gentleman from Mantua, who had indeed been d'Albret's captor in the battle, and a Spanish captain named Coimbres.

Being helped also by the Béarnese Baron, François d'Arros, on Christmas night the fair Italian contrived to bring a light rope-ladder under her clothes into the apartment where the King of Navarre was confined. There was no moon, and, after the ladder was attached, Coimbres went down first into the half-dried-up moat of the castle. Finding the ladder too short, d'Albret hesitated to follow, but his valet, Francesco by name, reminded him of all he stood to lose in addition to his ransom if he remained. Thereupon the young King went down, and, dropping from the end of the ladder, stuck in the mud, from which he was pulled out with difficulty by d'Arros and the Italian officer. As the amiable lady had provided relays of horses and guides, Henri d'Albret rode off at once at a gallop, all muddy as he was.

Upon his departure by the window, the King's faithful page, François de Rochefort, Seigneur de Viviers in the County of Foix, took his place in bed.

When the Captain of the Guard came on his rounds on the following morning, the valet said that the King was ill and sleeping, at the same time pulling up the curtain of the bed and disclosing a figure lying with face to the wall. The deceived officer retired quietly, and when the escape was found out, it was already late in the afternoon. Some mounted men started in pursuit even then, but they never overtook the fugitive Prince, who gained France in safety.

The Spanish officers who were in charge of the castle behaved with singular generosity to the faithful page and the valet de chambre, who received nothing but praise from the Spaniards for having risked their lives for their young King.

Great, however, was the anger and disappointment of Charles when he learned of the escape of the King of Navarre, whom he had expected to be able to force to sign away the rights to his Kingdom, in the same way as he was endeavouring to compel his more important prisoner, the King of France, to abandon Burgundy.

Upon meeting with Henri, Marguerite, who was thirty-three years of age, and therefore eleven years his senior, would appear to have fallen in love with him, or it may have been that, having been rejected by the Emperor, she was not averse to showing him that she could find others who would appreciate her at a higher value.

Henri, for his part, had previously met, and probably admired, the brilliant Duchesse d'Alençon some six years earlier, when, as a boy of sixteen, he had been for some time at the Court of François, shortly after his mother's death had left him an orphan. At that time the young Prince had been accustomed to see everybody of distinction at the feet of Marguerite, and no doubt, now that they both were older, he found that she was still the most agreeable and accomplished woman about the French Court. Two subjects of mutual interest they no doubt possessed, which would give them plenty of scope for intimate conversation—the hatred which each bore to Charles V. being one, and the Reform of religion being the other.

Whatever the causes that brought together this brave young King, possessing nothing more than the vestige of a Kingdom, and that intellectual and richly dowered widow the sister of the King of France, there is no doubt that a considerable affection sprang up between the couple, despite the disparity of their ages.

It has been the fashion for some historians to assert boldly that François I., having grown tired of his sister, and finding that her influence at the Court interfered with the sway of his mistresses, after his return from imprisonment married her off to the infinitesimal King of Navarre on purpose to get her out of the way. The

truth of the matter is, however, that the two people concerned, finding that a warm attraction existed between them, engaged themselves to each other during the King's absence in prison. When François eventually returned, although he thought and said that his sister might have done better, he could not well, owing her what he did, forbid her a marriage upon which she had set her heart with passionate eagerness. Later on, François was certainly often glad to be able to banish his sister to the distant Court of Béarn, especially when he wished to be able to continue the relentless policy which he assumed towards the Reformers without being constantly met with her reproaches.

From an intellectual point of view, Marguerite had the advantage of the Béarnese Prince, although in the manner in which he ruled his subjects he displayed much good, sturdy common sense, and always showed very plainly that he had their best interests at heart.

By the disgraceful Treaty of Madrid, by which François I. recovered his liberty, he meanly abandoned his ally the King of Navarre, engaging himself to demand him to resign his rights and not to assist him in any way. In spite of this, the marriage between Marguerite and Henri d'Albret was duly solemnised at the end of January 1527. After this, François made various promises and pretences to help his brother-in-law and ally to recover the province of Biscaye, but he secretly gave orders that the troops that he sent were not to pass the frontier into Spain.

The after-life of the Royal couple, who had presumably married from love, was not a particularly happy one. While Marguerite, on the one hand, never gave up adoring her brother, and trying to play his game even when he was manifestly playing her husband false, Henri, as his wife grew older, became tired of her and her ways, which consisted of a fictitious coquetry mingled with devotion. True to his early traditions, he became far too intimate with several of his wife's fair ladies of honour in succession. He also became rough with his

Queen, when he found her so constantly acting in her brother's interests instead of those of the Kingdom of Navarre, and Henri is said upon one occasion even to have struck this great, and formerly powerful, Princess.

Thus the learned Marguerite, perhaps partly from her own fault, was not lucky in either of her marriages. She had despised her first husband, Charles, Duc d'Alençon, and by her second husband she was ill-treated. Whereas, however, by her first marriage she had been childless, by Henri d'Albret she became the mother of two children, a boy who died quite young, and Jeanne d'Albret, who eventually became the mother of Henri IV., the first of the Bourbon Kings of France.

CHAPTER XXXII

François commits Perjury

A COUPLE of months after the return of Marguerite, Montmorency suddenly arrived in Paris from Madrid, and the news that he brought with him was not such as to cause François to remain a popular hero in the eyes of his subjects. The Maréchal Anne de Montmorency did not bring with him the expected act of abdication, but, on the other hand, the news that the King was concluding a treaty of peace at Madrid with the Emperor by which, after all, he was to cede Burgundy, and further, that in the beginning of February he had been officially affianced to the Dowager Queen of Portugal, the promised wife of the Duc de Bourbon.

In order to recover his liberty, this chivalrous King, who had talked so boldly about dying in prison rather than doing anything against the interests of France, had accepted everything proposed by Charles V., including the disgraceful stipulation that either twelve of the greatest men of France or else two of his own little sons were to be sent to Spain as hostages in his place.

Having become utterly sick of his imprisonment, the propositions for this peace had come from François himself, who sent Charles de Lannoy to the Emperor in the first instance to say that he was inclined to give in. Afterwards he told his envoys, of whom Chabot de Brion was one, distinctly that they were to yield everything or that they would cause him "irreparable displeasure."

The French King offered to give up all that Charles

had asked for in France, Italy, Flanders, Artois, and Burgundy; to resign likewise all claims descended to him from his predecessors to Aragon, Catalonia, and Roussillon, and at the same time he repeated his demand for the hand of Éléonore. When Charles found that he was at last to get all that he wished for, he did not well see how he could refuse to give his sister as the price of the peace, in spite of her long-standing engagement to Bourbon. His Chancellor, Gattinara, pointed out, however, that it would be impossible to break off the match with Bourbon, while the Duc himself protested loudly that he had lost his estates for the sake of the Emperor and this alliance.

Charles consulted Lannoy, with whom Bourbon still remained at daggers drawn, and the Viceroy in turn consulted Éléonore herself, who said very decidedly that she preferred François to Bourbon. This declaration on the part of his sister made matters easier for the Emperor, who told Bourbon that, for the sake of the peace, he must give way. In return for his renunciation he promised to give him the Duchy of Milan, of which he expressed his intention to deprive Francesco Sforza. The unfortunate Bourbon, an exile from France, had no one to depend upon but the Emperor. He found himself between the devil and the deep sea, and was forced to resign his promised bride to his deadly enemy.

Charles, however, who with reason did not trust the King of France, was not inclined to let François go until Burgundy had been actually handed over, and Gattinara also said: "No, get Burgundy first."

Lannoy, on the other hand, said: "Let the King go first, and thus peace will become a certainty; the cession will be all the more easily arranged when the King has returned to France. By getting the peace at once, the Emperor will be the better able to arrange matters for the preservation of the Low Countries, and he can in addition more easily crush the Reform movement in Germany, and also fight the Turks in Hungary." The wiser Chancellor Gattinara, however, was not to be gain-

said. He declared that the promises of François were of no value, as had already been proved, and that no sooner would he get loose than he would seek to obtain vengeance for his captivity. There were, he pointed out, only two safe courses to be followed: either to let the King of France go free without any conditions whatever, or else to hold him for ever a prisoner. In conclusion, Mercurin de Gattinara flatly refused to draw up the treaty of peace.

Charles, however, did not for once listen to his astute Chancellor. He remembered what Pescara had written to him about not being too hard over the peace conditions with France, as all Italy was against him; and as Pescara was now dying, and the Regent of France talking about renewing the war when the truce should expire, the Emperor feared to lose all that was now in his grasp if a new conflict should begin. He might easily find Italy invaded once more, and there would now be no bold Pescara to resist the invasion, while he was not himself in a position to invade France.

Accordingly Charles decided to accept what was offered to him, but, while accepting the two sons of François as hostages, he thought it also wise to bind his prisoner by his personal oath. He accordingly asked François to swear on his honour as a gentleman and a Knight that he would keep all his promises, and sent the Viceroy, as another gentleman and Knight, to receive his word. While intending to perjure himself all the time, François swore gaily to Lannoy, by everything that was sacred, and by his honour as a King, a gentleman, and a Knight, that he would be faithful in every particular to his engagements.

He vowed to ratify the treaty of peace six weeks after his deliverance, to cause it to be accepted by all the Parliaments and the States of the various provinces in less than four months, and finally, gave his word of honour to the Emperor, if by any chance anything should prevent his making restitution of Burgundy in that time, that he would return of his own free will and constitute himself

a prisoner once more, in the place of the child Dauphin and still younger Duc d'Orléans, who were to be sent as hostages of his good faith.

And now we come to the crowning act of treachery of François I., the *preux chevalier* who wrote from the field of Pavia that "all was lost save honour and life." Having sworn these oaths, François assembled six witnesses in his dungeon, among them being Montmorency and Chabot de Brion, and in their presence signed a protestation against the treaty of peace, and made a declaration that he would not consider himself bound by any of the obligations of a treaty which, since he was a prisoner, he considered as being imposed on him by force. He protested that everything in the treaty with the Emperor was null and of no effect, and that he would not keep his promises, because he had not given them while in a state of liberty.

He added that since he did not wish to be unfair to the Emperor, and "in order to put God and justice on his side," he intended to offer the Emperor a fair money ransom, one such as should be paid by a King who had been made a prisoner of war.

Six days after the signing of the Treaty of Madrid by the representatives of the two Monarchs, Lannoy was sent to the King of France, who was still kept in prison, to accomplish the ceremony of betrothal as proxy on the part of the Queen of Portugal. François, who was in bed with an attack of fever, declared himself also with certain solemn ceremonies as the affianced husband of Éléonore; and after this unusual celebration of marriage, the Emperor declared that his sister and the King of France might call themselves husband and wife. Notwithstanding this ceremony, Éléonore was not sent to see her husband, nor were the guards taken away from before the door of the King, whom the Emperor now called "his friend and brother-in-law." François, was, however, now allowed sometimes to go out in a litter in Madrid, or to ride a mule, in order to go to hear Mass in church, but always accompanied by Alarcon and his soldiers.

Even when the King of France was allowed to accept of collations offered him by the nuns of various convents, while these nuns stood round to gaze at him, there was a ring of soldiers behind the nuns.

Charles signed the ratification of the treaty of peace at Toledo upon February 11th, 1526, when he wrote to his aunt, the Archduchess Marguerite, that his "honour and particular welfare had been well protected by its terms." A couple of days later Charles thought that he would ride over to Madrid to call upon the prisoner, whom he flattered himself that he had now transformed into a warm friend. He determined to pass a few days in the society of his brother-in-law before he sent him off to France upon the arrival of the two little hostages at the frontiers of Navarre and Spain. The account of the meeting between Charles and François is worth recording if only for its very falsity. They had not seen each other since, with so many protestations of friendship, the Emperor had left his prisoner in the Alcazar after the arrival of Marguerite de Valois.

In order to meet Charles, François rode forth on a mule richly caparisoned, and wearing a Spanish sword and Spanish cape. To his right was the Grand Master of the Knights of Saint John from Rhodes, and to his left was that faithful watchdog Alarcon, while behind marched three hundred men of the King's guard in full armour. When he met the Emperor, on a bridge on the road to Toledo, he found him attired in black velvet and surrounded by all the grandees of the Court. For escort Charles had two hundred and fifty cavaliers, all being noble men-at-arms in the full panoply of war. Each of these had his helmet carried by a page, who rode behind him.

François wore a rich cap and Charles a hat. Holding their headgear in their hands, the Monarchs met and embraced each other closely and for a long time. One would have said it was the meeting of two brothers who loved each other dearly, and great was the courtesy each showed the other. Neither would precede in the order of march back to Madrid, but at last François persuaded

Charles, who showed great diffidence, to take a place to his right, and thus they entered the city amid the plaudits of the multitude, who showed every sign of joy at this scene of cordiality. Afterwards Charles V. and François I. had a grand supper together in the Alcazar, and kept it up merrily until late at night.

During the following days the Emperor and the King remained inseparable—and the people were delighted. François was even now to be permitted the felicity of a meeting with his future wife, whom he was to see for the first time, and Charles readily agreed to his request that she should follow him after a day or two on his journey to France.

In return for this concession, Charles asked the King to be so good as to give to the Duc de Bourbon a pension of twenty thousand crowns, and further asked that his estates should be restored to him as an independent Sovereignty. François agreed to give the pension, but declined about the Sovereignty, and the Emperor did not press the matter.

In the middle of February François rode with Charles to Toledo to see his fiancée. When she rode forth to meet him, attended by Germaine de Foix, François embraced both of the Queens tenderly. The modest Éléonore had at first tried to kiss the King's hand, but he said gallantly : "No, no ; that is not what I want. Give me your lips."

Arm-in-arm they afterwards entered a palace, where they were entertained with dancing, and on the following evening Éléonore delighted her future husband by the ease and grace with which she danced several Moorish dances before him. A few days later, while Charles went off to marry his cousin Isabella, François, after repeating his solemn promises to the Emperor, was allowed to depart for France.



Photo by Anderson, Rome, from the picture in the Prado by Titian.

ISABELLA OF PORTUGAL, WIFE OF CHARLES V.



CHAPTER XXXIII

Liberty and a New Mistress

1526

WHILE the Emperor's sister danced a gay saraband and François played the lover, Charles had looked on, laughing in his sleeve. He imagined that the marriage of his prisoner to the full-lipped Austrian Princess, which was one of sheer policy and brought about practically by force, was going to prove a binding tie to fasten the French King to his triumphal car. Seeing that Clement VII. was on the side of François, and only waiting for an opportunity to whitewash him from all his perjured oaths, Machiavelli has called Charles V. an imbecile for being so taken in. In his jealousy of his rival, he vainly imagined that he had utterly broken the spirit of this bold soldier, this trickster brought up in an immoral Court. Charles had himself as yet won no knightly spurs upon the battlefield, and in his envy of the glorious conqueror of Marignano had aimed at something beyond the mere acquisition of Burgundy—this was the lowering of his enemy. It seemed probable that this abasement would now be satisfactorily accomplished, for if François kept to the terms of his treaty—which included, by the way, the payment of two million golden crowns—Charles could point him out as a weak fool to the infatuated Spaniards. Should he, on the other hand, prove false to his pledged knightly word, then, before all Europe, the Emperor would be able to brand the King of France as a dastardly liar, meriting universal shame and condemnation. What-

ever happened, France was, at all events, humbled in the person of her King, who had cringed and bound himself to become the Emperor's henchman, to fight his battles for him against the Turk. The infamy of the Treaty of Madrid was one therefore which could never be forgotten by Frenchmen, whose cheeks for long years to come must redden with shame and anger at the baseness of their King. Among the Emperor's own partisans there were, however, those who, like Machiavelli, considered that, owing to the absolute absence of material guarantees, he had acted like an imbecile in allowing François to go free. So strongly did Gattinara feel on the subject that, as we know, he, although as Chancellor it was his duty to do so, absolutely declined to draw up the treaty. Marguerite of Austria likewise complained to her former pupil and nephew that he had not acted wisely. She who hated France so deeply would, she said, have preferred to have seen some actual results in the shape of territory in the Emperor's hands before he weakly listened to a Frenchman's promises and set a French King at liberty. Had she not reason? Had she not, as the repudiated wife of Charles VIII., in her own person experienced of how little value were the vows of fidelity of a King of France?

When Gattinara refused even to sign the treaty, the Emperor had put his own signature to the document, and from the moment that it was signed he rested satisfied with the knowledge that he had already won a political and a moral victory, no matter in whatever manner his rival might behave.

When we learn of all the symptoms of distrust with which he now caused François to be sent to the frontier, we are almost inclined to fancy that, in his heart of hearts, the young Emperor can hardly have, after all, expected to get much more than this political and moral victory.

When, four days under the year after the battle of Pavia, François left the Alcazar, he was under the double escort of the Viceroy of Naples and the trusty Alarcon, with plenty of soldiers into the bargain.

All sorts of precautions had been taken in advance to see that no body of French troops should be assembled within twenty leagues of the frontier, no men-at-arms who might seize the person of the King without delivering over the hostages. The whole length of the border of Navarre was watched by scouts sent out by Lannoy.

The river Bidassoa, between Fontarabia and Andaye, where, in the centre of the stream, the exchange was to take place, was cleared of ships and boats likewise, while no gentleman of the King's Household was allowed to approach its banks.

Until the Regent Louise arrived, with the two poor little Princes and her Court, at Bayonne, Lannoy kept the impatient François halted at a distance of several marches from the Bidassoa. Owing to the winter season and terrible rains, it was not without difficulty and danger that Louise de Savoie, who had the gout, arrived several days later than she had been expected. François was meanwhile eating his heart out with anxiety, and by no means certain that Lannoy and Alarcon would not march him straight back again to Madrid.

The Regent had wisely decided that it would not be safe to denude France of the twelve *grandes seigneurs* whom the Emperor had demanded as an alternative to the Princes, as they were the only leaders left in the country to be employed in case of a renewal of the war. She it was, therefore, who had decided that the two Princes, aged now eight and seven years, should be handed over. François, whose fatherly feelings seem to have been in abeyance, had agreed to this; it mattered little to him who took his place in a Spanish prison so that he got free himself.

While François was kept under guard in the castle of Saint Sebastian, his promised wife, the Queen of Portugal, had followed him as far as Vittoria, but there she remained. Eventually, on March 20th, 1526, the exchange took place in the exact centre of the frontier river. There a raft had been anchored, and while Lannoy, Alarcon, and ten armed gentlemen were rowed

out to this raft from the Spanish side with the King, Odet de Foix, Seigneur de Lautrec, with the two Princes and ten French gentlemen, were rowed out from the Navarrese side.

They arrived at the same moment at opposite sides of the raft, and as Lannoy and Alarcon mounted upon it with François I., so did Lautrec, with the Dauphin and his brother, mount likewise. The gentlemen remained in the boats.

The King of France wasted no time over greetings with the two little boys, whom his selfishness was to condemn to years of hard imprisonment.

They kissed his hand, he embraced them hurriedly, and then, as Alarcon remarked, "Sire, your Highness is at liberty," he instantly jumped into the boat which had brought his sons, and rowed off.

The Dauphin and the Duc d'Orléans were then taken away by Lannoy and Alarcon; and not very long afterwards, being separated from their servants, who had followed them, were lodged with a guard of rough Spanish soldiers in the mountain fortress of Pedraza.

Upon reaching the northern bank, François wasted not a moment to look back in regret at his children. Mounting an Arab charger which stood waiting for him, and exclaiming gleefully: "Now I am once more a King!" he galloped off at once to Saint Jean-de-Luz.

There he was welcomed by the King of Navarre, who was now his host, the Chancellor Du Prat, Doctor Taylor, the Ambassador of Henry VIII., who came to felicitate him, and all the Seigneurs of his Court. That same day he rode to Bayonne, near which place, at Mont-de-Marsan, François was awaited by his sister and Louise de Savoie, with a swarm of the immoral ladies of honour, with whom, like Catherine de' Medici later, the flighty Louise was wont to surround herself.

Among this group were two women, one of whom, the Comtesse de Châteaubriand, the King's old love, was detested by the Regent. The other was a young beauty, with a dazzling complexion, white as the lily

and crimson as the rose, whom the Duchesse d'Angoulême had brought with her in the hopes of making of her the new mistress of her son. The King had already heard of this fair young creature, and one of the numerous love-poems which he composed in his prison had been forwarded by him to his mother's new *protégée*. She was said to be excessively lively, witty, and talkative, and François' mother imagined that she would be just the sort of young lady to interest her son, and keep him amused in his moments of idle dalliance.

Knowing that her fate hung in the balance, Françoise de Foix stood trembling, waiting for a greeting, and possibly a loving one, from the Monarch who had first lured her from her home under false pretences, and over whose affections she had subsequently ruled so long.

As François approached the bevy of fair ones, all the courtiers looked eagerly to see to which of them he would first address himself. They were not left long in doubt. Turning his back upon Françoise de Foix, the unfaithful François went straight to Anne de Pisseleu, the new beauty, and made some gallant remark which brought the triumphant blushes to her carmine cheeks.

The die was cast, Louise de Savoie was triumphant and the Comtesse de Châteaubriand disgraced—her reign was over. Without delay, Anne de Pisseleu became the King's mistress, and such she remained, at all events officially, for the rest of his life. She was soon provided with a merely nominal husband, in the shape of that La Brosse whom we have already mentioned as leaving the King and becoming the partisan of Bourbon. It is, however, by the title of Duchesse d'Etampes, conferred upon her by the King, that this, for some time fortunate, lady is best known to history.

It was the custom of the Kings of France, when they took for mistress an unmarried lady, to endow her with a husband, in order to provide her with an air of respectability and make her eligible for presentation at Court. We see a dozen instances of this in the history of the Valois and Bourbon Kings. After the marriage these husbands were

told to make themselves scarce. La Brosse, or Penthièvre, was very glad to purchase the pardon for his defection upon such easy terms. He married the charming Anne de Pisseleu, and then, turning his back upon her for ever, went off to his restored estates in Brittany, where he lived as a bachelor in very grand style.

Not only the unfortunate Comtesse de Châteaubriand, but also Marguerite de Valois suffered by the success of this manœuvre on the part of Louise de Savoie. Had Marguerite possessed an aggressive spirit, she would now have asserted herself. Making the most of all that she had done for her brother in Spain, where the contagion of her devotion had been caught by the Spanish grandees, she could have resumed without difficulty the old supremacy which she had held over the King before he had insulted her honour with such ignoble proposals in the year 1523.

Her nature, however, was not of the aggressive sort. Therefore, when the brilliant Anne de Pisseleu showed her jealousy of the sister's influence, and, after the marriage of Marguerite to the handsome young King of Navarre, requested François to send her away with her husband to distant Béarn, her sole remonstrance was to indulge in copious tears. She wept, as she herself said, "enough to melt a flint," but she gave way and went off into a species of exile with Henri d'Albret.

It was a poor Kingdom, but one of great natural beauty, to which she went, and possessing two capitals, Nérac in the north, surrounded with poor uncultivated lands, and Pau in the south, in full view of the snow-crowned Pyrenees. Once she had established herself in Nérac and Pau, Marguerite, in whom there sprung strongly the spirit of the Renaissance, set herself to work to transform everything, to make gardens where formerly the briar alone had flourished. Sending for architects from Italy, this intelligent Princess soon caused her surroundings to show the effect of her cultivated mind and refined taste. In a short time the castles of Pau and Nérac were entirely changed, the old bare aspect of feudality was abolished

and elegant Italian art renovated the ancient dwellings. They soon became not merely comfortable but beautiful residences, worthy of the habitation of a Queen with modern ideas, one who loved to surround herself with all the men of talent, all the learned savants of the day.

She contrived, nevertheless, to pay numerous visits to her brother's Court. Indeed, the state of her finances, which, owing to her pensions not being paid by the ungrateful King, compelled her to enact the part of a Royal beggar, forced her at times to seek him where she could find him, to endeavour to obtain her rights. It was at the King's castle at Blois that her son was born. He died, and at Pau, on the 7th of January 1528, was born her daughter Jeanne.

When this girl had attained two years of age, François inflicted a cruel blow upon his sister. Under the pretence that her parents might marry Jeanne to a Spanish Prince—which, owing to the neglect of Navarrese interests by François, Henri d'Albret was indeed later anxious to do—François took her away, and installed her in the strongly fortified Castle of Plessis-les-Tours. This ancient château he presented to the child, and there she was brought up, away from her mother's influence.

CHAPTER XXXIV

The Holy League of Cognac

1526

FRANÇOIS I. had hardly got back into his own country than three messengers were sent after him in succession, to ask him to confirm the Treaty of Madrid. To the two first, Louis de Praët and Ugo de Moncada, he returned evasive answers. To the third, Charles de Lannoy, who followed the King to Cognac in Saintonge, François replied that he had no right to dismember his Kingdom, that all the officials of his country said so, and that Burgundy herself had distinctly refused to be separated from France. Under these circumstances he offered to pay the Emperor a money ransom in place of Burgundy, which he refused to deliver over.

While communicating these evil tidings to his master, the long-headed Lannoy, who always knew what he was about, wrote : "I beg you to give me leave to go off at once to Naples, for the practices of the Pope, of England, France, and Venice, are such that it is high time that I arrived there to improve matters."

The Emperor, who had been married but a short time previously to his attractive cousin Isabella of Portugal, was terribly cast down on receipt of the information which stamped him in the eyes of Europe as a fool, and one who had been taken in with his eyes open.

He had not anticipated such bad news, but, on the contrary, having made peace with François and con-

summated his marriage, was looking forward to entering Italy peacefully, in order to be crowned by the Pope with the Imperial crown. Thence he proposed to go to Germany, to crush the Lutherans, who were gaining ground immensely, and to Austria, to drive back the Turks, who were advancing upon Vienna. By the disloyal action of François in refusing to execute the Treaty of Madrid, Charles found himself in a quandary, all of his projects were upset, and for the time he felt crushed. Lee, the English Ambassador, wrote to Henry VIII. concerning his condition of melancholy : " Sire, the Emperor is marvellously altered since his marriage. He is full of dumps and solitary, musing sometimes three and four hours together. There is no mirth nor comfort in him."

What happened in Italy was briefly this. Instigated in a great measure by the revengeful Wolsey and Henry VIII., who declared that the Emperor was aiming at universal Sovereignty, the Pope had got up a coalition against Charles in the month of May 1526. Clement VII. and the Doge of Venice both sent envoys to François at Cognac to ask him to join this combination, of which they said that the object was the putting of the Duke Sforza in full possession of his Duchy, the restoration of the States of Italy to the position they had been in before the war, and the recovery of the children of the King of France in return for a money ransom.

To this league, called the Holy League of Cognac, François very readily acceded ; but the amusing part of the matter was that the confederates actually had the effrontery to send and ask Charles himself to join this Holy League—against himself!

The Emperor, containing his rage, pretended, in order to gain time, to act in a conciliatory manner to the Pope ; but when his Ambassador, the Duke of Sessa, asked Clement VII. if he intended to make war on the Emperor, as, if so, he had better leave to join the camp, he received a fiery reply.

" You are quite at liberty to go or stay, as you please,"

thundered the Pontiff; "but when I make war, you will find it out to the sound of the trumpets."

Three envoys—from France, the Pope, and Venice—arrived shortly after this, to politely invite Charles to resign Burgundy, to restore the King's sons, to withdraw his troops from Lombardy, and to join the League. Each of these envoys addressed him in turn. His reply to the Papal Nuncio was guardedly conciliatory, but Charles ended it up by saying: "To give up the sons of the King of France is out of the question. In that matter I am like Balaam's ass. The more he was spurred to make him go on, the more he jibbed."

Jean de Calvimont, the envoy of François, found, however, that he had caught a Tartar. In an insolent speech this self-sufficient Magistrate had "summoned and commanded" the Emperor, in the name of the Very Christian King, to make a reasonable peace and to give up his children for a money ransom.

In a biting reply the Emperor said, speaking angrily: "Your King has deceived me: I will never believe him again; and he will never gain his ends by force as long as there remains a stone in my Kingdoms. I showed liberality and magnanimity towards him, while he has shown cowardice and perfidy to me. He has neither acted as a true Knight nor a true gentleman, but evilly and falsely. I now demand from you, as his Ambassador, that the Very Christian King shall keep his faith, which he gave me, to become my prisoner again if he did not keep his word." Charles ended by a challenge: "Would to God that this dispute might be decided between us two, body to body, rather than by exposing so many Christians to death. God would show on which side justice lay."

Calvimont did not dare to repeat the Emperor's provocation to his master, but François learned later of all that had been said, when he in turn sent a challenge to Charles, which nearly resulted in a duel between the two Monarchs.

Charles now sent Moncada to the Pope, to try to

separate him from the King of France. He gave him cunning instructions, to rub well into Clement VII. the fact that François had expressed himself as being perfectly willing to deliver over Italy into his hands, without concerning himself about the interests of the Pope or any one else.

The meeting between Moncada and the Pope only resulted in a quarrel, in which the envoy threatened the Pontiff with the ruin of the Apostolic throne. The usually weak-kneed Clement was now thoroughly frightened, but he felt that he had gone too far to recede, and apologetically said that he could not now honourably separate himself from his allies.

Both Moncada and Sessa left the Pope with threats, and they wrote off at once to the Emperor, to beg him to send Bourbon back to Lombardy and Lannoy to Naples at once, and at the same time to send money to pay the soldiers.

As we have already explained, the cause of all the discontent in Italy was the conduct of the soldiers of the Imperial army. When Bourbon arrived to take over the command left vacant by the death of Pescara, he found a strange condition of affairs. The forces had formed themselves into a kind of military republic, which behaved as it chose, and even condemned one of its own Generals to death.

The principal leaders of this military vampire, which was sucking the life-blood out of Lombardy, were the Marquis del Guasto and, that bold defender of Pavia, the ferocious Antonio da Leyva.

Italy seemed unable to do anything against these tyrants; even Venice was frightened and trembled. The General of the Venetian Republic was the Duke of Urbino, who was placed in command of the newly levied troops of the Holy League. His caution, however, was so great that whenever he had an opportunity of fighting successfully he lost it by making a judicious retreat.

Meanwhile, the unpaid soldiers of Charles V. went on

living just as they chose; they quartered themselves in such houses as suited them, and made their unwilling hosts not only feed them but supply them with money. Should they prove recalcitrant, they were strangled. The wives and daughters of the citizens of Milan were looked upon by these ruffians as their lawful prey. Day after day, night after night, could be heard the screams of outraged women, of gentle ladies undergoing horrors worse than death. But there were none to help them, the rascally soldiery were supreme, and any resistance on the part of the victims, or any attempt at rescue, was met by the foulest of murder.

In their despair, many of those ladies who suffered at the hands of these Spanish demons hanged themselves or threw themselves from the windows. When the Duc de Bourbon arrived in Milan, the people hoped that better times had come. The nobles and civic dignitaries came and cast themselves at his feet, they humbly begged him to have mercy upon their unfortunate city. Bourbon replied kindly, and said that since all of these troubles were merely the result of want of pay for the troops, the matter could be remedied. All that was necessary was that the city of Milan should raise the sum of thirty thousand ducats for a month's pay. With that in hand, in a short time he would be able to lead the soldiers away elsewhere.

Wringing their hands, the impoverished citizens, who had been mulcted over and over again, set about to try to raise the money. The thirty thousand ducats were found, somehow, and given to Bourbon—and then, instead of removing the troops, he left them where they were.

His difficulties about raising money were, however, very great, as the Emperor, impecunious as usual, had left the Duc unprovided with the wherewithal, not for the men's pay only, but for the necessary munitions of war. Among other expedients to which Bourbon resorted was that of granting his life and liberty to Girolamo Morone, whose sentence of death for his plot with Pescara had never been

carried out. In return for his pardon, Morone paid the sum of twenty thousand ducats, and he was clever enough soon to win his way into the good graces of the Duc de Bourbon.

This talented old man, who was upwards of fourscore, soon became the prime favourite of the Duc, into whose mind he instilled the suspicion that the Emperor, in promising him the Duchy of Milan, had been merely playing with him, and was using, moreover, the other Spanish Generals to spy upon his actions. After his deception concerning Eléonore, Bourbon was only too ready to believe anything. In Morone he found, however, an enterprising counsellor, and one who shortly put into his head the idea that startled the whole Christian world when it was acted upon. This was nothing less than a march across Italy, in order to attack the Pope in Rome.

Only a short time previously the Cardinal Pompeo Colonna, with other members of that great Roman family, having been stirred up by Moncada after his angry parting with Clement VII., had marched to attack the Pope, who had excommunicated the Colonna, was the deadly enemy of their race, and had annexed their possessions. When at the gates of Rome an agreement had been come to with the Pope. Clement, who had been in considerable fear, revoked his excommunication against the Cardinal, upon the understanding that the Colonna were to resign their claims to the seigneuries they had held previously in the Papal States as the Pope's vassals. Ugo de Moncada and the Colonna were merely playing a game with the Pope which he did not see through; but Clement, who thought he had done a very clever thing, stipulated that these allies of the Emperor were to disband their troops altogether or send them to Naples. The Pope then foolishly disbanded his own forces in Rome, with the exception of three hundred men, after which Cardinal Pompeo Colonna, with Moncada, promptly marched back again to Rome, and took the city by surprise on September 20th, 1526.

While the Pope with all his Cardinals rushed for safety to the Castle of Sant' Angelo, the troops of Pompeo Colonna pillaged at their leisure the Papal palace, and likewise the Cardinals' residences, to their hearts' content.

At first Clement talked very big in his place of refuge about "taking a pike in his hand and fighting under the walls for his life," but in two days, finding himself short of food, he sang another tune altogether.

Moncada, after taking a couple of Cardinals for hostages, entered the castle and treated with Clement, who made a truce for four months with the Emperor, on behalf of himself and all the vassals of the Holy See. By this truce he was obliged not only to restore to the Colonna all their former possessions, but also to withdraw all his troops then in the neighbourhood of Milan. By this smart trick on the part of Ugo de Moncada the Holy League was deprived of the Papal forces both by land and sea, for Clement's galleys were withdrawn from the fleet of the League before Genoa at the same time as his Milanese troops were recalled.

Clement VII. was, however, a man who never fulfilled his engagements to the letter. Accordingly, under the false pretence that they were in the pay of the King of France, he left that famous *condottiere* Giovanni de' Medici, with four thousand men of the Italian Black Bands, with the army of the Holy League under the Duke of Urbino.

With this army of twenty-four thousand men Urbino took the city of Cremona, after a siege of seven weeks, but, with his usual caution, this General failed to attack Bourbon, whose forces were greatly reduced owing to sickness, in Milan.

The most that the commander of the army of the League ventured to do was to make a feeble attempt to prevent provisions from entering Milan, by blocking the approaches. Bourbon, who was a General of entirely another calibre, had made arrangements to upset this design. Having succeeded in obtaining some money

from the Emperor, Bourbon had written to George von Frundsberg to bring him a force of lansquenets from Germany, and with their arrival, instead of remaining on the defensive, this bold General proposed to assume the offensive, and to treat all the forces of the Holy League to something that they were far from expecting in the way of a surprise.

CHAPTER XXXV

Charles at Twenty-six, Mentally and Physically

1526

THE onslaught of, that savage Cardinal and soldier, Pompeo Colonna had proved to Bourbon that it would be by no means a difficult business to take Rome. The difficulty was, however, to get there, and first of all to join forces with the old warrior Frundsberg, who was threatened by the Duke of Urbino. This corpulent old man had with difficulty crossed the snow-clad Alps, with thirteen thousand Germans, into Italy. It was the month of November, and the bold commander had to be pushed or carried the greater part of the way through the mountain passes.

Urbino soon left the blockade of Milan, and went, with half of his army, of which a large proportion of the troops were Swiss, to prevent Frundsberg from joining Bourbon. With him he took the intrepid Giovanni de' Medici and the Black Bands, ten thousand Venetians, and a quantity of cavalry. The rest of his forces he foolishly left behind him at Vauri, in a fortified camp, under the Savoyard Marquis de Saluces or Saluzzo, who commanded the troops paid by the King of France. Had Urbino only taken his full force, he could have crushed Frundsberg easily; as it was, his manœuvres but showed his incapacity. The body that he took with him was not strong enough to easily smash up the lansquenets, while the troops left behind with Saluces could not cope with Bourbon.

Owing to the forethought of Charles V., who, with

grim determination, had been laying himself out to crush the Holy League, while François was giving himself over to idleness and dissipation, he had obtained the alliance and assistance of the warlike but changeable Alfonso d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, who had now supplied Frundsberg with some artillery, which he greatly needed. Charles had also by most determined efforts contrived to get together a fleet, which he sent under Lannoy and Alarcon with ten thousand men from Spain for the defence of Naples.

Lannoy had now been created Prince of Sulmona, and Alarcon Marquis of Valle Siciliana, in reward of their former services, and their fidelity to Charles was, as usual, unbounded. Although attacked by the famous Genoese Admiral, Andrea Doria, who was in the service of François, they contrived to get away from him and to land all their forces at Gaeta. In addition to the money which Bourbon had sent to Frundsberg, by way of the Tyrol, Charles had also sent this old German General an extra fifty thousand ducats by way of Flanders, so that there should be no question of his men going without their pay—the Emperor, in fact, left no stone unturned to get even with the treacherous François and his Italian allies.

As may have already been noticed, the young Emperor's nature was one more given to reflection than promptness of action—he thought for a long time before making up his mind to a step; but when he had decided, his power of will was so great that he became, as he himself said, as obstinate as Balaam's ass. Like the tortoise in the fable, by his slow but steady perseverance Charles very frequently arrived at the goal first in the end, after utterly discomfiting foes who had started off in a hurry and with a great flourish of trumpets.

The way that he started out to combat the Holy League of Cognac was an example of the steadiness with which he pursued his purpose. Perfectly aware of the unreliability of the powerful Duke of Ferrara, he did all in his power to win him to his side. Although the Duc de Bourbon was his Lieutenant-General and Commander-

in-Chief, Charles persuaded him not to decline to bestow upon Alfonso d'Este the rank of Captain-General in Italy, he conferred upon d'Este the coveted investiture of the Duchy of Modena, which Clement had refused to him, gave him the confiscated County of Carpi, and promised to connect himself with him by marriage. It will be remembered that Charles was the father of a natural daughter, named Marguerite. This child, who was still very young, he promised to the Duke of Ferrara for his son Hercules, whom he had had by his union with the beautiful Lucrezia Borgia.

Having made all these advances to Alfonso d'Este, Charles wrote to Bourbon: "By the investiture which we have given to him, and the homage he has caused his Ambassador to make to us, as well as by the marriage of our bastard that we have accorded to him, he must of necessity declare himself for us, and render himself entirely suspicious to the Pope." In this wise combination Charles proved himself to be correct, for when Clement VII. sent Guicciardini at last to concede to the Duke of Ferrara all he wanted, including the cession of Rubiera and Reggio, Church territory which he had recently occupied, Alfonso d'Este replied that it was too late to treat, and that as the Emperor had already conferred Rubiera and Reggio upon him, he wanted nothing now from the Pope.

Having worked the Duke of Ferrara successfully, Charles had proceeded at the same time to employ the cunning of his brain equally against François, in order to render him suspicious to his Italian confederates. France, probably entirely as a blind, had sent him an envoy, named Danjay, charged with peace negotiations. Thereupon the Emperor wrote to Lannoy: "I am well warned that they are nothing but fine words, but I will pay them back in the same coin. I have consented to allow the Sieur Danjay to come to me simply by doing so to instil suspicion into the minds of the Italians, the Pope and the Venetians, and fill them up so with jealousy that they will be anxious to be rid of their engagements with the Very Christian King."

From the two examples just given, it will be seen that the Emperor was a very long-headed young man. He was, although as yet he had taken no personal part in warfare, of a bold and courageous disposition. We have a picture of his person at this time from the pen of Gaspar Contarini, who had recently been Venetian Ambassador in Spain; and since, while we are talking about the Emperor's mental capacity, we may as well consider his bodily qualities also, we will now describe him as he appeared between the ages of twenty-six and twenty-seven, in Contarini's own words, as follows :

“ He is of ordinary stature, neither tall nor short ; his complexion is white, rather pale than coloured. He has an aquiline nose, grey eyes, the chin too much advanced, and an aspect which is grave without being either hard or severe. His body is well proportioned, his leg very well formed, his arm strong, and both in the joustings of arms and in tilting at the ring he is as adroit as any Knight of his Court, no matter who it may be.”

It may be added that Charles was very religious, somewhat addicted to the pleasures of the chase, and, although not libertine like François I., not always faithful to his marriage vows, although apparently attached to his wife Isabella. In his manner he was not affable, unless it was when he found himself in his Flemish dominions, when he would unbend; he was inclined to be mean, and he talked but little. He was never happier than when presiding and negotiating at the head of his Council; the government of the affairs of his various countries occupied him incessantly. A remarkable trait in the character of this self-contained Prince was that he never exulted in moments of triumph, nor did he allow himself, except by unusual silence, to appear cast down when evil days came upon him. During that silence, as recently seen when he had learned of the treachery of his released prisoner François I., Charles was revolving in his mind how best he might right matters. The Emperor was most assiduous as a worker, and it was owing to his constant application and scheming that, as in this instance

of the Holy League of Cognac, he often contrived to defeat his enemies as much by cunningly calculated negotiations as by the success of his arms in the field. Had Charles but been quicker in his deliberations, and had he but had the command of money equal to his ambitions, he might have been the Alexander of Europe.

Even limited as he was in these two respects, the manner in which for half a century he contrived to maintain himself and retain all his vast possessions in the face of so many foes compels our admiration, and stamps the Emperor Charles V. as having been, if not one of the best, certainly one of the most remarkable Monarchs that ever reigned.

CHAPTER XXXVI

Bourbon's Dash on Rome

1527

FRANÇOIS I. was, as we have mentioned, enjoying himself thoroughly now that he had got back to France. He had apparently entirely forgotten the existence of the fair Éléonore, whom he had kissed upon the lips and who had danced the fandango so prettily before him at Toledo. She, poor infatuated creature, after following the so-called husband, whom Lannoy had married for her in prison, as far as Vittoria, had, by her brother's orders, been compelled in the dreary winter season once more to traverse the whole length of Spain to return from Vittoria to Toledo.

François now had other lips, and far fresher ones, to kiss than those of a widowed Queen with a little girl of her own. In the first flush of his passion for Anne de Pisseleu, he was not neglecting his opportunities in this respect, while varying the amusement afforded by the gay sallies of his new mistress by continual indulgence in the pleasures of the chase.

Meanwhile, in Lombardy, the Duc de Bourbon was having trouble with his men, who were becoming mutinous. For the second time since this Prince of the Blood had taken service under the banner of Charles V., he pawned his jewels and golden chains to satisfy them, and he likewise persuaded Antonio da Leyva, the Marquis del Vasto, and other high officers to do the same. He also promised the soldiers the spoils of Florence and

Rome. Leaving Leyva to keep Milan, Bourbon marched out in the beginning of January 1527, and before the middle of February he managed to unite forces with Frundsberg, who had been recently joined by the young Prince Philibert of Orange.

Shortly before this junction the Duke of Urbino had made a half-hearted attack upon Frundsberg's rear-guard. He was very sorry for himself, however, when a ball from one of the Duke of Ferrara's cannons shattered the leg of his bold young leader of the Black Bands, especially as the spirited Giovanni de' Medici died of the wound a few days later in Mantua.

Just after the Duc de Bourbon had started in the direction of Bologna, the Viceroy of Naples, without reference to Bourbon, arranged a short truce with the Pope. This would have been a clever enough arrangement on the part of Clement VII. had he only been man enough to keep his engagements. For the last month or two the Pope had been trembling and shifting about between the League and the Imperialists, first asking the one to help him, then asking the others to treat.

Henry VIII., too, was not forgotten in his demands for money, while as for the Very Christian King, he was pressed to give more speedy and material aid in the war, one of the objects of which was the recovery of his own sons.

It was, however, in vain for the Papal Nuncio to endeavour to stir up François to activity, nor was the King greatly moved when the Pope's envoy said: "Come yourself, Sire, with the troops that you promised, and then yours will be all the glory. Otherwise the Emperor will crush us, to your eternal disgrace." François, who was just then becoming very interested in a plan for building a grand palace at Chambord, seemed for the time being not to care a fig for military glory. He made new promises, to send troops and a fleet to attack Naples, but personally made no movement in the nature of leaving his amusements to take command of those troops. François, who always spoke beautifully, and could see perfectly well and

quickly just what ought to be done in an emergency, was, however, lazy and entirely wanting in the application of Charles V. He put off the Nuncio, therefore, by telling him all that he was going to do, and further sent messages to the Pope, to the effect that, if he only remained faithful to the League, the King of England would very soon send him a large sum by the hand of his Ambassador, Sir John Russell.

Having sent these comforting messages, but nothing else, François went off for a gay hunting party into Champagne, and nothing more was heard of him for over a fortnight. When, upon his return from this expedition, he heard of the truce between the Emperor and the Pope, he expressed to the Nuncio great irritation with His Holiness, but boasted that he, Henry VIII., and the Venetians would be well able alone to resist the tyranny of the Emperor, who, he said, would soon reduce Clement VII. to the rank of a simple priest.

On the very day that the Pope concluded this truce, his army won a victory over the Spanish and Italian troops from Naples, commanded by Lannoy and Cardinal Pompeo Colonna, in front of a place called Frosinone. Learning this news, the unstable Pope instantly broke his truce and joined the Holy League once more.

Hearing of this last lightning change, François, who was delighted, sent to arrange for a marriage between one of his sons and the Pope's young relative, Catherine, daughter of Lorenzo de' Medici, who had been unjustly created Duke of Urbino by his uncle Leo X. This was the famous Catherine de' Medici, and her father being long since dead, she was known before her marriage to Henri of France as Duchess of Urbino, although by rights that title only belonged to the House of Della Rovere, in the person of Francesco Maria Della Rovere, Duke of Urbino, the commander of the forces of the Holy League.¹

¹ The mother of Catherine de' Medici was, the French Princess, Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne. Catherine was born April 13th, 1519, and both her father and mother died within a month of her birth.

Shortly after this matrimonial engagement had been entered into, the shilly-shallying Pope, becoming more frightened than ever, made a new truce—one which did not include his allies of France and Venice. This time it was a definite one with the Emperor's Equerry, Cesare Feramosca, whom Lannoy had sent to Rome on behalf of his master. For Charles, above everything, sought to carry out his plan of separating the vacillating Clement from François I., after accomplishing which he proposed to send Bourbon and his army into Venetian territory, there to live as they chose at the expense of the Republic.

Clement, by this last truce, which indeed resembled a treaty of peace, promised to pay sixty thousand ducats to the soldiers of Bourbon's army, who were more mutinous than ever and clamouring for their pay. The sum was, of course, not nearly enough for the required purpose, and when Feramosca hurried off to Bourbon near Bologna, to tell him of the truce and request him to retire, he found the Imperial army halted and in want of everything. There were no provisions in the camp, the men were in rags and had no boots, and, to make things worse, the rains were terrible. This was in the middle of March 1527, and the mutinous Spanish soldiers had even pillaged the Duc de Bourbon's tent, and would have killed him had he not fled from them to George von Frundsberg and the German lansquenets.

The lansquenets were, however, no better than the Spaniards, and it was in vain that their formerly beloved commander sought to appease them when they surrounded him, demanding instant payment of the sums owing to them. It was without any result that Frundsberg called them "his children," and begged them to have a little more patience; they would not listen to him. At last, overcome by the tumult, Frundsberg fell down in the midst of his angry soldiers, being stricken with apoplexy.

This blow to their brave and able leader brought the lansquenets to reason, and they vainly did all in their

power to save him. They carried him to Ferrara, where he died in a few days' time.

After the death of his most trusted General, Bourbon contrived to borrow from the Duke of Ferrara just enough money to pay all the troops a ducat a man. They seemed appeased, the more so as Bourbon promised them over again all the riches of Florence and Rome.

When Feramosca brought the news of the truce, and gave to Bourbon letters from his old rival Lannoy, ordering him, on behalf of the Emperor, to conform to its terms, he was as furious as were his own frantic men. He made use of the most unbridled language against Lannoy, and swore furiously. Finally, he told Feramosca he had better himself explain to the troops the necessity of going back, for that he would have no hand in the matter. On the contrary, he would leave the Emperor's service and his command together. Bourbon knew well enough what sort of a reception Feramosca would get from the baffled troops, who were determined to march, fight, and pillage. They tried to kill him, but Fernando Gonzaga, the young Marquis of Mantua, a cousin of Bourbon, contrived to save the wretched man, by giving him his own horse, after he had been severely ill-treated.

When Feramosca had got clear away, although in a very battered condition, from the camp, Bourbon assembled the Spaniards and the Germans, and asked them what they wished him to do.

"We wish to go forward," was the vociferous reply of the soldiers.

"Good!" responded Bourbon; "then I will go with you." Placed as he was, no other reply would have been possible: he was their servant.

The Marquis del Vasto, however, refused to disobey the Emperor's orders, and retired from his command to the city of Ferrara, although the Duke urged him to remain with him and see the business through to the bitter end.

Accordingly, whether really of his own free will or no, Bourbon advanced, with his vast assemblage of veteran and ill-disciplined troops, wandering along in extended order over a wide territory in the effort to obtain provisions.

The Duke of Urbino with his army of Italians followed him at a respectful distance. He professed himself unable to attack until he should be joined by his Swiss troops. When he was joined by these, he still found excuses from day to day which made an attack inadvisable.

France was giving but poor help to the Holy League ; merely a few hundred men-at-arms by way of troops were sent by François, while the galleys despatched to assist in the attack on Naples were unseaworthy. The Pope, however, felt secure in his truce with Lannoy ; he had received some money from Henry VIII. to pay his troops with, instead of doing which he disbanded nearly all of them from motives of economy.

He had other reasons for feeling secure, since Bourbon was writing to him in a respectful manner and deceiving him as to his intentions.

While thus deceiving the Pope, Bourbon was making a fool of Lannoy also. Having appointed a place of meeting with the Viceroy in one direction, he marched off in another, and, in spite of the spring rains and the mountain snows, crossed the Apennines and appeared in Tuscany. A great number of his German soldiers were bitter Lutherans, longing in their religious hatred to kill the Pope. Frundsberg himself had been of the Reformed faith, and a friend of Luther ; the corpulent old man had worn a golden chain with which he had boasted that he intended to strangle Clement VII. These men and the Spaniards now showed an implicit confidence in the Duc de Bourbon ; wherever he chose to lead, they would follow. Rains, snows, mountains, rivers in flood, were of no avail to turn them from their course. Like an army of invading Huns under Attila, they swept onward, irresistibly onward ; burning, destroying, wasting everything in their path. Poor indeed was the chance of

existence for the army of Urbino which was supposed to be following—the country was swept as bare as a board, it remained one vast scene of desolation when Bourbon had passed on his way.

Strange indeed was the composition of this army. Bigoted Spaniards, from a land where, for the sake of religion, the Moors were at that very time being ruthlessly destroyed, marched as the best of comrades side by side with the Lutherans, who never passed a church without reducing it to ashes. In rear followed a vast mass of armed Italian brigands, men without any homes, who had attached themselves to this vast force of desperadoes in the hopes of sharing in its spoils.

“Rome—let us burn Rome! the home of Antichrist!” This was the cry of the Germans. Neither Clement VII. nor any one else outside the army of Bourbon had, however, any idea that such a sacrilegious action could be even contemplated, especially in a time of truce. The advance of Bourbon was looked upon as merely a sort of military parade, which had for its object pillage and the ransoming of cities which happened to be met with on the way.

Lannoy, having found himself treated with disdain by Bourbon, whom he knew never to have forgiven the trick played when he had whisked the captive King of France suddenly off to Spain after Pavia, took care to keep out of the way of the ferocious soldiery of the army which had then considered itself defrauded of its lawful rights. After returning to Rome for a time in despair, when, at length, Bourbon seemed about to attack Florence, that birthplace of the illegitimate Medicean Pope, the Viceroy of Naples repaired to that city, which was included in the truce made with the Pope, and should therefore be respected by Bourbon.

Of the Medici family there were then present in Florence one legitimate and two illegitimate representatives. The first of these was the child Catherine; the others were the handsome youth Ippolito, the bastard of Giuliano, who was created Duc de Nemours, and the

ill-favoured Alessandro, who was generally understood to be the bastard of Pope Clement VII. Of these two young men, Ippolito was later compelled by the Pope, against his will, to enter the Church and become a Cardinal, while Alessandro was married to Marguerite of Austria, the illegitimate daughter of the Emperor, and, by the favour of Charles, created Duke of Florence. The Governor of the city, who had been appointed by Clement, was Cardinal Posserini of Cortona. Catherine de' Medici's aunt, the haughty and unamiable Clarice de' Medici, who was married to Filippo Strozzi, was at this time absent from Florence, she having been taken to Naples to be a hostage of the Pope's good faith in the matter of the truce arranged with Feramosca.

Notwithstanding the fact that Florence was well prepared for a siege, that fact would not have saved the city from the fury of the soldiers, who had looked forward to sacking it as a reward for all their miserable marches, had it not been for Lannoy. He acted as intermediary, and to escape the terrors of a siege and its probable consequences, Florence promised to pay up a money ransom to the invaders.

The Duke of Urbino, who had posted himself in the neighbourhood, was now joined by the Marquis de Saluces and the French troops; but the leader of the Imperial army had no intention of staying to fight them! Without waiting for the ransom that Florence had promised, and which he had rejected as too small, while informing Lannoy that he must make the Pope double it, Bourbon now played an entirely unexpected trick. Leaving his entrenched position near Florence, he marched off suddenly, almost at a run, in the direction of Rome. All impedimenta were left behind; even the guns that had been received from the Duke of Ferrara were abandoned. Rome was the goal; and such was the incentive of its pillage to the troops that, full of hatred of the Pope as were both Catholics and Lutherans, the army soon out-distanced the cavalry sent to follow on its footsteps.

In a hurry the Pope, who had again joined the League, now attempted to arm. The youth of Rome, the servants of the Cardinals and the Bishops, the artists and painters—all were enlisted. Those who have read the boasting memoirs of, that marvellous workman and artist, Benvenuto Cellini, will remember how that immoral braggart armed himself with his arquebus. Clement VII. was, however, short of money, and when the Pope endeavoured to raise money from the richest citizens of Rome for their mutual defence, he was met by the greatest meanness. A French historian tells us: "One of them did not blush to offer only a few ducats. He wept for it before long; if he did not pay up, his daughters paid, with their body, with their shame, and with the most disgraceful suffering."

On May 5th, 1527, Bourbon bivouacked with all his forces, fifty thousand in number, in a semi-circle outside Rome. He sent in a sarcastic message to the Pope, requesting permission to march through the city, as, he said, he wished to go to Naples by that route.

CHAPTER XXXVII

The Awful Sack of Rome

MAY 1527

ON the morning of May 6th, 1527, a thick fog or mist hung round about the city of Rome.

Clement VII. had shut himself up in the Vatican ; but, hoping that the Imperialists under Bourbon would be arrested by Urbino, he had not taken the proper measures in time for the defence of the Holy City. In his overweening confidence he had not even allowed the rich merchants to leave Rome, although, in spite of the Pope's orders, some of the more prudent were lucky enough to get off down the Tiber in boats and to reach Civita Vecchia.

Almost at the last minute Clement entrusted to Renzo da Ceri, the hero of the defence of Marseilles, the raising of a force. The celebrated "Capitaine Rance," as the French called him, contrived, with the money the Pope raised by creating half a dozen new Cardinals, to get together three or four thousand men, some of whom were old soldiers recently disbanded. Renzo had not, however, had the time to repair the walls of the city before Bourbon encamped before them on May 5th, 1527. Rome was, however, not easy to get into, the Borgo and the Trastevere forming two separate walled cities. The Vatican was in the Borgo, called also the Leonine City, and close at hand, connected with the Vatican by a long stone corridor, was the Castle of Sant' Angelo.



From a contemporary engraving.

CHARLES DE MONTPENSIER, DUC DE BOURBON,
Connétable de France.

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After taking the Borgo and the Trastevere, in order to get into the older and more populous part of Rome, containing the Forum and the Capitol, which was walled, it would be necessary for the attacking force to cross the Tiber by three bridges, which could be easily defended or destroyed.

May 5th was a Sunday; and Bourbon, while giving orders for the construction of scaling ladders, assembled his captains and told them that they must attack at once. They all complained that the troops were too tired, whereupon Bourbon put off the assault until the morrow, informing the army, however, that if they failed to carry the city, wherein they would find abundance and riches, they would most assuredly die of want outside.

In the mist on the morning of May 6th the Borgo was attacked at daybreak by the German lansquenets, covered by Spanish arquebus-men.

The Duc, on horseback, wore a white cloak over a silver cuirass, and the boldness of his mien inspired courage to his followers. Owing to the fog, the artillery from the walls did but little damage to the assailants, while, the Spanish arquebus-men keeping up a heavy fire on the defenders, the scaling ladders were brought up with ease.

The Duc de Bourbon now dismounted, and, taking a scaling ladder, boldly advanced to scale the western wall of the Borgo. While mounting the ladder, and thus setting a brilliant example to his men, the courageous Duc was struck by a bullet in the armpit—a bullet which Benvenuto Cellini subsequently claimed the honour of having fired, with what truth it would be hard to say.

The brave hero of so many conflicts was not, however, killed outright. He gave instructions to his captains not to be discouraged, and was carried to a chapel, wherein he received the comforts of religion while his men went on with their bloody work. By his confessor, Bourbon transmitted his dying messages to the Emperor. He said, among other things, that he had come to the Holy City in spite of himself, and protested that he intended

no irreverence to His Holiness. He pointed out to Charles V. the Prince of Orange as being the most worthy to receive the government of the Duchy of Milan. Finally, Bourbon asked the Emperor, in case he should make a peace with the King of France, to include in its terms his nephew and heir, the Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon, and all his gentlemen, servitors, and officers.

The last words of the gallant Charles de Montpensier—a noble rebel against an ungrateful King—were “To Rome! To Rome!”

While Bourbon was dying, Philibert of Orange had taken over the command. The lansquenets at first only went at their work half-heartedly, but the Spanish soldiers from the commencement of the fight were furious in their onslaught. Renzo da Ceri, making a bold front within, took prisoners the first three or four ensigns who contrived to penetrate into the city, and drove back their men, but soon the desperate assailants pouring over the walls in every direction made short work of the followers of the gallant Capitaine Rance, the survivors of whom fled, dragging Ceri with them.

The Spaniards, yelling “España! España!” and “Amazza! Amazza!” (slay! slay!) rushing through the Borgo, and filling it with blood and corpses, pursued the fugitives to the gates of the Castle of Sant’ Angelo, from which they themselves were only kept out at length by the lowering of the portcullis.

Upon the bridge of this fortress the French Ambassador to Florence, Guillaume du Bellay, who had hurried on to Rome to warn the Pope, made a brave stand for a time by the side of Renzo da Ceri.

While thus, sword in hand, Bellay and Ceri thrust and hewed away with might and main, the Pope was making his escape from the Vatican into the Castle of Sant’ Angelo. As he hurried along the long gallery which joined the two, and which had been built as a means of escape by Alexander VI., the Borgia Pope, Clement VII. was witness of the most horrible and blood-curdling sights.

Under his eyes, and close at hand, he beheld seven or eight thousand Romans lying dead, or dying with horrible wounds from the blows of the pikes, halberds, and swords. As he hurried along, a Bishop, named Paolo Giovo, held up the Pope's train in order that he might get the faster over the ground; and when he arrived, amid a host of other fugitives from the Vatican, at an uncovered bridge leading into the Castle, this Bishop's presence of mind probably saved the life of Clement VII.

For fear that the Pope would in this exposed position be recognised in his white rochet, and be shot down by the enemy so close at hand, the Bishop threw his own violet cloak over the Pope's shoulders. Amid the hustling, terror-stricken mass of Cardinals and priests scurrying over this bridge, Clement therefore passed unnoticed into Sant' Angelo in safety.

Although the Borgo was lost, Ceri, Bellay, and a small but brave band of French gentlemen now rushed to the Capitol, where the Romans were assembled, and begged them to make an effort to keep out the Colonna and their followers, who were approaching on that side.

The Romans, however, would not consent to keeping out the Colonna, saying that they were their fellow-citizens, and they, moreover, refused to sacrifice their fine bridges, which Renzo begged them to cut. Although the newly raised troops fought fairly well for a time under Renzo da Ceri to defend the Trastevere, at last they were seized with panic and fled headlong before the Imperial troops advancing to the assault under the Prince of Orange.

Night was commencing to fall when the whole of the invading army, entering the city, met with no further resistance. Suspecting a trap, they marched in solid companies over the undefended bridges. That night the Spanish veterans and Germans encamped in the open places, taking all military precautions against a surprise, but in the morning all discipline was at an end—and then the sack of Rome commenced.

According to a French writer of the last century :

“Never was there a more atrocious scene, a more fearful carnival of death. The women, the pictures, the stoles, dragged, drawn pell-mell, torn, sullied, violated, Cardinals being flogged, Princesses in the arms of the soldiers, a chaos, an odd mixture of bloody obscenities, of horrible comedies.

“The Germans, who killed a great deal at the beginning, and made a Saint Bartholomew of pictures of saints, of Virgins, were gradually swallowed up in the cellars, pacified. The Spaniards, reflective, sober, horribly experienced after Milan, snuffed Rome as torture and torment. The mountaineers of the Abruzzi were likewise execrable. The worst of it was that the three nations could not communicate. Ruined and ransomed by one of them, one fell into the hands of another.”

For a whole week the sack of Rome continued. The Duc de Bourbon being dead, there was no acknowledged head to the Imperialist army, and every excess was indulged in, every outrage that could be committed by a vast body of fierce, undisciplined men was perpetrated.

In this ancient city, the headquarters of the Christian religion, sacrilege and the cruellest robbery were accompanied by wholesale violation and arson. The marauding bands of armed men spared no house, no quarter of the city, no church. Many of the unhappy Romans had shut themselves up in their homes with their terrified families and their most cherished possessions, or with their women had taken shelter in the places of worship, which they had vainly imagined would be respected, only to find, to their horror and despair, that neither house nor sacred edifice could save their lives or riches from the robber, their wives or young daughters from the ravisher. Rome became a vast pool of blood; the streets were running with gore. All sense of religion was lost: while the Catholic Spaniards indulged to the full their brutal licentiousness even in the convents of the nuns, the Germans dressed up asses in the sacerdotal robes of Bishops and Cardinals, and gambled with courtesans upon the altars

of the churches. For an uninterrupted period of eight days and nights naught could be heard but fierce cries, screams of agony or dolorous shrieks and wailings in every street, every palace, and private house, whether belonging to rich or poor. The Lutheran lansquenets meanwhile, with the most fiendish delight, were taking especial pleasure in the pillage of the precious vessels and rich vestments of the churches and chapels. Universal and ruthless destruction seemed to be the password. The images of the saints served as targets for arquebuses; they were cast down and smashed, and the most sacred objects, such as broken crucifixes, trampled and sullied on the blood-stained floor. The basilicas of Saint Peter and Saint Paul were used as stables for the horses of the troops, and, as litter was scarce, priceless books and manuscripts from the libraries of churchmen or private persons were torn up and thrown on the floor for the horses to lie upon.

One of the most horrible features of the sack of Rome was the grim humour, the terrible practical joking of the sacrilegious soldiers. When tired for a time of ill-treating young women, cutting off the ears and fingers of old ones for their jewels, or murdering men and women indiscriminately, the ruffians sought relaxation by baiting those of the Cardinals who had not succeeded in taking refuge in Sant' Angelo.

The mocking and ill-treating of these Princes of the Church seemed to afford unlimited sport to the blood-stained despoilers, and the more so as it was a means of raising money. The following was an example of the soldier's jests. A Cardinal, named Araceli, having been placed in a coffin, was carried by a body of the German pikemen into a church. There, with all kinds of obscene jests, funeral orations were pronounced over him. He was then borne on his bier to his own palace, where the soldiers got drunk on the Cardinal's wine, after which the Cardinal was dragged from his coffin, mounted on a horse behind a soldier, and taken all round the city to beg for his ransom.

Many other Roman Bishops were dragged round the town tied on to donkeys, accompanied by lansquenets, who were themselves attired in the richest priestly robes, and who made a parody of the ceremonies of religion. These ecclesiastics were also compelled to beg for the benefit of their tormentors. To excite the pity of such of the citizens as had anything left to give, the priestly victims were cruelly beaten from time to time, or pricked with the points of lances until the blood ran down their robes, the soldiers meanwhile roaring with laughter at their contortions.

In the matter of extracting money during this long period of pillage, the Spaniards proved to be by far the most successful, as they shrank from no kind of horrible and cold-blooded torture to force men and women alike to reveal the hiding-places of their money and jewellery. The Italians who had accompanied the Imperialist army were equally pitiless upon their compatriots, and neglected no cruel or unscrupulous means of extracting the very last coin from their victims. The lansquenets, after their first outbreak of licentiousness upon entering the city, showed far more mercy than the others, and even by force interfered to prevent the Spaniards and Italians from satisfying their brutal passions at the expense of defenceless young girls, whose natural protectors had been massacred. So long as they could find enough to eat and especially to drink, and could collect enough money, grand clothes, and golden chains to satisfy their wants, they were content to ride round in state on the Pope's mules and those of the Cardinals, without inflicting torture or ill-treating the women.

With a beautiful impartiality, the soldiers of the three nations plundered the palaces of their friends, and exacted ransom from them, equally with those of their enemies. Although Bourbon's cousin, the Marquis of Mantua, commanded a force of Italians in the army, the palace in which his mother resided was forced, in spite of his prayers, and those who had taken refuge therein were compelled to pay a ransom of fifty thousand ducats.

The Ambassador of Portugal, a country at that time so very closely connected by ties of blood and marriage with the Emperor, did not escape either. His palace was pillaged from the basement to the attic.

As may be well imagined, in the hot climate of a Roman May, with the streets full of blood and unburied corpses rotting in the sun, the stench in the city soon became unbearable. The air was filled by flies in millions, and the horrible condition of Rome became such that it was impossible to bring food into the city for fear of its becoming polluted. The result was that first famine fell upon the inhabitants and then the plague broke out in fury, attacking the soldiers and the citizens alike, when none who died were buried.

A Frenchman named Grolier, who was an eye-witness of all these terrible horrors, has left a description of the condition of Rome after these eight days of massacre and unbridled licence.

He says : "When it became possible to do so I went out. As I advanced in the direction of the Forum, the horror, the silence, the solitude, the infection, the fetid corpses lying stretched here and there, froze me with terror.

"The houses were open, the doors torn down, the shops empty, and in the deserted streets one only saw running a few savage and uncouth soldiers."

Such, then, was the sack of Rome, and while it lasted Clement VII., with many Cardinals, and a mass of Roman nobles, merchants, and women, remained a prisoner in the castle of Sant' Angelo, which was besieged and frequently bombarded, although with little effect, owing to there being no kind of control over its assailants. For three weeks longer, until June 7th, 1527, the Pope held out—and then he capitulated.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

François Buïlds and the Pope Escapes

1527—1528

IF Pope Clement VII. had only had sufficient sense in his head, he need never have undergone the humiliation of the long captivity in Sant' Angelo to which he was condemned by Charles V. after his surrender. Even after the Imperialists had entered Rome, and for several days afterwards, the left bank of the Tiber was free, and he could easily have made his escape in that direction. Sense, however, was not a quality with which Giulio de' Medici was overburdened, and therefore, foolishly counting on his approaching deliverance by the troops of the Holy League, he remained where he was, besieged in the crowded castle, to endure untold misery owing to the heats of the summer and the stench of the dead bodies rotting in the streets.

The Confederates of the League, however, did nothing to help this misguided Pope. On the evening after the savage troops of Bourbon had entered Rome, an Italian captain of the League, named Guido Rangone, arrived with a small army close to the walls, but he retired again without attempting to relieve Sant' Angelo, which was not yet surrounded, and from which the occupants might have been rescued without much difficulty.

As for the Duke of Urbino, he did what might have been expected of him—nothing. After making a very slow and sedate march from the neighbourhood of Florence, he arrived near Rome sixteen days after its

capture. He then posted himself at a place called Nepi, where he talked vaguely of several plans for relieving the Pope, but attempted none. Although the Pontifical Lieutenant, Francesco Guicciardini, represented to him how easy it would be to deliver Sant' Angelo from the disorganised invaders, Urbino refused to move from Nepi, and presently marched away again with the whole of his fine army. He had formerly been grossly ill-treated by the Medici Pope Leo X., and by this action gratified his revenge upon the whole Medici family.¹

The result was that, in spite of Guillaume du Bellay and Renzo da Ceri, who were shut up with him, Clement insisted upon yielding himself and the thirteen Cardinals with him into captivity. Renzo and the other Captains of François I. were allowed to go free, while the valiant Alarcon entered Sant' Angelo and, after having been the gaoler of the King of France, now became that of the Pope of Rome, whom he guarded closely.

The wretched Clement was now compelled to pay an enormous subsidy and to yield up three fortresses, and, in addition, the three cities, concerning the possession of which the Popes were eternally squabbling, Parma, Piacenza, and Modena.

Seven Cardinals, who were given over as hostages to the army for the payment of the promised subsidy, underwent the most miserable treatment. On several occasions they were led out to execution with ropes round their necks, but reprieved by the soldiers when a large sum of money was paid over.

In the meantime a great part of Europe received with indifference the news of the capture of a Pope—the Vicar of God—and the profanation of the Holy City. Indeed, throughout the greater part of Germany the news was received with shouts of joy and derision. “Christ,” said the followers of Luther, “has now been delivered by the capture of Antichrist.”

When Charles V. was informed of what had taken place,

¹ The Duke of Urbino was the nephew of Pope Julius II. (Giuliano Della Rovere). He had been deprived by Leo X. of his title and his dominions.

the hypocrisy with which he behaved was amusing, and typical of the man. The devout young Emperor expressed himself as being dreadfully shocked at the profanity of the action of his Italian army, and he even gave orders for his Court to go into deep mourning out of sympathy with the Holy Father, who had been so grossly insulted.

At the same time, while going about with an expression of the deepest grief upon his countenance, the foxy Charles was determined to draw every possible advantage from the misfortunes of Clement VII. Accordingly, far from giving orders for his release, he sent instructions to Alarcon to hold his prisoner tight until further orders.

The Emperor was not the only one to take advantage of the downfall of the trimming, vacillating Clement. The city of Florence rose against the Pope's Governor, the Cardinal of Cortona. The Pope's statue was thrown down, the Medici were expelled, their arms defaced, and a Republic once more proclaimed by the turbulent citizens.

Florence was much dearer to the heart of Giulio de' Medici than was Rome itself, and he was ready therefore to abase himself to any extent to the Emperor for the sake of recovering what was now the most important city in Italy. In the last days of 1527 the Pope contrived to escape from Sant' Angelo, in the disguise of a gardener, and to reach the almost inaccessible mountain city of Orvieto, where he took possession of the Bishop's dilapidated palace. In this miserable place he was visited by Doctors Foxe and Gardiner, the Ambassadors of Henry VIII., who have left behind them a description of the appearance of penury of the tumbledown palace, and of the Pope's own miserable surroundings.

Henry VIII. at this time had made up his mind that he could not possibly exist longer without the possession of the fair Anne Boleyn. Since, however, that young lady absolutely declined to yield to the passion of the amorous King and become his mistress, he had just determined by hook or by crook to get rid of his wife Catherine of Aragon, and to marry Anne. The envoys Foxe and Gardiner accordingly came to find Clement on his mountain-

top at Orvieto, being bound on a very particular mission. This was nothing less than to ask the Pope to accord to Henry a divorce from his wife, on the grounds that, having been his brother Arthur's wife before she was his own, the marriage had been illegal from the very beginning.

In the fix in which he found himself, Clement VII. was very anxious to be able to oblige any Monarch who could be of use to him. The question was which of the two, Henry VIII. or Charles V., could be of the most use to him at that particular juncture. The one, who had given him money, lived a very long way off, and had not a single man in Italy. The other, from whom the Pope was in hiding, had Italy full of ferocious soldiers, and was talking of coming in person before long to compel the Pope to crown him as Emperor. Also, as it happened, Catherine of Aragon was the aunt of Charles. It seemed therefore to Clement that it would be rather a dangerous matter for him to grant a divorce, to brand the Emperor's aunt as having been living in nothing but an immoral union, and to pronounce his cousin, the Princess Mary, illegitimate.

Placed thus between two stools, the Pope took care not to break with Henry and at the same time not to offend the Emperor. He contrived to put off giving a direct answer about the divorce, telling the Ambassadors that he had no doubt that the matter would be arranged, but that it would require a little time and consideration. With this reply the impatient Henry was forced to be contented, and not long afterwards Clement, having arranged matters with Charles V., was able to leave Orvieto, and to return in the spring of 1528 to his pillaged Vatican, in his ruined city of Rome.

Henry VIII., who had no cause to be pleased with the Pope, had at this time a greater cause of dissatisfaction with his nephew the Emperor, who had failed to marry his English cousin Mary, now aged eleven, and taken instead his Portuguese cousin Isabella, who very soon presented him with a son. This son, afterwards Philip II., was by a strange turn of fortune's wheel

to become later the husband of that very Mary who had been promised to his father.

In the meantime François and Henry, having settled all old differences, were arranging that the Princess Mary should before long either marry François himself, in spite of his previous marriage by proxy to Éléonore, or else espouse his second son, the Duc d'Orléans. It was a strange and indefinite arrangement surely, but one quite in accordance with the extraordinary levity of the age where the personal feelings of a *Princesse à marier* were concerned.

While making a close alliance with Henry, who was to attack the Emperor in the Low Countries, while he himself was to intervene once more with an army in Italy, François was devoting his attention more towards the building of various palaces than anything else. At this particular time, with the aid of a clever architect from Blois, he was building that of Chambord, the plan of which has been preserved, stage by stage, in the Bibliothèque in Paris. The King was continually present with his fair Duchesse d'Étampes superintending the works on this edifice. It was built neither in the rigid, inhospitable style of the old Gothic "donjon," nor in the villa style of the Italian "palazzo," with more reception saloons than comfortable chambers. In building it François set the example of comfort of construction to those who came after him. He arranged everything with this object in view. One set of apartments was isolated completely from another, with a view to preserving privacy, while there were separate sets of stairways, so that those going up need not be needlessly embarrassed by unexpected meetings with those coming down. The outside appearance was harmonious in the extreme, with various towers which corresponded, and a majestic central tower which dominated all. Within all was arranged for convenience of circulation, everything calculated so as to give facility for either solitude or parties of pleasure as might be desired.

For no less than twelve years, in spite of wars, in spite

of public financial distress, François kept eighteen hundred workmen constantly employed upon this building. Its beautification seemed to be the chief occupation of his mind. In all directions the forms of the King's various mistresses figured as caryatides, while everywhere were to be seen the combined initials of F. for François and D. for the fair Diane de Poitiers, who was to be subsequently for so many years the Egeria of this sacred grove with the King's son, Henri II.

Taken up as much as he was with his building projects, it was but by fits and starts, and apparently regretfully, that François allowed himself the leisure to attend to more important matters. At the same time, the greater part of the sums which he extracted from his subjects by taxation went not to the promotion of works of public utility, but were devoted to the expenses of his Court.

Occupied as he was by his home amusements, François determined not again to head his Italian army in person, but to give Lautrec the command once more. Odet de Foix was accordingly sent back as the King's Lieutenant-General in the year 1527, to recover if possible all that he had not known how to hold in 1522. It was arranged that for the present, instead of sending an army to harass the Archduchess Marguerite in what is now Belgium, Henry VIII. should help towards paying the French troops by contributing thirty-two thousand crowns monthly. Sir Robert Jerningham was to follow the operations of Lautrec's army in the field and pay over this money as it fell due.

The reason for the liberality of Henry VIII. is not hard to find. Clement VII. was then still in durance vile, and the English King's burning ardour for Anne Boleyn so irresistible that he was anxious at any price to set the Pope free, in order to obtain from him a dispensation of divorce.

The Papal Nuncio, Acciajuoli, gave Lautrec good advice on starting, saying, "Do not waste time in besieging towns, but hurry against the Imperialist troops

while they are in such a disorganised condition, and direct your march through the Romagna to Naples. Having once conquered Naples, it will be simple enough for you to make yourself master of Lombardy later."

Starting from Lyon in July 1527, Lautrec crossed the Alps by the Pass of Susa, and met with success after success. He gave back various places that he took to the Duke Francesco Sforza, and then, after a feint on Antonio da Leyva in Milan, made a dash on Pavia. While he attacked this town of evil memory for France from one side, the Venetian army bombarded it furiously from the other.

Pavia was this time carried by assault, when, out of revenge for the defeat of François under its walls a couple of years earlier, it was sacked, and its garrison and inhabitants treated with the most brutal barbarity.

Of all the small States into which at this time Italy was divided, none was more constantly in a state of ebullition than that of Genoa. Sometimes acknowledging the superiority of the Emperor, at other times accepting the domination of France, Genoa was constantly at war within itself, owing to the rival factions of the inhabitants which dominated it turn by turn. At this time Genoa was a Republic, and, under the rule of the Doge Antoniotto Adorno, it had submitted to the Imperial over-rule. Making use of a brave Genoese officer, named Cæsar Fregoso, to command the land troops, and the celebrated Genoese Admiral, Andrea Doria, Lautrec now scored another success. Both of these men were of the party opposed to the Doge, and when they invested Genoa by land and sea their friends and partisans within the city rose in their favour against the party of Charles V. The result was that Genoa surrendered to François I., and, by the will of the inhabitants, became a French Seigneury once more.

Owing to the prayers of the Pope, after these successes Lautrec hurried off to the south to help Clement, notwithstanding the supplications of the Duke of Milan to aid him to put Leyva out of that city, which he was

occupying with only a very small force. This turned out to be an unfortunate move on the part of Lautrec, as the Pope had surrendered before he was in a position to render him any assistance.

At this period there was no real head to the Imperial troops left in Rome, as the Spanish troops had risen against Philibert de Châlons, Prince of Orange, and called to Lannoy to come and command them. Orange, who had been badly wounded in the face by an arquebus shot, retired to Sienna to get cured, and wrote to the Emperor furiously against the scheming tricks by which the Viceroy of Naples had supplanted him. The Prince of Orange did not, however, long have to suffer from the rivalry of this old enemy of the Duc de Bourbon, for the troops drove Lannoy away furiously almost as soon as he came to command them. He had, however, been in Rome long enough to contract the infection of the plague, and while on his way back to Naples he was struck down by it. This long-headed and subtle member of the family of Croy died at Aversa on September 23rd, 1527, and by his death Charles lost a servant who, if self-seeking and ambitious, had nevertheless always proved himself thoroughly devoted to his master's interests.

Lannoy was replaced by Ugo de Moncada as Viceroy of Naples, and for a considerable time, although he wrote to the Emperor begging him to re-appoint the Prince of Orange, Alarcon remained the only General with even a shadow of authority over the Imperial army.

CHAPTER XXXIX

Proposed Duel between Charles and François

1528

WHILE everything had been so far *couleur de rose* for Lautrec, and Charles V. was decidedly getting so much the worst of it in Italy, Cardinal Wolsey went on a mission to France, in order to talk over matters with François I. One especial subject there was for mutual consultation, and this was the question of the divorce of Catherine of Aragon.

Nothing that has ever been seen in modern times could equal the magnificence of the Cardinal of York on this really Royal Progress. Attired in a scarlet mantle embroidered with gold, his train was carried by two gentlemen bareheaded, while twelve hundred other lords and gentlemen accompanied him on horseback. Two priests carried respectively Wolsey's seal and his Cardinal's hat. The mule upon which he rode was covered with crimson velvet, while in front of it were borne croziers and crosses of silver. He proceeded to Amiens, after having crossed England in this state, and arriving on French soil as the Minister and Lieutenant-General of Henry VIII., Wolsey received Royal honours, at the same time that, in his capacity of Papal Legate, he received the same reception that would have been accorded to the Pope. His transport train was guarded by a regiment of archers. Passing from English to French territory at Guines, the Cardinal was received with the thunderous salute of cannon everywhere on his way, while every man-

at-arms, every soldier, every Church and civic official in the country, turned out to meet the great man with waving banners and addresses of welcome.

The better to flatter the Cardinal of York, François accorded to him the Royal privilege of granting pardons to all criminals in the places he passed through, and, that nothing should be wanting to do honour to Wolsey, the King went to meet him in person.

Not only did François repair to Amiens, but he took with him his mother, Louise de Savoie, his sister Marguerite with her new husband, the King of Navarre, and the whole of the French Court in its grandest array.

While the ladies waited in the city, François rode out a couple of miles to meet the Cardinal, who was now at his apogee of greatness. The King, attired in velvet slashed with white satin, was attended by the King of Navarre, the Cardinal de Bourbon, Charles de Bourbon, Duc de Vendôme, whose son Antoine was later to marry the daughter of Marguerite, and his brother, François de Bourbon, Comte de Saint-Paul. In addition to these Princes of the Blood, the King was followed by the Maréchal Anne de Montmorency and the Sénéchal de Normandie, husband of Diane de Poitiers, and many other *grands seigneurs*.

Archbishops, Bishops, and priests there were likewise in abundance with the train of the King of France, who advanced, cap in hand, courteously to greet the son of the butcher of Ipswich, and kissed him on the cheek in the most friendly way. After this Wolsey was treated exactly as though he were the King of England, whom he represented, while the King's mother and sister did not fail to shower upon him every polite and delicate attention.

After being for some time at Amiens, the King and Court moved to Compiègne and carried the Cardinal with them. There a considerable time was devoted to entertaining Wolsey with every kind of amusement. Never in his proud career had the mighty Cardinal of York

cause to feel prouder or more pleased at the recognition of his greatness.

In the negotiations which ensued Marguerite and the King together discussed the various affairs on hand with His Eminence. The Queen of Navarre and François took particular pains to appear to be entirely guided by his advice ; but we have no doubt that it was not with much of a pang that the King resigned the hand of the eleven-year-old Princess Mary. Upon this point Wolsey very wisely suggested that, as the Emperor still held the King's sons captive, it would be wiser, if possible, to arrange a peace than to continue the war ; for, as he pointed out, even after the war had been fought, no matter how successfully, there would still remain the question of paying a ransom for the two Princes.

“Better not, therefore, marry the Princess Mary,” said the Cardinal. “Peace and the restoration of your children will be much more difficult to arrange if you do, as the Emperor will be horribly offended if you break off your marriage contracted at Madrid with the Queen Éléonore.”

In the end it was therefore agreed between them that as soon as the Duc d'Orléans and the Princess Mary should arrive at a marriageable age, they should be made man and wife. In order the better to arrange the divorce of Henry VIII., the three negotiators agreed that for so long as the Pope should remain a captive, and under the Emperor's influence, any Bulls of his or the ordinances of any General Council he might assemble, should be disregarded. The Churches of France and England were to be administered by their own dignitaries, while any judgments delivered by Wolsey in his own Court as Legate and Archbishop should hold good, even if forbidden by the Pope. This meant, of course, that Wolsey himself was to give a dispensation of divorce, and that France would recognise it. To end up with, Wolsey endeavoured to have himself declared Vicar General of the whole Christian Church, and to cause all the Cardinals to assemble under him in France. This

subtle move was, however, defeated, owing to the foresight of the captive Clement, who, for fear that the Cardinals might assemble elsewhere to depose him and elect a successor, had ordered those not confined with him in Sant' Angelo not to leave Italy. As there were, it will be remembered, no less than thirteen Cardinals shut up in Sant' Angelo, and a number of others in Rome, it was impossible for an assembly of the Cardinals to take place under Cardinal Wolsey in France.

After the Cardinal of York had taken his departure, François sent a return mission to England, which was on an equally grand scale to that of Wolsey to Amiens. Headed by the "Grand Master," Anne de Montmorency, there were six hundred noblemen and gentlemen attached to this Embassy. To conclude these courtesies, while Henry VIII. sent the Garter to François, this latter sent the collar of the Order of Saint Michael to the English King.

When Charles V. heard of all these mutual courtesies between France and England he was excessively angry. Accordingly, when his brother Ferdinand wrote to him begging him, in the interests of Germany and Hungary, to conclude a peace, the Emperor replied, with dogged determination, that he would do nothing of the sort, but that he was resolved, with the aid of God, to upset the plans of the King of France, and to defend himself. Far from giving in, he raised troops in Germany, appointed the Prince of Orange to the command of the leaderless troops in Rome, and prepared for all emergencies, even to the extent of raising, by all kinds of expedients, the money which his Cortes refused in order to pay his soldiers.

These were now playfully threatening to burn Rome, to strangle the hostage Cardinals, whom they were dragging round chained together, and finally to quit the Emperor's service.

Fortunately for the unfortunate hostages, the soldier-Cardinal Pompeo Colonna, in whose palace they were

kept, was very popular with the troops. One day, after they had been taken and placed on the scaffold of the gallows, Colonna contrived to obtain the respite of the hostages, on their promising to pay the army on the morrow all that was demanded—or else to die as forfeit. That evening Cardinal Colonna gave a great dinner to the guards of those unhappy men. So great and so pressing was his hospitality, that before the morning every one of them was dead drunk. By the time that they had recovered their senses, next day, it vaguely dawned upon them that the hostages were not where they had left them on the previous evening—they had got clear away, and were not recaptured.

About this time François I. contrived, by specious talking, to obtain a large sum of money from the Parliaments, the nobles, and the Gallican Church. In order to do so, he was compelled to make an infamous bargain with the clergy, one which almost broke the tender heart of his sister Marguerite. This was to promise to extirpate utterly the Lutheran heresy throughout the Kingdom.

Having obtained this money, at the beginning of 1528, François and Henry—after vainly demanding from Charles the liberty of the Dauphin and the Duc d'Orléans, and the re-establishment of Francesco Sforza in all his rights in Milan—took an extraordinary course. This was to send their respective Heralds, Guyenne and Clarendieux, King-at-Arms, to Spain, to make a formal declaration of war to the Emperor.

Charles V., seated upon his throne, received these Heralds in great State. After each making three deep reverences, the Heralds, at the foot of the throne, donned their tabards, bearing the arms of France and England respectively, and then demanded permission to deliver their messages.

The Emperor replied courteously that they could do so, and would receive no hurt or displeasure in his dominions. Guyenne spoke first, and, on behalf of the King of France, accused the Emperor of tyrannical con-

duct, of bloodshed, and impious conduct to the Pope. To him also was imputed the progress which the Turks were making in Europe. He terminated an accusatory address, to which Charles listened with patience, by declaring that the Very Christian King would attack and injure the Emperor and his subjects everywhere throughout his territories.

Charles, in his reply, very naturally expressed surprise that he should be thus defied, after a state of warfare had already existed for six or seven years, by a King who, according to his pledged words, ought now to be his prisoner. He added that he would defend himself in the future as in the past, and was not afraid of the menaces of the Very Christian King. As for the Pope, he continued, he was very sorry for what had happened to him at the hands of mutinous troops; moreover, he mentioned that he had learned for certain, on the previous day, that the Pope had been set at liberty.

In making this reply, Charles combined haughtiness with dignity; but it must be conceded that, seeing how he had been lied to and defrauded by François in the matter of the cession of Burgundy, his language was moderate and reasonable. He had not, however, done yet with the Herald Guyenne, but before unburdening his mind to him, the Emperor listened to what the Herald of Henry VIII. had to say.

The defiance of Clarenieux, King-at-Arms, was founded principally upon the evil done to Christianity by the progress made by the Grand Turk, who had recently, after a long siege, taken the island of Rhodes, considered as the bulwark of Christendom, from the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem. After severely finding fault with the Emperor for the sack of Rome, Clarenieux complained that Henry VIII. was unable to recover from Charles the large sums which had been advanced to him from time to time. After this, the Herald declared that, by force of arms, the King of England would compel him to release the Pope, and likewise the two Children of France in return for a reasonable ransom.

Charles answered the English Herald firmly, but without the haughtiness he had shown in replying to Guyenne. He said that the English King could never make him give up the Children of France by force, for he was not accustomed to being forced to do anything. With reference to his debts, he did not deny that he owed his uncle money, and he was ready to pay it ; he could not therefore understand why Henry should wish to make war upon him for that which he did not refuse. The Emperor ended up by saying, "If, nevertheless, he will make war upon me, he will displease me and I shall defend myself ; but I have given him no occasion to do so."

Having thus disposed of Clarencieux, Charles now sent for Guyenne back again, to speak to him in a very different tone to that which he had just employed.

"I have an idea," said the Emperor, "that there is something which I said about your master to his Ambassador Calvimont at Granada which has not been repeated to him. Otherwise I hold him gentle Prince enough to have taken it up and replied. I will now repeat my words to you, and be good enough not to forget to deliver them to the King of France."

In the most insulting and offensive language, Charles then expressed to Guyenne the low opinion that he held of François I. as he had previously delivered it to Calvimont, the President of the Parliament of Bordeaux, who had taken very good care not to repeat it. So that there might be no possible mistake this time, Charles V. now wrote to Calvimont the following challenge to a personal combat with the King of France.

"I told you that the King, your master, had behaved in a cowardly and base manner not to have kept his faith with me according to the Treaty of Madrid, and, if he should choose to say the contrary, that I was ready to maintain it with my body against his. These are the same words which I made use of to the King your master at Madrid—that I should hold him as a coward and bae if he should fail in the vow which I hold of him. In

repeating them I keep my promise better to him than he does his to me. I have written it for you, and signed it with my own hand, in order that from this time forth neither you nor any one else can make any mistake about it."

Having delivered this letter for the Ambassador Calvimont over into the keeping of Guyenne, Charles V. allowed both of the Heralds to take their departure.

The Emperor's insults had been delivered openly before all his Court, and Calvimont had now no choice but to make known to François what had been written to him, and also spoken in the presence of the Heralds of France and England.

The reply of the King took the shape of insult, and a challenge of the Emperor to a duel. In the presence of all his Princes and nobles, François addressed Nicolas Perrenot, Seigneur de Granvelle, the Emperor's Ambassador. After some preliminary abuse of the bad manners of Charles, he remarked sarcastically that as for the Emperor expressing surprise that he, his prisoner of war, who had given his faith, should send him defiance, he would like to know in what war the Emperor had ever been to take him prisoner? He had never seen him on any battle-field! Having continued by calling Charles V. dishonourable for demanding a promise from him while he was guarded by arquebus-men in prison, François insisted that under such circumstances no prisoner had any faith to give, nor was able to make any promises that would be valid.

The King then handed a cartel of defiance to the Ambassador, in the shape of a letter full of insults, which he requested him to first read and then deliver to his master. The wording of this letter was most wounding, and Granvelle refused to read it or take it. He asked permission to retire, but François called one of his Secretaries of State to read it aloud in the presence of all. It ended with a challenge. The challenge to a duel of an Emperor by a King is an unusual event, and that with which François terminated his letter to Charles is

accordingly worth recording. By it the French King cunningly hoped to stop his rival's mouth, and prevent him from henceforward saying things openly which would prove that it was, of the two, François alone who had acted in a dishonourable manner. The wording of this challenge was as follows : "If you have chosen to charge us with having done a thing which a gentleman caring for his honour should not do, we tell you that you have lied in your throat, and as often as you may say it you will lie, we being determined to defend our honour with our life. Therefore safeguard the camp, and we will carry arms against you, protesting that, if after this declaration you should write or say words that are against our honour, the shame of the delay of the combat will be yours, seeing that in resorting to the said combat there is an end of all letter-writings."

This cartel of defiance given by François may have been all very well in its way, and have convinced him personally that he was a very fine fellow. But no one else was deceived ; the whole world knew the facts, and upon which side lay the right. Moreover, it must be remembered that, after all, it was Charles, the offended party, who gave the first challenge, since he it was who had offered, both through Calvimont and Guyenne, to meet the Very Christian King, body to body, if he did not like being told the plain truth concerning the dishonourable manner in which he had behaved.

Charles V. was, if less of a braggart, personally every whit as brave as his rival, with whom he was perfectly ready to fight the matter out as might any other two Knights in their respective domains. He did not intend, however, to be muzzled before having in advance shown the world plainly the justice of his cause, as François was anxious that he should be.

When the Herald Guyenne brought the Emperor the cartel, it was received openly by Charles in his Court. While remarking scornfully that he would satisfy the sender and keep his honour, he added, "The King your master will not find it easy to do the same."

Proposed Duel between Charles and François 355

In his reply to the French King's cartel, which the Emperor had caused to be publicly read, Charles accepted the duel, but was careful to justify himself and to repeat the accusations against the honour of François which he had previously made.

He requested François to fight at once, on the borders of Navarre and Spain.

CHAPTER XL

Pride comes before a Fall

1528—1529

IF, after these challenges given and received, the world was, after all, deprived of the sensation of a hand-to-hand combat between the two most powerful Monarchs in Christendom, it was not the fault of Charles V.

After the Royal couple had thus descended from rivalry to personal abuse, the Emperor was, he declared, most anxious for a duel, which might by its result put an end to the war and stop the endless effusion of blood.

Whereas, however, he had allowed the Herald Guyenne, without let or hindrance, to enter Spain with the French King's offensive cartel, François showed no such courtesy to the Herald-at-Arms Bourgogne, who was charged by Charles with his biting reply, and ordered to read it aloud before delivering it. It was very evident that François did not wish to be reminded of the fact of his broken word of honour pledged to Lannoy, nor to be told that "to pretend that every man guarded could not pledge his faith, or accept any obligations, was the argument of a badly brought up lawyer's clerk, and not that of a King, a Knight, or a gentleman."

François was indeed determined not to hear himself accused in the presence of his Court, and accordingly it was only with considerable difficulty that Bourgogne contrived to enter France, after having to wait six weeks at Fontarabia for a safe-conduct. He was again detained at Bayonne, and when he eventually reached Étampes, where François was amusing himself stag-hunting, the King

kept out of his way, after leaving him waiting for many days.

At length, in the autumn of 1528, Bourgogne was allowed to enter Paris, but treated with indignity. He was not allowed to put on his tabard with the coat-of-arms of the Emperor, and was lodged in a convent under a guard of archers.

It must be confessed that Charles V. was, if judging only by this behaviour on the part of François, perfectly justified in saying that he acted neither as a Knight nor a gentleman. Worse was to come. Admitted at last to the King's presence, François commenced to browbeat the Herald and would not hear him speak, only demanding from him in a bullying tone if he had brought the patent for "the safeguarding of the camp," saying that that was all that concerned him, that he had no occasion to speak about anything else.

Bourgogne was not allowed to read the cartel; and, when he wished to comply with the Emperor's orders on that matter, François sprang from his seat and shouted at him furiously, saying that he would not allow any of the Emperor's hypocritical tricks to be introduced into his Kingdom.

Montmorency, the Grand Master of France, had better manners, and more respect for the laws of chivalry than his master; he begged the King to allow the Emperor's King-at-Arms to speak. The only reply was a fierce one. "No, no; I will not allow him unless I hold the assurance of the camp, without which," he said, turning to Bourgogne, "you can be off, and do not add a word."

Bourgogne was a plucky fellow, and stood his ground well. He again demanded of the King his permission to hand to him the Emperor's cartel, or, if he should refuse to accept it, to give him a written statement to that effect, and also a safe-conduct to return to Spain.

"Let him have his safe-conduct," shouted François, jumping from his throne once more in his rage.

The Imperial King-at-Arms made yet another attempt to deliver the Emperor's cartel, but, after being refused

an audience, had to leave. This bold Burgundian Herald, of the name of Bourgogne, which name probably reminded François unpleasantly of his broken oath, would not depart from France, however, without publicly declaring that the safeguard of the camp of combat was contained within the Emperor's cartel, and that Charles V. would publish everywhere that the King of France had refused to receive the acceptance of his challenge to mortal combat.

Upon the return of the King-at-Arms to Spain, Charles laid the whole circumstances of the case before a Court of Honour of the Supreme Council of Castile.

This Council decided that the Emperor had behaved in an honourable manner, becoming a Knight, but that the King of France had behaved neither as a Knight nor as a gentleman, and, by refusing to allow the King-at-Arms to fulfil his mission, had evidently declined to accept "the field and the combat." This decision, the Council declared, should be made known to all the *grandees* of Spain, and to all the Captains of the Emperor's armies.

Charles accordingly published the facts everywhere, and at the same time disclaimed all responsibility for the war about to break out. While the Emperor's manifesto reached all parts of Europe, François remained silent, for he had nothing to say. He had evidently had the worst of the dispute, which had become a merely personal quarrel between the two Monarchs.

The stinging remark of François—"He says that he took me in battle; I do not remember ever to have met him in one"—filled the Emperor with rage. Not being able to avenge himself with sword and lance upon the body of the man who made it, Charles took his revenge upon those Frenchmen whom he had in his power—the attendants of the two young captive Princes. With unheard-of barbarity, these innocent French subjects, who had been taken in no battle, were torn from the Princes and sent to be chained to the oar in the Spanish galleys. Shortly afterwards, so that all trace of them might be lost, they were sold as slaves to the Moors of

Barbary. The Dauphin and the Duc d'Orléans, henceforth confined in a dark and melancholy dungeon, now never heard a word of French ; they forgot their mother-tongue, and when allowed subsequently to be visited by Bordin, an envoy from France, the children were compelled to request him to speak in Spanish, as they could not understand what he said.

The revenge which the Emperor thus took upon the children whose father had so selfishly abandoned them two years earlier, bore bitter fruit. The boys changed in character, and the effects of the imprisonment in the mountain fortress of Pedraza were such that the constitution of François the Dauphin was undermined, and he died young.

The other, Henri, afterwards King of France, became gloomy and violent by nature. None of the brightness and *bonhomie*, the cleverness of tongue and attractiveness of manner of François I., were ever apparent in Henri II.

The Pope Clement VII., once more at liberty, had had a good scare, but still he could not go straight—it was not in him. He therefore only kept half of the promises made to Charles whereby he had obtained his freedom. His ransom was only partly paid, he never handed over the fortress of Civita Castellana, and he secretly helped Lautrec on his march towards the south. On one point, however, he showed his cautious cunning ; he openly refused to re-enter the Holy League of Cognac ; his fear of the Emperor was too great. He was, moreover, furious with the Venetians, who had taken advantage of his troubles to help themselves to his places of Ravenna and Cervia, frantic with Alfonso d' Este, Duke of Ferrara, who had annexed Modena, and raging against the Florentines, who had bundled the Medici neck and crop out of his dearly beloved natal city.

It was, above all, with the hope that François I. would, if victorious, help him to recover Florence that the deceitful Clement, at peace with Charles V., assisted Lautrec's army with plentiful supplies of provisions on its march to Naples.

In this kingdom, where the remains of the old party of Anjou were still strong, Odet de Foix found himself well welcomed, as a liberator from Spain—the towns opened their gates to him everywhere.

The Prince of Orange at last, with great difficulty, having persuaded the remaining eleven thousand soldiers of the Imperial army to follow him from Rome, marched off likewise to the Kingdom of Naples, and entrenched himself at Troja. He had left all his cannons behind him with the Colonna, and Lautrec, with his splendid army of twenty-eight thousand men—Germans, Swiss, Saxons, and Italians—behind him, had but to attack to wipe the Imperialists from the face of the earth.

While the Swiss, panting for the combat, kissed the ground according to their custom, while the remainder of his troops, full of ardour, shouted "Battle! Battle!" Lautrec advanced upon the enemy. He ordered the engagement to be commenced by artillery fire, and then!—and then he might as well, from his conduct, have been the Duke of Urbino, for he ordered his astonished army to retire.

By this extraordinary and inexplicable conduct the Maréchal de Lautrec lost not the Kingdom of Naples only, but the whole of Italy. He could have finished off the pretensions of Charles V. in Italy at one blow, and for some unknown reason he refused to strike that blow!

His captains were simply furious, and, since even an impartial chronicler is apt to share their feelings of disgust, we will say as little as possible concerning the closing days of the career of this usually daring if often effete commander. Orange was now able to enter the city of Naples by a night march, while Odet de Foix was foolishly waiting for the Florentine Black Bands to join him before attacking. The remaining two and a half months of Lautrec's life were passed in a furious and obstinate attempt to capture that city. He sat down before the walls, while the famous sea-captain Andrea Doria, and his nephew Philippino Doria, blocked the bay of Naples

with their Genoese ships. It was on May 1st, 1528, that Lautrec began the siege. Shortly before this, Philippino Doria had fought a bloody naval battle off the coast with the fleet of Charles V., commanded by that old sea-dog Ugo de Moncada, now Viceroy of Naples.

This proved a complete victory for the French cause, the principal event in the battle being a terrific duel between the flagship upon which was Philippino and that upon which Moncada had hoisted his flag.

Moncada was killed, and likewise the Grand Equerry, Cesare Feramosca, while all the other Imperial captains were taken prisoners. Among these was one of the Colonna, Ascanio, who was the Constable of Naples, and the Marquis del Vasto, who will be remembered as having refused to follow Bourbon in his march to Rome.

These captures had a serious effect upon the cause of François I., who, in his greed for the ransoms of the Imperialist captains, demanded of Andrea Doria to hand the captives over to him, which the Admiral flatly refused to do. Since François had last become Over-lord of Genoa he had already foolishly contrived to wound the feelings of the Genoese, and to irritate the valiant Doria, by endeavouring to make a rival of Genoa out of the neighbouring city of Savona. In spite of the patriotic Doria's protestations, the French had continued to erect fortifications at Savona, to draw ships to the port, and to establish there the salt-market of the Mediterranean, which had hitherto been held at Genoa.

Carrying his folly further, when Doria refused to deliver over the captives, by the advice of Du Prat, François sent a French Admiral named Barbesieux to command his Mediterranean fleet, and further decided to cause Admiral Barbesieux to arrest Admiral Doria. Hearing of this, the Maréchal de Lautrec sent a noble named de Langey as a special messenger to the King, to beg him on no account to make such a mistake. Langey saw Doria, whom he knew well, on his way, and took

from the mouth of the old sailor the sole conditions upon which he would renew his services under the King of France. His time of engagement was then almost at an end, and Doria sent an eloquent appeal to François on behalf of the rights of Genoa as opposed to those of Savona, which latter city, he represented, should be placed under the obedience of the former. This appeal was not listened to, but Barbesieux instructed to go ahead and make a prisoner of Andrea Doria, and to take from him by force all the Imperialist captives. It was not, however, an easy matter to capture an old warrior like this, one whose name had long been famous in the Mediterranean. He ran with his prisoners under the protection of a fortified castle in the Gulf of Spezzia, and waited there securely until his term of service under François should have expired.

In the meantime the Prince of Orange, fighting for his life in the beleaguered city of Naples, learned, while treating with the Count Philippino for the ransom of certain prisoners, what was taking place. He was clever enough to write off to Charles in Spain and point out to him how desirable it would be to win Doria over to his cause, and in order to do so, advised Charles to refuse nothing that he might demand.

The Emperor for once acted promptly on this excellent advice, and promised Andrea Doria the entire liberty of Genoa as a Republic, and sixty thousand crowns a year for himself, if he would join him with his fleet.

When it was too late, François repented his folly, and employed Clement VII. to try and make up his quarrel for him with Doria. He had, however, no success in his efforts; the offended Genoese would listen to no apologies and accept no offers from France, but went over to the Emperor.

François, who was hunting and building a palace at Fontainebleau, had just been congratulating himself on his good luck when this bad news arrived.

The Duke of Brunswick, with an army of Germans and Antonio da Leyva, had just been utterly defeated

before Lodi by the bastard brother of the Duke Sforza, and a new French army under François de Bourbon, Comte de Saint-Paul, had arrived in Lombardy. Lautrec had likewise been reinforced by troops taken to Naples by Admiral Barbesieux. Thus all indeed seemed to be going well for France. François, who had been ill but had recovered, wrote accordingly in a tone of jubilation to Montmorency :

“ My affairs all go well, and will soon go better, please God ! I have, my dear Cousin, always heard it said that strength crowns reason, and I leave it to you to consider what an astonishment it will be to my enemies, while themselves weakening daily, to see my strength and prosperity constantly increasing.”

But pride comes before a fall, and François, by his own ill-advised action, was now to find this out. Doria with his ships soon revictualled the starving garrison of Naples, Odet de Foix lost three quarters of his men by plague, and, refusing to move away from before the walls of Naples, died himself. The remainder of the unhappy Lautrec's men, under the Marquis de Saluces, who was killed, were taken prisoners by Orange. The famous Pedro Navarro, that faithful servant of France, died at the same time. The combined French and Venetian fleets were dispersed by Andrea Doria, and Genoa and all Liguria were lost to France. Doria was now created Prince of Melfi by Charles V. and hailed by the Genoese as “ Saviour of the State and Father of his Country.”

The fate of the war in Italy and the League of Cognac was still more definitely decided in the following spring, that of 1529. Then the Duke of Urbino, the Comte de Saint-Paul, and Francesco Sforza combined to take Milan from, the hero of the defence of Pavia, the ferocious Antonio da Leyva ; their project being not to assault the city, but to try to starve the Imperialists out.

Saint-Paul, who was a Bourbon, and as such an adventurous spirit, soon found this plan, suggested by the timidity of Urbino, not sufficiently exciting. Hearing that Doria had sailed from Genoa to see Charles V. in

Spain, he devised a scheme of his own which might prove more interesting. He started off to attack Genoa with his French, German, and Italian troops, leaving Urbino and Sforza to continue the blockade of Milan.

Having, however, taken his measures without secrecy, Saint-Paul proved himself no match for that really excellent soldier, Leyva—a man who differed vastly from the unfortunate Lautrec in that he never failed to seize an opportunity. Causing himself to be carried in a litter on account of severe sickness, the bold Leyva issued with most of his forces from Milan in the night-time. He followed Saint-Paul, and fell upon his scattered troops furiously, by surprise. The Comte was without his cavalry, which had gone ahead, but, dismounting, he fought vigorously on foot for a long time. At length his Germans and Italians broke and ran. Remounting, Saint-Paul endeavoured to jump a small canal, but his horse falling with him, he and the greater number of his officers were captured. The Italians, French, and Germans fled in all directions, and Lombardy was left at the mercy of the Imperialists.

In this manner was the Emperor left victorious in both north and south, and the hopes of François I. in Italy completely dissipated.

CHAPTER XLI

Marguerite of Austria makes a Peace

1529

THE wheel of fortune had turned in earnest, and Charles had been hoisted from the bottom of the ladder to the top. If he did not now become the tyrant of the whole of Europe, it was owing to two powerful influences, those of Soliman, the Grand Turk, and the Emperor's aunt, the Archduchess Marguerite. Already, owing to the outcry of the merchants of London, whose trade was being interfered with, Henry VIII., dragging France behind him in the bargain, had made a truce with the Governess of the Netherlands. The scene of war was therefore confined to the north of Italy, where François in desperation still clung on to Asti and one or two other places. Louise de Savoie, taking advantage of the messengers of Marguerite being in France, began to send friendly messages to that Princess, saying how deeply hurt she had been at the insulting letters sent by the Emperor to her son, and asking Marguerite if she did not think it about time that these old insults were wiped off the slate and hands shaken all round.

The Emperor's aunt was very much of that way of thinking; but while the principal cause of the desire of the Duchesse d'Angoulême for peace was the recovery of her imprisoned grandchildren, Marguerite had another reason.

This was the alarming progress of the Turks in Europe. After overrunning Hungary, they had even entered Austria and were about to besiege Vienna, and for long

past the Archduke Ferdinand had been writing pitiful letters to his aunt, representing his extreme danger unless, to save Austria and Germany, the Christian Powers would make peace and combine against the mighty Turkish hosts.

Ever since, just after the battle of Pavia, François I. had sent his ring to the Sultan, there had continued to be friendly relations between the Very Christian King and the Infidels of the Ottoman Empire. At this time, with Austria thus gripped by the throat, François had a splendid opportunity of profiting by this friendship, and turning it into an active offensive and defensive alliance, by which Austria would be annihilated.

Although Charles, taken up with his rivalry with François, had paid but little attention to his brother's cries for assistance, there was every reason why he should do so. For a double marriage-tie connected him with Hungary and Bohemia. His youngest sister, Marie, by her marriage with the young King Louis II., had become the Queen of those countries, while his brother Ferdinand had married Anne, daughter of the late King of Hungary, the Pole Vladislav II., and the sister of Louis II.

Great misfortunes had now come upon the youthful Queen Marie, who, having formerly lived at Malines with the Archduchess Marguerite, at her palace called La Cour de Cambray, was very dear to her aunt.

The Turks having overrun and devastated Hungary, there were two Kings of that country, one being Louis and the other the Transylvanian John Zapolya.

The march of Soliman having been irresistible, he had seized the sacred crown of Saint Stephen and, a great number of Hungarian magnates, out of their hatred to Austria, having sworn fealty to Turkey, had determined to crown with it a King who should be his vassal.

By the favour of, Soliman's talented favourite and Grand Vizier, the renegade Greek Ibrahim of Parga, and also by that of the Doge Gritti of Venice, who was on good terms with the Sultan, as he paid him a large tribute, Zapolya was made the Turkish vassal King, in opposition to

Louis, who was the King elected by the Hungarian hero Batthori and those of the German party. Each king ruled a part of Hungary. Thus, whereas in the fifteenth century that country had been united, in the sixteenth three quarters of Hungary were in the hands of the Turks, and at this time ruled by Zapolya, while a narrow strip to the north remained under Austrian influences.

The country being thus divided against itself, the task became an easier one when, forced by his warlike and unruly Janissaries into further aggressive operations, Soliman advanced against the young King Louis in 1526.

The Ottoman army—which was well supplied with artillery, whereas their opponents had none—met the Hungarians near the marshes of Mohacz. The Transylvanians, who had formed a party of their own, failed to give Louis any assistance.

The Hungarians behaved, however, with splendid valour. Although greatly inferior in numbers, with the bold Louis at their head, their horsemen hurled themselves against the mighty Ottoman host. As Hannibal treated the Romans at the battle of Cannæ, so did the Turks now behave to the brave Hungarians. After these, with their King still leading, had actually fought their way through to the guns and were cutting down the gunners, the wings of the Turkish army wheeled up and engulfed the assailants.

The Janissaries fell upon them in rear, and hamstrung the horses. Some, however, and Louis among them, won their way through, only to plunge into bottomless morasses, where they were swallowed up with their horses and lost. After this fatal battle for Hungary, the Turks returned to their own country, dragging behind them three hundred thousand of the inhabitants of the country, the greater number of whom were women and children, to become their slaves and replenish the harems.

Zapolya, who had just been crowned, was an eye-witness of this terrible leading into captivity of his people. Realising his hopeless position, should the arms of the Emperor be turned against him, he now sought to consolidate his

alliance with the Sultan, which he succeeded in doing through the good offices of a bastard son of Gritti, the Doge of Venice, and also to obtain the support of France.

To François he sent as envoy, that extraordinary man, the corpulent Spanish Captain Rincon, a brave and capable individual, who, in spite of his unwieldy bulk, was for years to be seen travelling Europe from one end to the other as the emissary of Kings. To François, Rincon proposed that his second son, the Duc d'Orléans, should become the heir to the throne of Zapolya. In order that the interests of the House of Poland might be recognised, the French Prince was to marry a Polish Princess, the second daughter of King Sigismond. To this arrangement François readily agreed. He promised to help Zapolya with money, and become the ally of the Sultan, to whom King Zapolya gave homage.

Less than three years later than this, the mighty Soliman was found before Vienna, besieging that city. Charles had by this time contrived to send a few good Spanish troops, but it was chiefly owing to the terribly wet weather, which prevented him from bringing up his heavy siege guns, that the Sultan was for the time compelled to retreat. Of the fact that he would return later, possibly to wipe out Austria and then invade the Emperor's German dominions, there seemed to be no kind of a doubt.

The Archduke Ferdinand, as the husband of Anne, the sister of the unhappy King Louis, had in the meantime contrived to procure his election to the throne of Hungary, left vacant by the death of his brother-in-law.

In order to obtain his election, Ferdinand made specious promises to the Hungarians, which he never kept; and in this manner was the Crown of Hungary first annexed by the House of Habsburg.

When Charles learned of the election of his brother, he wrote to thank the countries of Hungary and Bohemia, while vowing to expend all his treasures and blood in their defence. It was chiefly this letter which caused the alarm of, Ferdinand's rival, King Zapolya. He need not, how-

ever, have been frightened, for every ducat of the Emperor had already gone in Italy.

From the above facts it is easy for us to look at the situation as it was viewed by the Archduchess Marguerite when Louise de Savoie, without any reference to her son, first began making friendly overtures to her. That very clever woman Marguerite, who was always so capable of grasping a situation clearly, perfectly understood that, although François had been defeated by land in Italy, and, owing to the loss of the services of Doria, likewise had lost the command of the Mediterranean, he still had behind him the immense power of the Turk to call to his assistance. She also knew that there still existed the large Venetian force under the Duke of Urbino, to which there remained attached the odds and ends of some of the smaller states of Italy, including the forces of Sforza. Given another commander than Urbino, these troops of the League, which had not been wasted by too much fighting, might become valuable allies to François I. The Papal forces might likewise again have to be reckoned with, for Marguerite was wise enough to be convinced of the truth, that the miserable Clement was still keeping in with the Holy League, while pretending to have made up his differences with her nephew, Charles V.

With a woman like Marguerite of Austria, to see a way in which she could get ahead of the France that she detested was to follow it. Without a moment's hesitation she promised to Louise de Savoie her good offices as intermediary in the cause of peace, and at the same time asked her to send to her at Brussels the terms that she proposed.

Having received these, Marguerite went through them clause by clause, cut out anything to which she objected, introduced new clauses of her own, then sent off the draft of the proposed treaty to Spain.

Marguerite wrote at the same time shrewdly to her nephew, insisting that he should agree to the terms proposed, which did not, however, include the cession of that bone of contention, Burgundy. She urged that, if the

Emperor really wished to protect his brother Ferdinand from the Turk, now was his opportunity, and added that François I. would be hopelessly crippled for a long time to come by the ransom he would have to pay for his sons' liberty.

By a stroke of the pen, so Marguerite pointed out, Charles could deprive François of all his allies at the same time that, with the large sum that he would extract from his rival, he would be able to make a Royal armed progress into Italy, and compel the Pope to crown him with the Imperial Crown. His aunt added that he would further have all the old Italian allies of François by the throat, and, that, after treating Italy to a taste of his power, he could proceed to Germany, there to crush the Lutheran heresies, and re-establish his authority over the Empire.

To crown all, by the terms which Marguerite proposed to the Emperor that he should accept, she begged him to notice that he would have the satisfaction of causing his rival to escort him with his ships of war from Spain to Italy.

With the admirably drawn-up dispositions of his aunt in his hand, Charles was far too long-headed not to realise how good was her advice, and to see upon which side lay his advantage.

The Emperor accordingly wrote back to his aunt, giving her full powers to treat for peace personally with Louise de Savoie ; but upon two points he told her to insist most emphatically. These were that François should abandon Italy entirely before his hostage sons would be returned, and that he should also be base enough to enforce the delivery to Charles by his allies the Venetians of all the places which they had captured and still held on the coasts of the Kingdom of Naples.

Having received the Emperor's instructions, which were entirely in accordance with her own views, the able daughter of the Emperor Maximilian wrote a charming letter of invitation to Louise de Savoie, to come and meet her in a friendly way at Cambray, a border city between France and the Low Countries. The proposed conference

between the two ladies was arranged for the end of June 1529, but at the same time the Emperor was getting ready an army and a fleet of Spanish and Genoese ships at Barcelona, with which to proceed in person to Italy.

Hearing something of what was in the wind, and feeling very uncomfortable concerning the uses to which the Emperor might be about to put this fleet and army, the unstable Pope now definitely cut himself adrift from his allies, and sent to make a treaty of friendship with Charles.

Since it suited him admirably to go to Italy as the Pope's friend rather than his enemy, Charles met Clement VII. half-way, and promised to make the Venetians and the Duke of Ferrara respectively return to him all the places that he claimed. Also, to the great delight of the Pope, he promised to upset the recently established Republic in Florence, and to restore the Medici family as rulers in that city. In his joy at this cheerful news, Clement VII. undertook to give the Emperor the definite investiture of the Kingdom of Naples, always claimed by France, and further solemnly to crown Charles V. with the Imperial Crown.

The untrustworthy François, with a view to possible eventualities, was at this same time raising a new army; and in order to reassure his terrified allies, who were justly afraid that they were about to be left in the lurch, declared that he was about once more to cross the Alps and continue the war.

In spite of this pretence, the two Princesses who were to discuss the terms of peace duly met at Cambray, at the beginning of July 1529. Although Marguerite had been warned not to go to that place without a large force, for fear that the King of France might make her a prisoner, she replied that she would not take an armed man with her, as she was merely going on a mission of peace, but that if any of her people were afraid to accompany her they could stop at home.

After the manner in which François I. had failed to keep his word to her nephew the Emperor, in acting thus the Archduchess certainly displayed considerable courage.

She had, however, confidence in the word of the Queen-mother, who had written to her saying that she loved her extremely, and that there was nothing she desired so much as to see "her sister." It will be remembered that Louise de Savoie and Marguerite had been very good friends in their childish days at the Court of France, and, moreover, the Archduchess was perfectly well aware that the Duchesse d'Angoulême was far too anxious to recover her grandchildren from the revengeful Emperor's power not to ensure her perfect safety. Before the meeting, Marguerite had expressed her fears lest Henry VIII. might do something to mar the negotiations. Louise, however, had sent her back word to the effect that the King of England, being her son's ally, had sent her full powers to treat in his name as well as that of the King of France.

While Marguerite of Austria took up her quarters in an Abbey at Cambrai, Louise, accompanied by the Queen of Navarre, lodged in a mansion close by. In order to be able to meet more freely, the Princesses had these dwellings connected by a covered gallery.

After four weeks of acrimonious discussions, the Peace of Cambrai, otherwise called The Ladies' Peace, was signed and proclaimed upon July 31st, 1529. By it Marguerite gained all for which she had contended, while France was humiliated in the dust at her feet.

CHAPTER XLII

The Emperor is Crowned Gloriously

1530

WHILE his mother had been at Cambray making this infamous treaty for him, François had been enjoying the pleasures of the chase not very far away. He ratified it on August 7th, 1529, and in so doing covered himself with even more shame than he had previously done when he broke his word of honour pledged to the Emperor "as a King, as a Knight, and as a gentleman."

Let us see to what infamy the knightly King of France had committed himself. He renounced his friends Robert de La Marck, the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, and his son the Seigneur de Fleuranges. He deserted Charles d'Egmont, Duc de Gueldre, who, on his own account, had, after he had been made a prisoner at Pavia, been the first to draw the sword on his behalf, and, invading Marguerite in the Low Countries, terrified her into making a truce. Gueldre was now compelled to bow his stubborn neck before Charles—to become a vassal of the Emperor.

Although his sister, the Queen of Navarre, who loved François so devotedly, had personally assisted her mother in struggling for his interests at the conference at Cambray, he had not made a single stipulation on her behalf or that of her husband, who had been defrauded of his kingdom owing to his father's loyalty to France. He promised not to interfere any more in Italy, nor to inter-

vene on behalf of the Lutherans in Germany, who had been looking to him for protection. He even menaced the Lutherans, and threatened likewise, his avowed friend, the Sultan Soliman. He renounced both Milan and Naples for ever. He promised that he would compel the Florentines to submit to the Emperor within four months, and that he would compel Venice to yield up places which she had held for the last sixty years. On behalf of Francesco Sforza, who had been fighting with him as an ally, the King did not say a single word, nor did he make any bargain on behalf of the nobles of the Angevin party in Naples, who had compromised themselves by assisting Lautrec. They were now, in consequence, cruelly imprisoned and beheaded by the Spaniards. On account of his ally, the King of England, he likewise said nothing. The Princess Renée, daughter of Louis XII., his sister-in-law, had, after being so often promised, at last found a mate in Italy. She had just been given in marriage to Alfonso d'Este, Duke of Ferrara. It might well have been imagined that François would have instructed his mother to make some effort on behalf of this ally and brother-in-law. Far from it, however, d'Este was left to throw himself upon the clemency of the Emperor. Thus the so-called Ladies' Peace was a mere catalogue of desertions.

The gains to François were that his sons were to be restored to him, and that he was not compelled to give up Burgundy ; but the moral loss to the name and prestige of the King was infinitely greater than the material gain. For the ransom of his sons he was bound to pay two million golden crowns, which would be about the equivalent of seventy million francs in France to-day. Nor was this all ; in addition to lending his ships to the triumphant Charles, François had the pleasure of paying up another sum of a hundred thousand crowns for the expenses of his rival's journey into Italy.

The wily Governess of the Low Countries had not forgotten to cajole the King's mother at Cambray with some tempting promises, whereby it would seem that

after all, Milan might possibly revert to France. She had held out as a bait a marriage between a daughter or a niece of the Emperor with the child—Duc d'Orléans, this Imperial Princess to take Milan as a dowry to her husband. This was but a blind, as was another vague promise made by Marguerite, to the effect that Éléonore should herself take Milan as her dowry, when the Queen of Portugal should proceed to France to conclude the half-marriage already contracted with François when a prisoner in the Alcazar.

We had almost forgotten to mention that in his list of renunciations François had allowed his mother to include all of French Flanders and the feudal rights which he had held over the Emperor as his Suzerain in Artois.

Such, then, was the great Treason of Cambray, for which France had to thank her King, who had reduced his country from the position of a great power to little better than that of a petty State, dependent for existence upon the goodwill of his rival. As a result of his triumph, that rival was now at last able to send some troops to Vienna, who materially assisted the terrible inclemency of the weather in causing the retreat of the army of two hundred thousand Turks from before that city.

Charles at the same time passed into Italy, by way of Genoa, and found not an enemy to bar the way of the force that he took with him. He now found force no longer necessary to gain his ends; he had but to secure the various Italian States by arrangement.

This arrangement in several instances took the form of the payment of immense subsidies; for example, he only gave back the Duchy of Milan to Francesco Sforza upon his making himself responsible for a subsidy of upwards of a million ducats. Even then Charles kept in his own hands the citadel of Milan, and also occupied the Milanese territory in Lombardy by an army under that old war-dog Antonio da Leyva, to whom he gave an Italian city, while creating him Prince of Ascoli. When, a year or two later, the unhappy and worn-out Francesco

Sforza departed this life, Charles retained Milan in his own hands. It was never allowed to revert to France, by marriage or any other means.

From Alfonso d' Este, who was rich and powerful, the Emperor extracted, by way of arrangement, the sum of two hundred thousand ducats ; and the advantage of the bargain was not altogether on the side of the Emperor, as that excellent trimmer, the Duke of Ferrara, contrived to get his *quid pro quo* in various ways. Coming to meet the Emperor in person at Bologna, whither he had gone to be crowned by the Pope, Alfonso flattered Charles with promises of devotion and future support, until between them they concocted a subtle arrangement for doing the shifty Clement VII. out of the restitution of Reggio, Rubiera, and Modena.

These places, which had been originally wrested by Ferrara from the warlike Pope Julius II., and lately recaptured from Clement, Charles had promised recently at Barcelona should be returned to the Pope.

D' Este, however, while delivering the three places into the custody of the Emperor, obtained from him the promise that he should hold them for him for the present, while compelling Clement VII. to assent to his acting as arbitrator in the matter as to whom they really belonged. Charles told the Pope that for the present he must adjourn his decision on this important matter, but, as he did not wish to break with him, promised at once to satisfy His Holiness concerning the wish that he held nearest to his heart. This was the restitution of Florence to the Medici ; with all their former power and grandeur in that city, and the destruction of the newly formed Republic.

Clement VII., who was, above all things, anxious to keep the Emperor from entering Rome, was able to make an arrangement, which was in many ways convenient to Charles, that the ceremony of his coronation should take place in the city of Bologna. While moving slowly across Italy at the head of twenty thousand men, Charles gave authority to the Prince of Orange, who had formerly been the Pope's gaoler, at the head of the



Photo by G. Brogi after the painting in the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence.

Imperial army in Rome, to accept service under Clement for the reduction of Florence. Aided by many veteran Imperial soldiers, who were promised that they should have the sack of the city, Florence was accordingly invested in October 1529. As the place hated the Pope and all the Medici clan with a most holy hatred, its citizens made a magnificent defence, which lasted for ten months. When at last, in August 1530, owing to the treachery of Malatesta Baglioni, the Republican General, Florence capitulated, it was, however, by the terms of the surrender, spared the horrors of a sack, greatly to the disappointment of the attacking soldiery.

Its existence as a Republic was, however, ended. Florence was absolutely at the mercy of the Pope, who, with the authority of the Emperor behind him, made his natural son, Alessandro Medici, ruler of the city. To this ill-favoured youth, who became the first Duke of Florence, Charles V. gave the hand of his juvenile illegitimate daughter Marguerite, who, like her great-aunt in the Netherlands, was known by the name of Marguerite of Austria. This daughter of Charles's fair Flemish love, Marguerite Van Gest, was remarried in 1538 to a twelve-year-old boy, Octavius Farnese, made Duke of Parma and Piacenza. She was a very able woman, and became Regent of the Low Countries under her half-brother, Philip II.

The Emperor did not reach Bologna until the month of November 1529, but the Pope, who had already arrived, was waiting for him in that city.

It must have appeared strange to the onlookers at the ceremony of the meeting of the Pope and the Emperor, to see the latter kneel down and kiss the foot of the Pontiff whom he had so lately held a prisoner. Charles, however, not merely kissed Clement's foot, but his hand also, and treated him generally as if he were his dearest friend.

The ceremony of the coronation was double. Upon his birthday, February 24, 1530, when he attained the age of thirty, Charles V. was, with the most magnificent

ceremonial, crowned as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, with the golden crown of Charlemagne. Two days earlier he had been crowned with the iron crown of Lombardy, in assuming which he took over the Sovereignty of the Kingdom of Italy.

We need not describe the gorgeousness of the display made upon this occasion of the assumption by the fortunate young Emperor of the supreme rule of the greater part of Europe. It was, of course, as magnificent as was befitting the occasion. Perhaps the most interesting sight for the spectators in the Royal procession was the appearance, side by side, of Antonio da Leyva and Andrea Doria. This pair preceded all the great dignitaries of the Church, and, as Leyva was still a cripple, as when he pursued and captured the Comte de Saint-Paul, he had to be carried in a litter, while his war-horse was led behind him. Four thousand of Leyva's Spanish veterans and eighteen cannons came directly behind him and the hero of Genoese independence, and then followed a thousand men-at-arms, dressed in the old armour of that Burgundy of which, in spite of all his other triumphs, the Emperor was fated for ever to remain deprived.

CHAPTER XLIII

The Princes Released—Marguerite of Austria Dies—Anne Boleyn

1530 AND LATER

WHEN mentioning above that François had promised to pay two million golden crowns for the ransom of his sons, we omitted to point out that some eight hundred thousand of these represented money borrowed from Henry VII. and Henry VIII. by Charles V. and his grandfather, the Emperor Maximilian I. It will be remembered that not long since, when Henry VIII. had joined the League against Charles, the Emperor had said that he did not see any reason for Henry so doing, as he intended to pay his debts to his uncle. He now had the opportunity of doing so without having to disburse a single crown from his own exchequer, as François it was who was compelled to pay the piper.

With a mistrust born of experience, Charles, in spite of the Peace of Cambray, refused to hand over the young Princes to his rival until all of the vast sum promised by François was paid in actual cash. He declared that he was not going to be caught a second time, as he had been by the French King's vow to hand over Burgundy after he had been set free in 1526. The Dauphin François and Henri, Duc d'Orléans, remained, therefore, close prisoners in the middle of the mountains of Castile until such time as the money should be forthcoming. This mistrust on the part of Charles, which was no doubt justified when dealing with a shifty monarch like

François I., condemned the little boys, therefore, to another painful year of imprisonment. In the summer of 1529, however, Louise de Savoie was allowed to send her usher Bordin to see them at Pedraza, when it was with considerable difficulty that Bordin obtained access to the fortress, as the boys' gaoler, the Marquis of Berlanga, took the greatest pains to keep the Princes isolated.

When at last Bordin was admitted, he found the two young Princes in a dark chamber with bare stone walls. They were seated on stone seats near the solitary window, which admitted light through a wall of immense thickness. Bordin described the dungeon as being close and evil-smelling, and in fact only fit for the detention of the worst criminals, while the clothing in which he found the poor boys was mean and ragged. The sight of the Princes in such a condition brought tears to the eyes of their visitor, and he was still more horrified when, after conveying to them the loving messages of which he was the bearer, and promises of speedy release, he perceived from the boys' puzzled manner that they did not understand him properly. The Dauphin indeed asked the Marquis of Berlanga if Bordin could not speak Spanish, as he wished to talk to him in that tongue. Bordin apparently knew Spanish, as he replied, asking François, the Dauphin, if he had forgotten his own language. "How could I help doing so?" replied the boy. "I have never heard anything but Spanish since we were deprived of our servants."

Each of the boys had a little dog to play with. "That is all their pleasure," remarked Berlanga, pointing to the spaniels.

"I call it but a poor pleasure for such great Princes," Bordin replied.

"Oh, well," retorted Peralta, the captain of the guard, "now you can see the sort of way in which the sons of the King your lord are treated in the mountains of Spain."

Berlanga now told Bordin that it was time for him to go, and refused to allow him to return to pay another visit.

With difficulty, before leaving, the messenger of Louise

obtained permission to send to his inn for two velvet toques, with gold embroidery and white plumes, which he had brought for the Princes. When these caps arrived, the Marquis snatched them from Bordin's hands and, although the boys begged to be allowed to receive them, brutally said that he would keep them for them. The Spaniards apparently feared some enchantment if the children should be allowed to wear the toques, and for the same reason would not allow Bordin to measure the Dauphin's height, to see how much he had grown.

For ten months after the usher's visit, the boys remained prisoners. In the meantime the Archduchess Marguerite, who, if she hated the French yet had a good heart, having heard how hardly they were treated, wrote to beg her nephew Charles to have mercy on the boys. Charles listened to his aunt's remonstrances, and gave accordingly instructions for their better treatment during the remainder of their captivity. This kindly act of interference was one of the last occasions upon which we hear of the worthy Marguerite interposing in her nephew's affairs, for she died in November 1530, as the result of having trodden on a piece of glass which one of her ladies of honour, an English girl, had dropped into her shoe by accident.

The actual cause of Marguerite's death was an overdose of opium, given to her by the surgeons when they were about to amputate her foot ; but, as the gangrene had in all probability permeated her whole system, this peaceful ending probably saved this most excellent Princess from much suffering.

Charles V., who was hurrying to the Low Countries from Germany, upon hearing of his aunt's illness, never saw her again. However, on the day before her death Marguerite wrote to the Emperor a tender letter of farewell, in which she informed him that, with exception of a few legacies, she had left him her "sole and universal heir."

This unselfish daughter of the sturdy old fighter Maximilian was fifty years old when she died, and had been for over twenty-two years the Regent and practical

ruler of the Low Countries at the time of her decease. During that long period of rule, how well she had managed her difficult administration is proved by the fact that there was never any rebellion in the Low Countries. Things did not go so smoothly under her niece, and successor as Regent, Marie, the widowed Queen of Hungary, who soon drove the inhabitants of Ghent to rise in arms owing to her arbitrary taxation.

To return to the sons of François I. In the summer of the year 1530, with the greatest vigilance they were conducted by the Constable of Castile to the northern portion of Spain, Montmorency having at last arrived at Bayonne with all the money in gold for their ransom. The Grand Master of France had also brought with him the papers for the renunciation of all the places in Italy and elsewhere to which François I. had agreed. He was accompanied to the French frontier by Bryan, the Ambassador of Henry VIII., who brought with him the various notes of hand for money received which had been signed by Maximilian I. and Charles V. Bryan brought likewise with him some very costly and beautiful jewels, which had been left in pledge by these two Emperors with the two English Kings, from whom they had borrowed money, which jewels included a magnificent *fleur de lys* in diamonds.

By the instructions of the cautious Charles, the utmost vigilance was observed by his messengers, Louis de Praët and Alvaro de Lugo, to see that they should not allow their master to be cheated in any way. Every paper, every title, was carefully verified, and all of the immense amount of gold brought by Montmorency on mules to Bayonne had to be counted and sealed up again in sacks.

At length, being satisfied that all was correct, the Constable of Castile allowed Anne de Montmorency to proceed with the exchange of the money, documents, and jewels, against the bodies of the two young Princes.

A pontoon or raft was, as before at the time of the release of François I., moored in the middle of the river Bidassoa, and while two warships watched the mouth of

the river, an equal number of French and Spanish troops were drawn up on either side. Upon July 1st, 1530, while Montmorency arrived at the pontoon on one side with his barge full of valuables, François, the Dauphin, and Henri, Duc d'Orléans, were taken to the other side of the pontoon by the Constable of Castile. The boats were exchanged, and while, after rowing round the end of the pontoon, the Constable of Castile and his gentlemen returned with their precious freight to Spain, Anne de Montmorency, rowing round in the opposite direction, bore off into Navarrese territory the little Princes, who had been prisoners for upwards of four and a half years.

Queen Éléonore, accompanied by a suite of her ladies, at the same time crossed the Bidassoa at a point close at hand, and, joining the Dauphin and his brother, proceeded to meet the French King and Court at Bordeaux, when the sister of the Emperor Charles V. became the Queen of France.

By the release of the French Princes and the marriage of the King of France to Éléonore was concluded the first great period of the rivalry of Charles V. and François I. There were, however, other periods to follow, only to terminate with the death of the Monarch who had now become the Emperor's brother-in-law.

During the two years following the Peace of Cambray Charles endeavoured to consolidate his power in Germany, and to bring the Lutheran German Princes back into the fold of the Pope of Rome. As these Princes had, however, combined by an union which they formed for self-defence, called the League of Smalkalde, the Emperor found the reduction of these rulers of various German States no easy matter.

Owing to the renewed aggression of Soliman in the south of Europe, he soon recognised that instead of persecuting the Protestants he would act more wisely by conciliating them and obtaining their support in a war against the Turk. A Diet held at Augsburg, which had been attended by the violent Papal Nuncio Campeggio, had resulted in severe penalties being pronounced against

the Lutherans. Campeggio wished, in fact, to introduce the Inquisition into Germany, on the model of the Spanish Inquisition, and represented to the Emperor that it was requisite to accomplish "the destruction of these venomous plants by iron and the fire."

Instead of being quelled by the decision against them at Augsburg, the German Princes, headed by the Elector Henry of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse, openly despised the decisions of the Imperial Chamber. Feeling that they could count in an emergency upon the help of Henry VIII., who was furious at not obtaining his divorce from the Pope, and François, who still wanted Milan, they were ready to set the Emperor at defiance.

At this moment came the news that the Sultan Soliman had entered Hungary with three hundred thousand men. The frightened Charles made haste to come to terms with the Princes, first at Nuremberg and then at the Diet at Ratisbon, assuring them freedom of religion until a general ecclesiastical council should meet to consider the whole matter from every point of view.

The Protestants now came to assist the Emperor with all their forces, and soon he was to be seen at the head of an immense army in the neighbourhood of Vienna.

This was the first time that Charles V. had commanded an army in person, and, as his brother Ferdinand joined him with a swarm of Hungarian and Bohemian horsemen, great things were now expected from the Emperor.

Charles himself, whom recent events had rendered conceited, boasted how he was going to strangle "that dog of a Turk," and all Europe stood by watching in joyful anticipation for such an auspicious event to take place. "Nothing," declared the Emperor, "shall prevent me from being present at the battle," and having uttered this bold speech, he waited without advancing to the attack.

The Sultan himself was present with his immense army, and anxious to fight against Charles V. Presently he learned, however, that the Emperor was said to have an ulcer in the leg, and had gone off to Karlsbad or some similar place to take the waters.



Photo by Brogi after the painting in the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence.

CLEMENT VII. AND FRANCOIS I.

Thereupon Soliman continued at his ease to devastate Hungary once more. He likewise invaded a new Austrian province, that of Styria, which this time furnished the great tribute of young girls and children without which a Turkish army never returned from its expeditions.

While Charles boasted that the Turk had been afraid of him, he nevertheless advised his brother Ferdinand to treat, when he accepted the most humiliating terms at the end of 1532, making of himself the vassal and tributary of the Sultan, and agreeing to the division of Hungary with Zapolya.

In order to wean the unreliable Clement away from the Emperor's alliance, François now cleverly thought of a plan which he contrived to carry out. This was to arrange a match between his second son, Henri d'Orléans, with the Pope's youthful relation Caterina de' Medici, or, to use the name by which she is better known in French history, Catherine de Médicis. Charles was both furious and disgusted when he learned that his now dear friend Clement was not only flattered and delighted at the idea of this grand alliance with François, but intended to proceed in person to France, where the marriage was to be solemnised at Marseilles. He said that he could not believe that the King of France would marry his son into a family of base mercantile origin; nevertheless, the Emperor was mistaken. After about three weeks of continued festivities at Marseilles, where he was entertained royally by François and all his Court, the Pope himself, in October 1533, performed the ceremony which united Caterina de' Medici, of evil memory, to Henri de Valois, Duc d'Orléans.

Just a year later, greatly to the delight of all Europe, and especially of Germany, England, and Italy, Clement VII. died, after a reign which had lasted for upwards of eleven years, when he was succeeded on the Papal throne by Alessandro Farnese, who, upon his election in October 1534, assumed the name of Paul III.

Not long before the death of Clement, Henry VIII.,

whose passion for Anne Boleyn would brook of no longer delay, broke openly with Rome. He had waited for six years for a divorce from Catherine of Aragon, but the Emperor's efforts and those of Cardinal Wolsey, who had secretly been false to his master's interests, had proved of more avail than all Henry's supplications to the Pope.

The King therefore persuaded Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, to annul his first marriage and to declare his daughter Mary illegitimate, and then, in 1533, married the merry and volatile young maid-of-honour for whom he had so long been pining in vain. When the enraged Clement VII. had declared the English King excommunicated unless he should return to his first wife, Henry caused his Parliament to abolish the Papal power in England and to declare him the supreme head of the Church.

Although Henry VIII. remained a Catholic and persecuted those of the Protestant faith, by this action he opened the way for the Protestant Reformation, which commenced in England with his successor.

Before he thus took to his bridal bed one almost a Frenchwoman, if of English parentage, whom he had first admired as a child when at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, there had previously been question of two really French marriages for Henry. These had been with the Princess Marguerite d'Angoulême, and Renée, who married the Duke of Ferrara.

After Marguerite had set all Europe talking about her in 1526, by the devotion shown by her to her brother in her visit to Spain, Henry had loudly declared his admiration for the talents of this Princess. He was already living apart from his wife, on account of some female ailment which seemed to preclude the possibility of her bearing him a much-desired son, and he gave instructions to his Ambassador in France to cultivate the good graces of Marguerite.

It would have been a splendid opportunity for François, in the person of his able, clever, and devoted sister, to have obtained a real foothold in England. By the influence of Montmorency and the clerical party in France,

which then and later showed its attachment to the cause of Charles V. and Spain, the matter came to nothing. François seemed to be alarmed when he saw Henry's Ambassador in intimate converse with his sister, and endeavoured successfully to keep them apart. A little later, as we know, Marguerite married the impoverished Henri de Navarre, so much her junior. Montmorency had represented that it would be unwise to marry in England Marguerite, who had Protestant leanings, just at the very moment that François was endeavouring to become the chief of a Catholic league in Italy, and thus he had nipped in the bud any chance of a match which would have been a most excellent one for France. It was when Marguerite's second marriage took place that Anne Boleyn, who had been attached to her household at the French Court, left her and went to England, where that old diplomat, her father, contrived to have his daughter received among the Queen's ladies-of-honour, of whom, with her French vivacity, she formed the brightest ornament. The gaiety and charm of her manner were recognised not only by the King but others, and her style in dress copied by the ladies of the English Court—they now wearing high dresses instead of the very low-cut ones which had previously been the fashion.

It was in the year following the arrival of Anne in England that Wolsey came on his splendid embassy to the French Court. Then, when enjoying the festivities at Compiègne, the Cardinal broached a subject which had not been previously mentioned at Amiens. This was a formal demand for the hand of the Princess Renée. This daughter of Louis XII. had for mother Anne of Brittany, and might possibly lay claim to hereditary rights to that great Duchy, of which, when Anne had been married in succession to Charles VIII. and Louis XII., she had so distinctly reserved the right of personal government.

Louise de Savoie was anxious to accept this alliance in the event of a divorce being obtained for Henry VIII.

Not so, however, her son. François, suspicious of the English King, feared lest he might some day lay claim to Brittany through his wife, and therefore refused to give him the hand of Renée.

It was, so the Cardinal more than hinted, quite on the cards that the security of the recently concluded Franco-Anglo alliance might be endangered by this refusal ; but on his return to England, after three months' absence, Wolsey discovered that the loss of Renée was a matter of the most perfect indifference to the King, whose master he had hitherto been.

During his absence Wolsey had been supplanted by another. Anne Boleyn had now completely wound herself round the heart-strings of the still handsome if somewhat corpulent Henry, and the butcher's son found that no master, but a mistress, was now required at Windsor.

The Cardinal, who distrusted the Reformed religious leanings with which Anne Boleyn had been inspired by Marguerite d'Angoulême, had already viewed this young lady with suspicion before his departure. So had Catherine of Aragon, who had once sent Anne away from the Court, supposedly on account of a love affair with a young gentleman who sought her hand. While the Cardinal was away, Sir Thomas Boleyn had taken advantage of that circumstance to contrive the reinstatement of his daughter at the Court, and she had become well aware to what an extent the King was troubled by her presence.

Nevertheless, although her vanity was flattered, Anne was frightened at the vista which opened out before her. She fell before the King, declaring that she could not become his mistress ; and when Henry replied that all obstacles should be removed, that he would make her his wife, Anne wished to decline the honour. Tremblingly the fair maid-of-honour pointed out to her lord and master that, should she marry him, she could never have the same openness of heart towards him that she might have if married in her own station in life.

Now it was that Wolsey, reporting his failure in obtaining the hand of Renée, received for abrupt reply from Henry that it did not matter, he intended to marry no other than Anne Boleyn. The Cardinal, more suspicious than ever of the Lutheran pupil of Marguerite d'Angoulême, commenced writing to Clement VII. to prevent the divorce. A letter of his to the Pope to this effect was seized, his subsequent disgrace ensued, and it was only by a timely death that the great Cardinal escaped the scaffold.

With the marriage of Henry VIII. to Anne Boleyn there seemed a considerable probability of the triumph of the Reformed religion in England. François I., anxious to keep on good terms with Henry on account of his support against Charles, pushed also by his sister Marguerite, was not therefore inclined at first to crush with a heavy hand the new ideas in France. François was naturally inclined towards new ideas, new learning, new art—or, at all events, the restoration of ancient learning and artistic ideas as adapted to more modern times. While he called to him the great artist Leonardo da Vinci from Italy, he also, as we have already mentioned, summoned Erasmus to Paris, who declined to come.

When, in 1528, the mutilation occurred of the image of the Virgin in the Rue des Rosiers, François allowed himself to change round and persecute the Reformers. Nevertheless, in his rivalry with Charles V., he still endeavoured to keep in with the Protestant Princes in Germany, who had snapped their fingers at the Emperor.

CHAPTER XLIV

The Emperor invades Tunis and France

1535—1536

WHEN, by such irregular means, Henry VIII. divorced Catherine and married the attractive Anne, Charles V., the nephew of the former Queen, was furious. The Pope being of the same way of thinking, together they sought for vengeance on the English King, and cast about in their minds for any means to do him damage. It so happened that Clement VII. had an instrument at hand in the person of Reginald Pole, who became later Archbishop of Canterbury and a Cardinal.

This young man, the son of Lord Montacute and Margaret Plantagenet, Countess of Salisbury, was a cousin of the King of England. He had been partly brought up at the Court and loaded with many marks of favour, especially by Catherine of Aragon, who had thrown out hopes to him of marrying his cousin the Princess Mary.

When Henry was negotiating with Clement VII. for a divorce, he sent young Pole, who was educated at Oxford and Padua, as one of his emissaries to the Pope, who won him over to write violently against his benefactor Henry VIII. Charles V. and Clement now talked of deposing Henry, and Pole, being made a Cardinal, was sent to Liège, to correspond from that place with the discontented party in England, and stir up insurrection. As a reward, Pole was promised the Crown of England. Charles, being on friendly terms, at all events nominally,

with his brother-in-law François, wrote to him asking him to execute the sentence of deposition against Henry VIII. François merely sneered, while replying that the King of England was his friend, and that he did not in the least wish to hurt him.

The casuistical reply Charles now made was that he wished "to save the King's conscience and honour," which was to be accomplished by shaving his head and putting him in a monastery.

Even at the present day it is impossible to repress a smile at the thought of Henry VIII. as a monk! but although Montmorency, at the instigation of Charles V., endeavoured to push François, the French King refused to have anything to do with the scheme for reforming Henry, even when the Emperor speciously offered to marry one of the French Princes to the Princess Mary and to make him King of England.

Such promises did not affect François—he knew their value. What he really desired was to get Milan back again, in spite of his renunciation. He had recently received a terrible insult in that Duchy, when, at the instigation of the Spaniards, an envoy of his to the Duke Sforza (who had, by the way, recently married the Emperor's niece) was assassinated. The name of this envoy was Maraviglia. It was owing to the threats made by Charles against Francesco Sforza for receiving him that, after first being decoyed into a duel, in which he proved successful and killed his adversary, Maraviglia was seized and beheaded.

When François complained to the Emperor of this cruel crime, he received no satisfaction, and shortly afterwards Charles caused the arrest of another French envoy, whom François was sending to the Sultan Soliman.

Here were the makings of a very pretty new quarrel already, and, despite his marriage to the amiable Éléonore, who very soon found that she had a hard time of it between her husband and her brother, François made the second move in the game.

This was to stir up the great pirate of the Mediterra-

nean, commonly known as Barbarossa, to ravage the coasts of Corsica, Sicily, and Italy.

There were two brothers—renegade Greeks—from their red beards both known as Barbarossa ; their names were Kheir-ed-Din and Ouradj, and both in turn became Bey of Algiers. Kheir-ed-Din was likewise employed by the Sultan as the commander of his fleets, and, by treachery, he contrived to conquer Tunis from the Sultan Muley-Hassan, a Prince who had murdered all his thirty-three brothers, save one named Al Raschid, and usurped the throne.

Having seized Tunis, which he now ruled under the Suzerainty of the Sultan Soliman, and having murdered Al Raschid, in whose name he had conquered that city and surrounding country, Barbarossa, using that place as his base, proceeded as before to plunder the shipping and coasts of the Mediterranean.

When François had made friends with Kheir-ed-Din, the Italian subjects and Genoese allies of Charles V. soon had cause to tremble, for he was quite the equal of Andrea Doria in valour and skill as an Admiral, and vastly his superior in the possession of warships. The unhappy inhabitants of the Italian coasts and islands now began constantly to dread the appearance of the turbaned pirates, who pillaged their homes, drove the men to the fields or killed them, and carried off their wives and daughters as booty in their ships, to become inmates of some Turkish seraglio.

Barbarossa made a regular trade of the rape of particularly beautiful women, for whose capture he received large sums from some Bey or Pasha. He carried off in this way the daughter of one of the Spanish Governors of Charles V., while the beautiful Giulia of Aragon only just escaped in her chemise, by the devotion of a Knight who yielded up to her his horse and remained himself to escape as best he could on foot.

As a mark of her gratitude, Giulia of Aragon, sister of the famous beauty Joanna of Aragon whose picture is in the Louvre, caused the death of her gallant pro-

pector from the Turks, the saviour of her honour! In order that he might not be able to boast of having seen her unveiled charms, Giulia employed assassins to murder the man to whose devotion she was indebted for salvation from a life of imprisonment and shame in a Turkish harem.

When François employed such allies as Barbarossa, a perfect howl of execration went up against the Very Christian King, who, the ally of Infidels, was himself no better than an Infidel. Charles V., having failed to attack the Sultan, determined to attack his Admiral in Tunis, where also many of the troops of Soliman were stationed under the great pirate's command. No expedition could make the Emperor more popular than this, and volunteer troops of all nations flocked to his standard, the Pope and the Knights of Saint John sending squadrons. The Emperor, with a splendid fleet under Doria, and numberless troops in transports, the whole amounting to five hundred vessels, arrived in the Gulf of Tunis off the fort of Goletta, which protects the city, in the middle of July 1535. Barbarossa was ready for him with a splendid army, while his Turkish troops held Goletta. After a fierce and stubborn resistance, Goletta was captured, the Emperor marching in through the breach which his cannon had made in the walls of the strong fortress. The defenders, however, escaped through a shallow arm of the sea, and joined the army with which Barbarossa now advanced to give battle to Charles.

In the ensuing battle, fought in the burning sands outside Tunis, the discipline and armour of the Spanish hosts prevailed against the courage of Barbarossa and his Turks, Moors, and Arabs. He would, however, have saved the city of Tunis had but his own cruel counsels, to kill ten thousand Christian slaves left in the citadel, been followed. At the request of his captains, the pirate chieftain had spared their lives. These Christians now rose up against him in his city during the continuance of the battle, and securing the guns, completed the discomfiture of Barbarossa, while the former subjects of Muley Hassan brought the keys of

the city gates to Charles. The Emperor's army of fifty thousand men entered Tunis, taking the deposed Sultan Muley Hassan with them, it being the Emperor's purpose to restore the Kingdom, under his own Suzerainty, to this murderer of his thirty-two brothers.

No sooner had the Emperor's troops reached the city gates than all discipline was lost. The sacking of Tunis, where all the harems were broken into and the innocent inhabitants murdered, was only equalled by the sack of Rome. Great excesses, more horrible outrages, were indeed committed at Tunis than at Rome, owing to the fiendish delight of the Christian soldiers, Germans, Italians, and Spaniards alike, at finding the Infidels in their power. Although the Moorish men and women of Tunis had themselves been sufferers at the hands of Kheir-ed-Din and his invading hosts, they were now treated as if they had been the ravishers of the coasts of the Mediterranean—no mercy was shown to either man or woman. Thirty thousand persons were butchered on that fatal 25th of July, 1535, and when, at length, all the sacking was over, ten thousand Mussulmans were borne away into captivity; but Barbarossa escaped.

Having reinstated Muley Hassan upon his throne, to be detested by the subjects upon whom he had brought such untold horrors, Charles left a strong garrison in Goletta, and returned in triumph to Europe.

François I. took advantage of the absence of Charles in Tunis to compass his revenge for the murder of his envoy. Having raised an army of over forty thousand men, he invaded the dominions of his uncle, the Duke Charles of Savoy, whose wife Beatrice, the sister of Isabella of Portugal, the Empress, had become the practical ruler of the Duchy.

Owing to his wife's suggestions, the Duke Charles, who had become a Spaniard at heart, had actually proposed to exchange Savoy with the Emperor for some equivalent in Italy. To have had Charles installed in Savoy and Bresse would have been fatal to France, other-

wise the King had not the slightest pretence for his aggression in Savoy, and likewise Piedmont, which belonged to Savoy. Geneva was also at that time subject to the Duke Charles. This city, which now declared itself Protestant, was aided against him by François, and not only succeeded in procuring its freedom, but also conquered the Duke's territory of what is now the Swiss canton the Pays de Vaud.

The seizure of Savoy and Piedmont, which was not accomplished without some hard fighting among the mountains in the wintry season, was completed by the following April (1536); and then the Emperor retaliated, and a new war commenced between the rivals.

Before the Emperor proceeded to the invasion of France (which, by abandoning his posts, the treachery to François of the Marquis de Saluces made easy), Charles V. in the Vatican at Rome pronounced a most bitter diatribe against the French King. There were present Princes, Cardinals, and Ambassadors of all powers, including those of France, when, in the most violent terms, Charles gave utterance to this harangue. It was subsequently printed and disseminated throughout all Europe, when the accusations that it contained injured François greatly, especially in the estimation of the Protestant German Princes, who recoiled from "the friend of the Turk."

One fiery remark of the Emperor was a fresh challenge to François to mortal combat. The French Ambassadors were present, owing to the recent death of the Duke Francesco Sforza, to demand that his ancient patrimony of Milan might now be returned to the King of France. The Emperor's reply was as follows:

"Let us not continue to wantonly shed the blood of our innocent subjects; let us decide the quarrel man to man, with what arms he pleases to choose, in our shirts, on an island, a bridge, or aboard a galley moored in a river. Let the Duchy of Burgundy be put in deposit on his part, and that of Milan on mine—these shall be the prize of the conqueror; and after that let the united

forces of Germany, Spain, and France be employed to humble the power of the Turk and to extirpate heresy out of Christendom."

The Emperor, with the Marquis del Guasto, the Duke of Alva, and the Marquis of Mantua, Fernando de Gonzaga, all put themselves now under the supreme command of Antonio da Leyva to invade France. As Charles persuaded the Catholic Cantons to recall the Swiss fighting under François, "the Turkish King," and as Saluces abandoned his posts, the invasion of Provence by Charles proved an easy affair.

To live in that French province, once the Imperial army had arrived there, was, however, entirely a different matter.

In that year of 1536 Montmorency was given the command by François, and, to prevent the army of Charles V. from procuring food, in the most barbarous manner this French General devastated the whole south of France, ruined and starved all of the inhabitants of Provence. While retiring with his army into various large and very strongly entrenched camps, and occupying one or two walled cities, Anne de Montmorency destroyed completely the rest of the country round.

The awful sacrifice was made of a hundred towns and villages; all stores, all mills of every kind, were destroyed, even the wells were filled up; everything that could be consumed was burned. Many of the large towns destroyed, such as Aix, had been made receptacles by the wretched inhabitants for their furniture and goods; Montmorency, however, ordered these to be burned with the rest.

The result was what had been anticipated by this commander. Charles V., constantly harassed by the starving and furious peasantry, and occasionally by the light troops, had to retire with the terrible loss of twenty-five thousand of his men, including the veteran Commander-in-Chief Antonio da Leyva. This retreat was a terrible disgrace for the Emperor, but Montmorency took good care not to turn it into a rout by issuing with his full force and

driving Charles back at a run. He was too good a friend of Spain to crush the Emperor, who indeed had only been attacked while in France by the peasantry and by adventurous Knights and men-at-arms who had refused to obey their detested commander's orders to remain strictly on the defensive. The peasants, however, inflicted terrible losses upon the retiring force, and nearly succeeded in killing the Emperor also. Nevertheless, as a reward for having reduced a large part of France to the most frightful condition of misery that it had ever known, even when overrun by a successful enemy, Montmorency was created Constable of France by his grateful Sovereign.

Meanwhile, after two months in France, Charles had been compelled to retire excessively crestfallen, and, if François had but known how to play the game properly, the year 1537 should have left the Emperor at his feet.

CHAPTER XLV

The Influence of the Women

1536—1547

IN order the better to understand why it was that François during the remainder of his career so frequently failed to take advantage of his opportunities, and so often played into his rival's hands, the position at the French Court of various women must be considered.

Of his mother, Madame, the intriguing, passionate Louise de Savoie, François lost the counsels in 1533. This Princess, who, as de Lussy remarked to Queen Éléonore, was "a very terrible woman," suffered for a long time with perpetual stomach-ache, which, added to the gout, eventually carried her off. It is more than probable that Éléonore found life easier after the death of her mother-in-law, and the removal of her influence, which was never a good one, over the King.

There were, however, other female influences remaining, that of the mistress with whom Louise had supplied her son being for a considerable time the most important. This was Anne d'Heilly de Pisseleu, the blonde beauty who had replaced Françoise de Foix.

The "*méchante maîtresse*" was the daughter of Guillaume de Pisseleu, Seigneur d'Heilly, a Captain in the Legion of Picardy, and, having become a maid-of-honour to Louise at the age of seventeen, was less than nineteen when she became the mistress of François. By the charm of her conversation, Anne was found from the first to be a very desirable companion to the King. Like

him, she was of an artistic temperament, fond of letters and fine architecture. When Anne was first presented to him on his return from captivity in Spain, the King fancied that he saw in her a resemblance to Ximena de l'Infantado, the daughter of the great Spanish noble who went into a nunnery from love for François when he left Spain. A French author has asked, what chance had the Comtesse de Châteaubriand against one whom he describes as "la jolie, fraîche, vive, pimpante demoiselle picarde, brillante de nouveauté et de l'espérance, qui, souple comme une couleuvre, du premier coup tenta, enlaça, ennoua irrésistiblement le roi."

Having been married to a convenient husband, who took himself off to his restored estates and became the Governor of Brittany, Anne de Pisseleu, as we know, herself blossomed out into the Duchesse d'Étampes, and remained the King's titular mistress for so long as he lived.

During that period of a score of years, according to M. de l'Escure, after getting rid of Marguerite d'Angoulême with all the honours of war, she contrived to provide handsomely for all of her thirty brothers and sisters, and to make her uncle a Cardinal into the bargain. For herself the Duchesse d'Étampes not only piled up great wealth, with various châteaux and estates, but obtained from the King many of the Royal jewels of the French Crown. There are various stories told of the grasping nature of Anne with reference to her dealings with Charles V.

One of these is that when, owing to the weakness of François, the Emperor was allowed to pass through France, and even well received at the Court in Paris in the year 1540, the Duchesse d'Étampes gave to the King a bit of advice which, if dishonourable, it would have been to his interest to follow. This was to retain the Emperor in his hands until he made good his promises to hand over Milan. Charles, who was himself acting dishonourably in beguiling François with promises which he had not the slightest intention of fulfilling, understood

the antagonism of the Duchesse d'Étampes, and thought he could buy her. Accordingly, while she held to him at dinner-time a golden ewer of water, he purposely let slip into it his most magnificent diamond ring. When Anne fished the ring out of the basin to return it, the Emperor, assuming his most amiable expression, begged that one so fair as the holder of the bowl would honour him by accepting the jewel.

She accepted the ring and the Emperor's friendship together, and when next war broke out, and Charles was invading France by way of Champagnen, Anne is said to have acted as a spy in his behalf, and to have sold him the secret concerning the presence of provisions at Epernay and Château Thierry, the seizure of which enabled the Emperor to hold out until he and François made their last peace at Crépy. Of this peace, which was disgraceful for France, Anne de Pisseleu is said to have arranged the terms.

While, as we have said, artistic by nature and fond of building, the Duchesse d'Étampes was by no means devoted to the artists whom François called to the Court, in whom she saw her rivals in the King's favour. Above all, she hated and always fought with the braggart Benvenuto Cellini, when François summoned him to France.

In the year 1537, when the Duchesse d'Étampes was still a young woman twenty-nine years of age, she was by no means the friend of either Charles V. or Spain.¹ Therefore she was perfectly willing and inclined to push François to seize the opportunity, after the disgraceful retreat of Charles from Provence, of employing the Turk, and, by combining with him as an ally, crushing the Emperor in Italy.

It was no longer with Barbarossa, an Admiral who could only ravage the coasts, but with the whole might of the Sultan Soliman, that it behoved François to ally

¹ Anne de Pisseleu was born at Heilly in Picardy in 1508. She was one of the thirty children of Guillaume de Pisseleu, by his second wife, Anne Sanguin. She died at the Château de Challuau, at the age of sixty-eight, in 1576, surviving her rival Diane de Poitiers by ten years.

himself firmly and faithfully; not merely to make a promise of aiding Soliman one day in some particular adventure, to break it on the morrow, and to undertake some other enterprise on his own account, entirely different to what had been arranged. There were others at the Court, notably the old warlike diplomatist, Guillaume du Bellay, and his brother, the witty Bishop Jean du Bellay, who saw eye to eye with the Duchesse d'Étampes in this matter.

Jean du Bellay, of whom Anne de Pisseleu made a Cardinal, was the clever emissary of whom François was apt to make use to visit the German Protestant Princes, when such was his power of persuasion that he almost convinced them to believe in the King's protestations even when they despised and distrusted him most. Indeed, had it not been for the callous cruelty with which François allowed the Sorbonne to condemn twenty-four French Lutherans to the fire at one time, Jean du Bellay would no doubt have been able to arrange a warlike combination with the German Princes which would have proved fatal to their Sovereign lord the Emperor.

It is no wonder, however, that the Germans were disgusted, when even the Pope Paul III. was horrified at the cruelty of the Very Christian King, and wrote to say that "even God Himself showed more mercy." This was when, accompanied by Anne de Pisseleu, in June 1535, François had proceeded in solemn procession, torch in hand, to light the fires which were to burn six Lutherans at once.

In 1536 the King suffered a severe loss. While in the camp at Valence, at the time that the Emperor was invading Provence, his eldest and best beloved son, the Dauphin, was hurrying to meet him. This young Prince, who had never been strong since his imprisonment, died suddenly at Lyon, after partaking of a glass of water from a very cold spring. Without reason, his page, Montecuculli, was tortured on the charge of having poisoned the Dauphin. By this death Henri, Duc d'Orléans, became the heir to the

throne, and between that Prince and his father there existed no confidence. Henri was attached with Montmorency, who was a man of detestable nature, to the party fond of Spanish ideas in religion, especially concerning the Turk. Spanish manners and gravity of demeanour, which were considered to be good form, as opposed to the spirit of levity of the King, his mistress, the Bellays, and the Admiral, Chabot de Brion, distinguished this Spanish party.

It was soon to be recruited by a great lady who became its captain, and then, while the Spanish party became in their own opinion "the Elect," that of the volatile King was considered as the party of the Lost Ones. By the influence of Montmorency and the Elect it was that the arms of François, instead of being employed to aid the Turk in an invincible invasion of Italy or Austria, were in the year 1537 directed to Picardy, which the Flemish troops of the Low Countries had invaded in considerable force.

Jean du Bellay had at this time by the power of his tongue proved himself a valuable aid to his master. The Emperor had not long before compelled the Princely German Electors to elect his brother Ferdinand as King of the Romans, upon the pretence that his own frequent absences in his other dominions required that the States of the German Empire should have an authorised leader near at hand to lead them against the Turk.

Ferdinand, with the weight of his newly won authority, had duly secured large bodies of German lansquenets, when Bellay, finding that these were to be employed to invade Champagne, by his address and intrigues persuaded the German Princes to withdraw their contingents.

The greater part of the King's forces remained in the south of France inactive; but the Knights and men-at-arms sent to Picardy defended Péronne, which was besieged, and other places with great vigour, and the enemy retired to their own country having done nothing.

From the end of the year 1537, when the King com-

menced to be troubled with abscesses due to the debauched life which he had always led, he may be said to have commenced to go downhill.

The great lady who became the head of the party of Elect, or the *honnêtes gens*, as they liked to style themselves, which was now to oppose François, was a widow, one who had been his own mistress in 1523, and hitherto had remained upon very friendly terms with him. She was Diane de Poitiers, the *Sénéchale* de Normandie, and until this year, since her former intimacy with the King, she had conducted herself with marked propriety in a Court where immorality and debauchery were the rule, not the exception.

In the year 1537 François, while lamenting to her the loss of the Dauphin, complained of the awkward, *gauche*, and sullen manners of his second son, Henri.

"Give him into my charge," exclaimed Diane laughingly; "I will make him my gallant, and soon turn him into a presentable fellow." The new Dauphin was then eighteen, and Diane already aged thirty-eight, but excessively beautiful, with a perfectly moulded form.¹ She took Henri as "her gallant," and, aided by Montmorency, who lent the lovers his Château of Ecoeu for their amours, took him completely under her protection. While employed thus in forming the Dauphin's manners, the still youthful looking widow became the mother of a little girl, whose birth, which took place in great mystery, was laid to the account of a perfectly blameless young lady.

Henri, while Duc d'Orléans, had, it will be remembered, a few years earlier been united to a young girl of fourteen, the black-eyed, swarthy Catarina de' Medici. This young girl, having come from a mercantile stock, had been despised by her young husband. Although bright-witted and well educated, Catherine counted for nothing in the eyes of her youthful and saturnine husband, whose chief

¹ Diane was born at St. Vallier in 1499. She was sixty-seven when she died at her Château d'Anet in 1566, and preserved her good looks and youthful appearance until the end.

and indeed only accomplishments consisted in his being the best athlete, the best jumper, among the young Knights at the Court. Only from the talkative, easy-going, pleasure-loving King her father-in-law did Catherine receive any notice at the Court, where she was looked upon as an interloper and an outsider. At this time she was timid and servile, giving no hint of the pernicious strength which marked her later years ; and when Henri, her husband, began openly to wear Diane's mottoes and arms, Diane's colours of white and black, the young wife turned also to Diane for protection, and received it even after she had become Queen. To Diane, Montmorency, and the Dauphin there now joined themselves the Queen Éléonore, and likewise two great dignitaries of the Church. These were the Cardinal de Lorraine, of the Ducal family of Guise, and the Cardinal de Tournon. All of these were for the Emperor against the Turk and infidelity—their sole desire, they said, to save the soul and honour of the King.

François' mistress, the Duchesse d'Étampes, was not, however, by any means the woman to allow herself to be snuffed out at the Court by any woman, even if, while for ever wearing white and black as the mourning for her deceased husband, that woman had become openly the paramour of the Dauphin, who might have been her son, and had, while living in immorality, styled herself one of the Elect.

Anne, the young mistress, railed constantly against Diane, whom she styled *la vieille*, the old one, and thus there soon developed, not two parties merely, but two Courts within the Court—that of the King and that of the Dauphin. While Diane retaliated upon Anne de Pisseleu by having herself painted nude, in order to show that she had a far more beautiful figure than the King's favourite, François himself was torn by the strings which pulled him in different directions. Thus it happened that while a splendid plan for united action was formed by the King's agent Laforêt in 1537, and Soliman and Barbarossa actually landed troops at Castro, François



From a photograph of the statue in the Louvre by Jean Goujon.

DIANE DE POITIERS (STATUE).

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failed to keep his engagements. The Turks accordingly left Naples and invaded Venice, which Soliman compelled to buy peace from him for three hundred thousand ducats.

Although from his constant desire to be popular, not to displease those who surrounded him, François had lost this chance, in the year 1538 he sent his agent, the wily and corpulent Captain Rincon, to Soliman once more, when he had learned that the Turks had won a great victory over Ferdinand of Austria.

The Pope Paul III. was, however, at this time making the greatest efforts to bring about a personal meeting between the Emperor and the King at Nice, with a view to peace. Charles, who was once more penniless, as neither the Low Countries nor Spain would give him a farthing, was anxious enough for the meeting; but not so François, who saw that he would be committing a weak action. His wife Éléonore at length persuaded him to allow her to go and meet her brother, but François left the Emperor waiting, and remained at a distance with many of his Court—the rest accompanied Éléonore to Nice, in the territory of the Duke of Savoy, half of whose dominions were retained by France as a result of this war.

With those who accompanied Éléonore were all of the Elect, and the Emperor was perfectly content when he thus succeeded in getting into touch with these enemies of the King. Their influence, and that of his sister Marguerite, who wished something to be done with the Emperor with reference to the restoration of Navarre, eventually induced François to meet Charles at Aigues-Mortes, a small port on the southern coast, when the meeting of these old enemies was to all appearance excessively cordial and friendly. Montmorency and the Princesses were with François, and with their support Charles V. contrived to come to an arrangement. By this, while Charles promised definitely to give Milan, with his niece, to the Duc d'Angoulême, the King's youngest son, who now had taken the title of d'Orléans, François accepted conversion, and promised to be good in the

future—that is to say, he abandoned the Turk, swore that he would fight against him and be an apostate no longer.

The delight of the party of the Elect was unbounded—Éléonore and Diane de Poitiers wept together for joy.

We have already considered Anne de Pisseleu, but what kind of a woman was her rival, this leader of the Elect, this friend, for personal and political reasons, both of the brutal, uncouth Montmorency, and the suave dignitaries of the Church, Tournon and Lorraine? That she was vain and greedy we know, also that she always got up early, took a cold bath, and went for an early ride with a view to preserving her health and her beauty. But that she must have been possessed of considerable ability there can be no doubt. Otherwise how could she, even at an advanced age, still have continued to rule Henri II. so absolutely? rule also Catherine de Médicis? It was only by the orders of Diane de Poitiers that Henri eventually lived *maritalement* with his wife, and consented to become the father of heirs to the throne of France.¹

Whatever the means by which she attained her ends, she always succeeded. Once at the top of the tree, she remained there until Catherine fiercely revolted, at length, upon the death of Henri II. in July 1559. With such plotting, such trickery and jealousy for ever around her, Diane must indeed have possessed arts out of the common to remain so successful until the end of Henri's reign. Cruel and hard she was, we know, while, too, her greed exceeded by far that of the Duchesse d'Etampes, from whom at last she took away all the rich jewels in which she had so greatly gloried. Created Duchesse de Valentinois, Diane possessed not only Chenonceaux, Anet, and the Duchy of Valentinois, but property to the extent of about a quarter of France.

Truly she must have been a wonderful woman, this Diane who always remained young and beautiful, who

¹ Catherine's first child was not born until the eleventh year after her marriage, which took place in 1533. She then became the mother of ten children in rapid succession, the last of whom was born in 1556. She was born at Florence in 1519, and died at Blois in January 1589.

carved up and made France sweat, and was never satisfied, but always asked for more !

Wonderful or no, during the declining years of François I. her influence was sufficient to make him appear as a nullity, and being thrown constantly into the scale against the King contributed largely to the exaltation of his rival the Emperor. In good sooth, Diane de Poitiers proved herself the worthy captain of the party of the *honnêtes gens*, of which the lieutenant was Anne de Montmorency, Constable of France.

CHAPTER XLVI

The Forced Marriage of Jeanne d'Albret

1541

FRANÇOIS I., by this alliance with Charles V., stipulated to defend the States of the Emperor during the war against the Turks, and thus went over body and soul to the reaction against the Reformation in Europe, and especially in France. For it was solely owing to the constant intervention of Soliman in the south of Europe that Charles V. had hitherto been unable to carry out his pet scheme of crushing the Protestant Princes, and compelled, on the other hand, to temporise with them for his own ends, in order to secure their armed co-operation instead of being compelled to face their armed rebellion.

From the date of the ten years' truce agreed to at Nice, Charles, however, was left with a free hand to go ahead as he chose in Germany, and as he never gave up any project upon which he had set his mind, no matter how much or how long he might dissimulate, the Emperor soon proceeded to show that his promises made at Ratisbon to respect the Reformed religion were nothing better than a farce.

With his great rival Charles felt that, for a long time to come at all events, he would no longer have to contend, but into the circumstances concerning his imprisonment of the Elector Henry of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse, and the story of his consequent triumphs in Germany, we do not now propose to enter, but rather

to confine ourselves as much as possible to the subject of his relations with the husband of his sister Éléonore.

In the year 1539 things were going very badly for Charles V. in several directions, and it may be safely said that then the weight of Montmorency and the party of the Dauphin proved his salvation. In Spain he was most unpopular and being threatened by the nobles and the Cortes ; in the Low Countries the excessive war taxation imposed by the Governess, Queen Marie of Hungary, had caused rebellion and outrage at Ghent, and in his unpaid armies all was revolt and mutiny everywhere. Thus the Emperor was at a very low ebb.

The insurgents in the Low Countries were treating with François, and offering him, in return for his armed assistance, their country as a Kingdom for his younger son. Here was a splendid acquisition assured, and lying close at hand, a tangible scheme far better than the nebulous recovery of the distant Milan.

What did François do? Did he jump at it? Did he ever jump at anything that was really to his advantage? Montmorency reminded him of the promises that Charles had made at Nice, and then the King committed a base act of treachery. He sent to Charles and told him all about the propositions made to him by the Belgians, he even had the infamy to lay their correspondence before his rival. This abominable action, which was equivalent to cutting off a number of heads and torturing a quantity of people with his own hands, François committed to please the Emperor, so that he might not by any chance forget to give Milan to the Duc d'Orléans, with his niece. At the same time, marvellous to relate, François accorded to Charles the permission to pass from Spain through France, in order to go and punish his rebellious subjects in the Low Countries. He was afraid of proceeding by sea for fear of capture by the fleets of Henry VIII., and to go by Italy and Germany would take too long. Just at this period, by a lucky chance for Charles, Barbarossa destroyed four thousand of his mutinous Spaniards, in a little

Italian town called Castel-Nuovo, while the Viceroy of Naples cunningly contrived the dispersion and massacre in detail in Sicily of six thousand more turbulent Spaniards, whom he had removed by ship from Tunis, ninety miles away.

Being thus relieved from the necessity of paying his old Spanish troops, when Charles wanted new ones he only raised three thousand with difficulty. The spirit of American adventure was in the air, and the Spaniard would far rather embark in some maritime expedition to rob the Indians of Mexico or Peru and to return laden with gold, than run the risk of having his throat cut by a Turk in Hungary or his weasand slit by a Frenchman or German on the frontiers of France and Italy.

Weak as he had become, when, on August 5th, 1539, Montmorency, the Constable, sent to Charles and revealed to him all the details of French diplomacy in Turkey and England, the Emperor became strong again. He saw the loving arms of François extended to him, and resolved to throw himself into them with confidence. Were not his sister, Diane de Poitiers, the Dauphin, and Montmorency all at the French Court to protect him? He determined, accordingly, to take advantage of the leave accorded him to traverse France; he would go to Paris and tell a few lies about surrendering Milan, and then retire to the Low Countries, polish off his rebellious subjects there, then snap his fingers at François and say that if he had seemed to promise Milan he had not understood what he was saying, that he had meant something entirely different.

This was exactly the course that Charles pursued, and, if ever in the past François had behaved dishonourably to him, the Emperor now repaid the dishonour with interest. For lying and deceit, if the palm were to be accorded to either of the rivals, after his splendid procession through France and hospitable reception in Paris, the crown of dishonour belonged to Charles V.

While Diane de Poitiers had made a lover of Henri the Dauphin, the harum-scarum young Charles, Duc d'Orléans,



From an engraving after a picture by G. P. Harding.

KING FRANÇOIS I. AND THE EMPEROR CHARLES V.

had attached himself to the skirts of Anne de Pisseleu. During the visit of the Emperor, the Duc Charles and his party of young Knights offered to the King's mistress to carry off the Emperor, and shut him up until Milan was actually placed in the hands of the credulous King. They also made another proposal, one which was, we should imagine, particularly acceptable to the Duchesse d'Étampes. This was to seize her rival, Diane de Poitiers, and spoil her beauty by slitting her nose, or cutting it off. The playful Duc d'Orléans represented that it was scarcely probable that his brother Henri would continue to be subjugated by the fascinations of Diane after she had been deprived of her nasal organ.

The Emperor, however, made friends, as we have already described, with Anne de Pisseleu, and, for some reason or other, Diane de Poitiers was allowed to retain her nose.

Charles V. came into France, stayed a week of festivity in Paris, and passed on to the Low Countries in safety, although several contretemps occurred on the way. A block of wood fell upon his head in one place, he was nearly stifled in another, while at the Castle of Amboise he and those with him, including François, were nearly burned alive, owing to a page accidentally setting fire with his torch to the tapestry hangings in a corridor. François, in his polite excuses to his guest, offered to hang the Royal page on the spot, but the Emperor, not to be outdone in politeness, declared that there was really no occasion for the King, his host, to put himself out so much as to deprive himself of the services of his young attendant, after having already suffered the loss of his splendid tapestry.

By the month of February 1540, after having cruelly punished his rebellious subjects in Ghent, Charles found himself firm on his feet once more. When he now so plainly showed how completely he had hocused the King of France about Milan, Montmorency, although unauthorised to do so, wrote to the Emperor to try to regain him, offering on behalf of the King his master to

give French troops to fight against the German Protestant Princes. When Charles published this letter, as may well be supposed, there was little confidence left in Germany for the French King. Montmorency, however, suffered in his own credit at the French Court, and, in consequence, at the instigation of Marguerite, to whom he had long been hostile, the King publicly humiliated the Constable upon the occasion of the first marriage of the child-heiress of Navarre.

Jeanne d'Albret, the young daughter of Marguerite and Henri, King of Navarre, had been forcibly brought up in France by her uncle the King. While her father had frequently been in communication with the Emperor, with a view to the marriage of this little girl to the Infante, afterwards Philip II., François had proved too cunning to give any opportunity for this Spanish marriage, by which Henri d'Albret hoped to recover his lost dominions in Spain.

Jeanne being kept closely, although with considerable grandeur, at the Castle of Plessis-les-Tours, it was only by trickery or some sudden *coup de main* that d'Albret could hope to carry off his daughter to Béarn with him, whence it would be easy for him to pass her into Spain. There was only one such opportunity for Henri to seize his daughter, which was when she was in the south of France with the Court to meet the Emperor on his journey to Paris. Unfortunately Charles had not yet quite made up his mind about the marriage, and, as the King of Navarre was not willing to enrage his brother-in-law François for nothing, the chance was lost. Shortly after having deceived the King concerning Milan, and safely got through France to Flanders, Charles V. sent his Ambassador, François de Bonvalot, to demand the hand of Jeanne d'Albret from the French King for his son Philip. At the same time, instead of the promised Milan, Charles offered the Low Countries, Gueldre, Zutphen, and the renunciation of his own rights over Burgundy as a dowry for his daughter on her proposed marriage to the Duc d'Orléans.

These offers were absolutely valueless. The Low Countries, disgusted with François, no longer wanted a French prince. Gueldre and Zutphen now belonged, by purchase from his uncle the ruined Charles d'Egmont, to the Duke of Cleves, a German Prince hostile to the House of Austria ; while Burgundy and Charolais, which Charles offered so magnanimously to resign, had for long past effectually belonged to France.

As regards the marriage of Jeanne d'Albret, the King refused to agree; he said that the parties were too young, that there were more pressing matters to be arranged, that he wanted that concerning Milan settled first. The King and Queen of Navarre were both greatly disappointed at this reply, for they naturally considered that François should have given his consent, in their interests, while stipulating for the return of Spanish Navarre to Henri d'Albret.

There were, however, other candidates in the field for Jeanne, who, born in 1528, was now twelve years of age. These were Antoine de Bourbon, a young Prince of the Blood, and François de Lorraine, of the Ducal House of Guise. Considerable jealousy existed between these two applicants for the hand of the child-Princess, who fought with each other with considerable valour in the lists on her account, and subsequently quarrelled in the presence of the King. The King, instead of promising his niece to either of them, made entirely other arrangements, which were as distasteful to the twelve-year-old girl as they were to her father.

These were to promise her hand to the warlike Duke William of Cleves, and, in spite of the opposition of the King of Navarre, a contract with this enemy of the Emperor was signed at Anet in 1540.

Cleves was already in very bad odour with Charles, who had sought to cause this young Prince to resign the Duchy of Gueldre in his favour. Had it not been for his warlike preparations, these estates would have been already taken from him by force, and now the announcement of his engagement to Jeanne d'Albret was con-

sidered as being tantamount to a declaration of war on his behalf against his liege lord, Charles V.

Escaping the Emperor's minions, who were secretly waiting to assassinate or arrest him, Cleves arrived in Paris in April 1541. There now ensued a battle-royal between François and the King and Queen of Navarre, who tried to make every delay in the marriage of their daughter with a German Prince, one, moreover, whom the child herself declared that nothing on earth should induce her to accept.

François, anxious for the support of Cleves against the Emperor, and determined that the young Princess should not be married into Spain, became very angry. He vowed that he would marry his niece Jeanne by force to the Duke William "not as a Princess of Navarre, but as the mere daughter of the House of Albret, and as such his vassal."

Marguerite, who could not for long resist her brother's will, now came over to his side; but Jeanne wrote out a protestation, which she signed and had witnessed by the principal officers of her Household, to the effect that, although her mother was causing her to be flogged and ill-treated (*fessée et maltraitée*), she would only be dragged to the altar with Cleves by force.

The King of France now in person endeavoured to overcome the obstinate young girl's opposition. To his question: "Why do you not wish to marry the Duke?" Jeanne replied diplomatically: "Because I do not want to leave you." François, mollified, answered that she and her husband should live in France. "I will rather throw myself down a well!" was the determined reply of the now thirteen-year-old Princess of Navarre.

François wreaked his rage upon Aymée de Lafayette, Jeanne's governess, whom he terrified by swearing that he would cut some heads off. To this lady's son-in-law, the Vicomte de Lavedan, he exclaimed furiously: "I swear to God that I will punish you!" and Madame de Lafayette was caused to administer violent whippings to Jeanne.

In spite of all her tears and opposition, neither Jeanne nor the King of Navarre could resist the will of the King of France, especially as Marguerite was working constantly in his interest, and already treating the Duke of Cleves affectionately, as a son-in-law.

Although the child fell into ill health, she was married by force, in the presence of the King and the whole Court, on June 14th, 1541. Wearing a golden crown and attired in a dress of gold and silver, heavy with jewels, Jeanne stubbornly declared that she was unable to walk up the church.

Then it was that the displeasure of the King against his former favourite Montmorency became apparent to all. François ordered the Constable to carry the Princess to the altar. He told her to take his niece *au col*. Montmorency could but obey, and burdening himself with the now big girl, heavily weighted as she was with gold and precious stones, bore her to the altar, where the Duke of Cleves placed a diamond ring upon her finger.

The Court was stupefied at the insult to the Constable, but the Queen of Navarre openly showed her pleasure at his humiliation. To his friends Montmorency remarked : " It is all up with my favour. Adieu ! "

There was a grand dinner, followed by a ball and mummeries, after the wedding, but Marguerite obtained from the Duke a promise that the marriage should not be consummated for a year, on account of her daughter's youth and ill health.

The farce, however, was gone through of making them man and wife. According to the German Ambassador Dr. Olisleger : " They were put to bed together in their chemises, while the King, the King and Queen of Navarre, the Duchesse d'Étampes, *grande maîtresse de cour*, after the King had drawn the curtains, went to talk in the embrasure of a window. After a time the Duke was taken away by them to another room, the King calling him ' my son. ' "

In the following days a defensive alliance was made between the King and the Duke of Cleves, and the

marriage was taken to prove that the Duchesse d'Étampes had entirely reasserted her influence, and was now the real Sovereign at the Court of France. Even the Queen Éléonore humiliated herself before her. Writing to Spain, to the Grand Commander of Leon, she says when speaking of the King's dispositions towards peace: "Those of the Duchesse d'Étampes are the capital point."

The Duchesse was not, however, always faithful to the King, and the Queen Marguerite of Navarre spoke of her infidelities with a gentleman named Le Bossut de Longueval.

When the Constable de Montmorency, after this marriage, sought to regain her favour, Anne de Pisseleu would have none of him, but said: "He is a big rascal; he has deceived the King by saying that the Emperor would give him Milan at once, when he well knew to the contrary."

Not long before this wedding the Constable had brought about the disgrace and imprisonment of his rival, the Admiral Philippe Chabot de Brion, whose pretty young wife had attracted the attention of the King. The Duchesse, however, now procured the return to favour of Chabot, while de Montmorency remained in evil odour.

Shortly after this marriage the emissaries of François to Venice and Constantinople, Cæsar Fregoso, son of the Doge of Genoa, and the corpulent Captain Antoine Rincon, were proceeding together on their mission and travelling through Italy. Rincon being unable to ride on account of his weight, the Ambassadors decided to descend the river Po in a boat. Although they had been warned by Guillaume du Bellay, who was in Piedmont at Rivoli, that the Marquis del Guasto, the Governor of Milan, intended to murder them, in order to procure their despatches for the Emperor, they pooh-poohed the warning as Fregoso, having formerly served with Guasto, said he was too good a soldier and comrade to commit such a crime. They, however, sent back their written despatches to du Bellay, and proceeded down the river, when they

were duly waylaid by armed men in boats, and murdered not far from Pavia.

This dastardly murder of his Ambassadors caused François to get ready for his last war with Charles, who in this same year, 1541, was most miserably defeated in an expedition which he made to Algiers against the Algerine pirates. It was owing to his own obstinacy that he failed so lamentably, as Doria, in charge of the fleet, had assured him repeatedly that the season was too far advanced and that the elements were bound to be against him.

Continued hurricanes and torrents of rain caused the loss of most of the Emperor's shipping, and likewise extinguished the matches of his arquebus-men, who thus, after having landed, became the easy prey of the Algerines. The slaughter of the Emperor's men was awful, and the remnant nearly died of starvation while retreating along the coast to the few ships which Doria managed to bring back to pick up the survivors. In this retreat Charles displayed great personal courage, fighting on foot with the rear-guard to cover the embarkation of the miserable remains of his army.

Upon his return to Europe, the first action of the Emperor was to threaten the Duke of Cleves, who was recruiting troops for, his uncle by marriage, François I., and upon November 12th, 1541, the last war commenced between the two great rivals.

France was now alone in Europe, where she found no support among the anti-Catholic party. With exception of the troops being raised for him by the Catholic Duke of Cleves, François could not obtain a man in Germany. He accordingly sent to Sweden and Denmark to endeavour to enrol mercenaries, also to Switzerland.

In this last war François managed to put five armies into the field, and the rival Princes, the Dauphin and the Duc d'Orléans, each had a command. But very few French soldiers of the middle class were employed owing to the jealousy of the nobles, who declared that "the villeins want to make themselves gentlemen." The family of

Guise, belonging to the reigning Ducal family of Lorraine, was now commencing to show the ascendancy which it afterwards held in France. Accordingly, while Claude de Guise went off with the Duc d'Orléans and the army of the north to invade Luxembourg, his son François joined the Dauphin in the south, and with him invaded the Emperor's province of Roussillon.

CHAPTER XLVII

The End of the Struggle

1547

HENRY VIII. was disgusted with François for upsetting his plans in Scotland, by first giving his daughter Madeleine, and when she died Marie, the sister of François de Guise, to James V., which latter Princess became the mother of Mary, Queen of Scots, in December 1542.

In consequence of his pique, and his matrimonial vagaries, the conduct of Henry VIII. had a considerable effect upon this last tussle between the two great rivals.

The English King, having achieved the summit of his happiness by marrying Anne Boleyn on January 25th, 1533, declared himself as being even more happy when he had caused her head to be cut off on Tower Hill on May 19th, 1536.

Upon the following day he married a fresh beauty, Jane Seymour, who died after giving birth to Edward VI.

With Anne of Cleves, the sister of Duke William, a marriage contract was signed upon September 4th, 1539, but upon the appearance of this German Princess in England in the following month, Henry expressed his absolute disgust at her appearance. He called her "a Flanders mare," and, although he married her, the marriage was never consummated. On June 9th, 1540, the King of England divorced his fourth wife, while settling some large estates upon her, and ordering her on no account to leave England.

For so long as the Duke of Cleves had been the brother-in-law of Henry VIII., the Emperor had not ventured to attack him in force, but after his sister's divorce had been pronounced, he had lost his importance as the ally of England.

Cleves, being now nothing but the nephew by marriage and active friend of his rival François, Charles determined to lose no time in endeavouring to bring him to reason. He had the greater confidence in his approaching success from the fact that Henry VIII. now became the open foe both of François I. and of his former brother-in-law, Cleves, and in 1543 concluded an alliance with Charles V.

Previously to this, relying on the promises of support from François, William of Cleves had taken the field, and, after first beating the Flemish army of the Emperor's sister Marie, Queen of Hungary, the Governess of the Netherlands, commanded by the Prince of Orange, had then administered severe punishment to another force led by the able Count van Buren.

The French, at the same time, under the youthful Antoine de Bourbon and the Duc d'Orléans, had entered Flanders, taken several cities, and likewise Luxembourg.

All for a time continued to go well with that bold warrior the Duke of Cleves, who next smashed up an army under the Duke of Arschott, and whose subsequent feat was to vanquish the Duke of Nassau. François I. at the same time entered Hainault and took the city of Landrecies.

All of these advantages over the Emperor were wasted, owing to the conduct of the Duc d'Orléans and the King his father. The former, jealous of his brother the Dauphin, foolishly left his command, and hurried off to the south of France, to join him when he heard that a big battle was expected shortly, a battle which never took place.

François I., who was taking matters very easily besieging Perpignan, broke his promise to assist Cleves when Charles, arriving from Spain, took command in

person of an army of forty thousand men, and announced his intention of chastising the Duke William.

Charles advanced against Cleves, and sent forward this great force under Gonzaga, the Marquis of Mantua. After a terrific struggle at Dueren, in the Duchy of Juliers, which belonged to the Duke William, that city was entered.

In order to strike terror, Charles now gave orders that the whole of the defenders of Dueren should be put to the sword. There were ten thousand Spaniards in his force, and they not only murdered all whom they met, but sacked the city, with their usual refined cruelty and rapacity.

William of Cleves was possessed of plenty of backbone, but what could he, a mere German princeling, do single-handed against all the might of the Empire? He tried to defend Venloo, his strongest place, but his garrison and the inhabitants, warned by the example of Dueren, refused to fight.

The Duke of Cleves was therefore compelled to submit, when the Duke of Brunswick personally conducted him to Charles, before whom he was obliged to fall on his knees and humbly beg for mercy.

While the Emperor stared haughtily at one whom he termed his vassal, without making any reply, the Duke of Brunswick endeavoured to make excuses for Cleves, throwing all the blame for his conduct upon his mother, the Duchess Maria of Juliers, who had always been the partisan of France, and had but lately died.

Charles V. still glared ferociously at the Duke of Cleves without answering a word, but at length he relented, owing to Brunswick's well-chosen excuses. The Emperor raised up the Duke of Cleves, shook hands with him and forgave him, while annexing the estates that he had purchased from his late uncle, Charles d'Egmont, Duc de Gueldre, and which the Emperor had always claimed.

The Duke William signed the Treaty of Venloo on September 7th, 1543, by which he abandoned the alliance

with France. While, for a time, Charles left the Prince of Orange as Governor over Gueldre, Cleves, and Zutphen, he eventually restored his Duchies to the Duke, and even later gave him his niece in marriage.

After conquering the husband of Jeanne d'Albret, the Emperor, who had already for years past been a sufferer from the gout, was obliged to retire to Brussels to rest. Although he had been joined by six thousand English under Sir John Wallop, he had failed in retaking Landrecies from François.

The King of France, after failing to take Perpignan, and having, by his own fault, lost his useful ally Cleves, had been having a very enjoyable time hunting in the neighbourhood of Rheims, when, to his surprise, he received a message from the Duke William requesting him to be so good as to forward his wife to him. He represented that it was by no means his own fault if he had been compelled to submit to superior force, but that, nevertheless, he held to his young wife, and would send Ambassadors for her.

François was furious, while the Queen of Navarre now displayed all the antipathy which she had secretly felt against the marriage of her daughter. Marguerite declared that Jeanne was about as much joined to Cleves as she herself to the Emperor, to whom she had once been semi-betrothed.

A refusal was sent to the Duke of Cleves, and then this Prince, by the good offices of the Emperor with Paul III., contrived to obtain a dispensation of divorce from Jeanne in January 1545. After this, as he was happily united in marriage to the Archduchess Marie, daughter of the Archduke Ferdinand, King of Hungary, and was, moreover, restored his forfeited dominions, William had no cause to complain of his lot.

Jeanne being now free, her father and mother sought to marry her again, but to different Princes. While Marguerite was in favour of her nephew the Duc d'Orléans, Henri d'Albret, who had been taking no part in this last war against the Emperor, got into touch with

him again without allowing his wife to have an inkling of what he was doing.

Philip, the Infante of Spain, had just lost, in her sixteenth year, his wife Maria of Portugal, who died in childbirth. Charles and the King of Navarre now began to discuss the old subject of Philip marrying Jeanne, but they could not agree on the subject of the return of Navarre.

Marguerite's plan for giving her daughter to d'Orléans was upset in a different manner. This fiery young fellow, who was greatly beloved by François, as his wildness reminded him of his own dissipated youth, died in August 1545 of the plague, which he had contracted by his own folly. While with the army near Abbeville, he stayed in a château where there had been a case of plague in one of the bedrooms. This room the Duc d'Orléans preferred to that which had been allotted to himself, but he was warned not to occupy it. "Bah!" exclaimed the Prince, "who ever heard of the pestilence attacking one of the Royal Blood?"

Calling several of his wild companions to him, Charles, Duc d'Orléans, entered the room. With their swords they playfully ripped up the mattress and the pillows of the bed, filling the air with the feathers. Sleeping there on the following night, the young man was attacked with the disease. During its course the King showed the greatest courage; he could not be kept from the infected chamber, and frequently took his plague-stricken boy in his fatherly arms. When the Duc d'Orléans died, François was inconsolable. He had now lost his two favourite sons, and there was only left to him Henri, who, with Diane de Poitiers, opposed his father in every possible way.

In the course of this war the Infidel Turkish fleet, under Barbarossa, gave its assistance to Christian and Catholic France, where the chief directors of affairs of State were now the two Cardinals of Lorraine and Tournon. It was a strange combination, and one which shocked Europe.

In company with Barbarossa, the gallant young Comte d'Enghien besieged in vain the Duke of Savoy's last retreat at Nice. A Savoyard gentleman, named de Montfort, made, however, a most gallant defence. After first repulsing with loss a combined assault of the enemy, who appeared together against him under the Crescent and the Cross, de Montfort occupied the citadel, situated on a strong rock, and could not be dislodged before the Marquis del Guasto arrived by land, and Andrea Doria by sea, to relieve him. The Algerines, compelled to retire, were now put by the French into the port of Toulon, where they showed their impartiality by ravaging the neighbouring coasts of Provence, and carrying off many French girls, and also French men as slaves for their galleys. In the following year these barbarous allies of France carried off six thousand slaves from Tuscany, and eight thousand from Naples, including two hundred virgins from the convents, especially selected as a present for the Sultan Soliman, who had himself completely overrun Hungary once more.

The young Comte d'Enghien, who was a Bourbon, the son of Charles Duc de Vendôme, made up, in April 1544, for his reverse before Nice by a brilliant victory at Ceresola in Piedmont, called by the French *Cérisoles*.

The rival of the Guises, he was the rival also of the Dauphin, to whose party those of this Lorraine family had attached themselves. Enghien was compelled to send a special messenger, named de Montluc, in order to ask that he might, instead of retiring, as those of the opposing faction desired him to do, be allowed the opportunity of distinguishing himself by giving battle to an Imperial army advancing against him, under the Marquis del Guasto, the murderer of Rincon and Fregoso.

De Montluc, by his eloquence, persuaded the King, who sent the required permission to the Comte d'Enghien. The forces of this gallant young man consisted of seventeen thousand Swiss, Gascons, and Italians, many volunteer French nobles being also under his command. The army of del Guasto was composed of a superior force of

Germans and Spanish. The battle was one of the most hardly contested since the famous fight at Ravenna in 1512, when that brilliant boy Gaston de Foix lost his life in the moment of victory by his own foolhardiness.

In the course of the action Enghien, with a party of young Knights, made a magnificent charge, in which he penetrated the serried ranks of the veteran Spaniards from front to rear. Trying to return, he found himself nearly alone, he had lost so many of his brave companions. He found, however, that he had gained the victory—the battle was won. Del Guasto had fled, leaving twelve thousand of his men dead on the field. This brilliant feat of arms availed, however, but little to France, as Charles V. now invaded Champagne, pushing the Dauphin before him in the direction where the English awaited.

The mutual selfishness of the Emperor and Henry VIII. saved the French, however, as, instead of combining, as had been agreed upon, to march on Paris, each followed his own devices. Thus, while the Emperor dallied to besiege certain towns and thus delayed needlessly, Henry VIII., who had set his mind on the capture of the port of Boulogne, directed all the efforts of his arms to the reduction of that place. In the meantime all of Champagne was laid waste by the French themselves, so that when eventually, after a long delay before Saint-Dizier, Charles advanced, as had happened previously in Provence, his army ran great risk of starvation.

The brave Comte d'Enghien did not long survive his triumph at Ceresola. He was killed by François de Guise. In a supposed friendly game of snowballing, this subsequently famous member of the Lorraine family threw a small iron casket at the head of Enghien, which caused his death.¹ This murder was, so the murderer stated, committed by the orders of Henri the Dauphin.

The King now found himself indeed alone, while the

¹ The date of this crime was the 23rd of February 1546; François d'Enghien was only twenty-seven when Guise thus cut short his brilliant career.

Duchesse d'Étampes had everything to fear from the Dauphin, who, with his party, commenced to have absolute control in the kingdom. The health of François was by this time in such a bad state that for a great part of the time he was utterly unable to attend to business, while the duties of his *maitresse en titre* became nothing but those of a sick-nurse.

While in this feeble condition, François, in 1545, allowed the Cardinal de Tournon to extract from him a paper to punish the chiefs of the large religious sect of the Vaudois, formerly known as the Waldenses, from the name of Waldo their founder. This document, by a forgery, the infamous Cardinal changed into an order to kill all those of this religious persuasion. Many villages in the south of France were entirely destroyed and their inhabitants massacred by the Baron d'Oppède and his brutal soldiers, many of whom had been taken from the galleys to accomplish this wholesale massacre of harmless, God-fearing people, who were taken entirely by surprise when the murderers arrived.

Many of these villages were not on French ground, but on the Papal territory of Avignon, but that did not save them. By the order of the Papal Legate at Avignon, twenty-five women who had escaped were stifled with smoke in a cave, while in another place five hundred dead bodies were found in a church—but this was on adjacent French territory. During this awful persecution of the Vaudois, which is perhaps the worst blot on the reign of François I., no woman's honour was respected, all were treated as at the sack of a city by the horrible ruffians employed by the Baron d'Oppède. When the blood-stained soldiery returned from their butchery, they behaved as though they were Turks, carrying off young girls and boys with them as slaves, whom they eventually sold.

While a cry of execration against the King arose from Germany and Switzerland, in Spain this awful crime was applauded as a meritorious action — a well-merited destruction of heretics. François himself was, however,

made to swallow the forgery, and to accept the responsibility for what had happened, it being represented to him that those thus slaughtered in cold blood were a mere nest of rebels about to rise in insurrection against his authority.

Of real authority, however, François possessed none ; the King had become the mere plaything of those around him, even by the time of the termination of his last war with Charles V. This took place at a small town named Crépy-en-Valois, near Meaux, and only some forty miles from Paris, in September 1544.

The Emperor, after losing a vast number of his men, was about to retreat for want of food when (as her enemies said, by the information supplied to him by the Duchesse d'Étampes) he learned of the presence of a large quantity of supplies for the French troops at Épernay and Château-Thierry on the Marne. Seizing these magazines by forced marches, Charles established himself within a couple of days' march of Paris. Although the Dauphin Henri contrived to send eight thousand troops into the capital, nothing probably could have saved Paris from the Imperialists but that which happened some distance away, on the northern coast.

This was that Henry VIII. captured Boulogne, and having done so was contented. He refused to budge another inch to help Charles. Learning this, the Emperor was quite ready to open peace negotiations with François, especially as he had the gout badly. As usual in these treaties, Charles made fresh deceitful promises concerning the giving of Milan to Charles, Duc d'Orléans, who was then still alive. François had, on his side, to resign Savoy, with exception of two strong places, and to repeat the humiliating renunciations that he had made on previous occasions.

The worst feature of this peace was that François disgracefully undertook, against the interests of his sister Marguerite, that he would give no aid to the King of Navarre to recover his Spanish Kingdom.

While François, although suffering from a most painful

disease, still continued to go hunting during the last years of his life, often being borne in a litter, he was very low in health by January 1547, in which month he suffered a severe shock by the news of the death of the King of England.

François, strange to say, had always been much attached to Henry VIII., and when that Royal husband of six wives was removed by death on January 28th, he feared that his own decease would soon follow. By the end of February, after several days' hunting at Rambouillet, his painful disease assumed a still more acute stage. Nevertheless, up to the last François was exerting himself to stir up the various countries of Europe against his rival once more, and Charles, who was well aware of his intrigues, trembled at the prospect of a new French war, which would interrupt him in his drastic operations for the disciplining of the various German Princes of the Protestant faith.

The Germans were commencing not only to listen to François, but to turn to him for assistance, when Charles V., who was at Madrid, received the most joyful tidings for which he could have wished. This was that, his great rival, François I., had died at Rambouillet on March 31st, 1547.

François I. had been for thirty-three years on the throne, and was fifty-three years old when he died, and for no less than twenty-eight years his life had been one of long-continued rivalry with the Emperor, a rivalry which had not interested France alone, but at different times involved nearly all the States of Europe in the quarrel.

By his death the mind of Charles V. was greatly relieved, and the Emperor was left free to follow the objects of his ambition with only Henri II. to oppose him, a Prince whom he knew to be in no way possessed of his father's great abilities.

Characteristically, Charles exclaimed hypocritically upon hearing the eventful news: "He is dead! the great Prince! Nature will never make another like him!"



After the picture by Holbein.

HENRY VIII.

CHAPTER XLVIII

Love Match of Jeanne and Death of Charles V

1548 AND 1558

DURING the last hours of François I. the Dauphin and Diane de Poitiers behaved with indecent gaiety. When he was gone and Henri II. had become King in his stead, Montmorency was instantly recalled to the Court, while Diane indulged in her triumph over the Duchesse d'Étampes.

This lady had retired to Limours before François died, and upon her return she found that the Constable de Montmorency and his gentlemen had cavalierly occupied her apartments at Saint-Germain. The neglected Queen Éléonore was at the Convent of Poissy, and Henri II. visited her there, and politely asked the Emperor's sister to remain in France. Éléonore consented to do this upon the condition that she was allowed to send away from the Court the Dame de Canaples, a young beauty who had been a mistress of François I. This lady's revengeful husband now treated her much as the Comte de Châteaubriand had formerly treated his wife—he confined his unfaithful spouse for life in a convent.

Owing to the renewal of hostilities with Charles V., the Queen Éléonore only remained for a year and a half in France, after which she joined the Emperor in Flanders, thoroughly contented to turn her back upon the French Court for ever.

The Duchesse d'Étampes, upon her return to find

her apartments occupied, demanded an audience of the new King, who only treated her with indignity, while general hatred was shown to her on all sides. While all her jewels were torn from her, for the benefit of Diane de Poitiers,¹ the Chancellor Olivier brought an accusation against "la vie et vexations de la dame d'Étampes." Her "agent de confiance" and lover, Bossut de Longueval, was arrested under disgraceful circumstances. He was seized unexpectedly in the middle of the night in the bedroom of a beautiful young Italian lady who was maid-of-honour to the new Queen, Catherine de Médicis. As a writer of the time said: "Et Dieu sait si l'on a ri de la honte quil reçut méritoirement." He was sent to the Bastille, while his mistress, Anne de Pisseleu, Duchesse d'Étampes, after being fleeced of nearly all her possessions, was glad to be able to retire to a distant part of the country and there remain.

Not long after the death of his father, Henri II. gave orders for the burial of François I. and his two brothers, the late Dauphin and the Duc d'Orléans, together at Saint-Denis. Watching the procession of coffins, Henri remarked brutally, pointing to that of his brother Charles d'Orléans, which came first: "Do you see that bellwether? he heads the advance-guard of my happiness!"

By one person François was deeply mourned—this was his sister Marguerite, who during the whole of the winter before his decease had, in her distant Béarnese dominions, lived in an agony of fear on his account. She retired for a time to a convent, where she long waited for news which never came. At length, fifteen days after the King's death, she first learned of that event from a half-crazy nun, when she nearly lost her own senses from the shock.

¹ On the death of Henry II., Diane, in turn, was forced by Catherine de Médicis to restore this ill-gotten plunder, largely consisting of jewels belonging to the Crown. The Guise faction, however, prevented Catherine from keeping the jewels for herself; she was compelled to surrender them to, the niece of the Guises, the young Queen Mary of Scotland, then married to the boy-king François II.

While mourning her brother, Marguerite was compelled, however, to think about the future of her daughter Jeanne, who, now a girl of nineteen and remarkably pretty, was leading a life of extreme gaiety at the new Court, where her constant extravagances were a source of the greatest embarrassment to the King and Queen of Navarre.

The cost of the toilettes of this giddy young Princess was immense, and when, owing to the non-payment of her pensions by her nephew King Henri, Marguerite at Nérac wrote to expostulate, she merely received for reply from Jeanne that she was only spending that which was becoming in a Royal Princess at the Court of Paris. Suspecting the plans of his uncle for marrying his cousin Jeanne into Spain, Henri now ordered Montmorency to open the Queen of Navarre's letters in transition. The new King was, moreover, determined to marry off Jeanne quickly in France, and to spoil any such Spanish project. With a view to preserving for France the succession of what remained of the Kingdom of Navarre, he proposed eventually to marry her to his cousin, the First Prince of the Blood.

This was Antoine de Bourbon, Duc de Vendôme, who, in the event of the death of the sickly Dauphin who afterwards became François II., would become heir to the throne of France.¹

While the self-willed Jeanne flatly declared that she would not marry Vendôme's rival, François de Lorraine, later Duc de Guise, she looked with a favourable eye upon Vendôme. He was young and rich, handsome and brave, and, seeing him frequently, Jeanne fell in love with him.

Merely to please his middle-aged mistress Diane de

¹ Antoine, son of Charles de Bourbon, Duc de Vendôme, was descended from the Comte de Clermont, sixth son of Louis IX., called Saint Louis, who died during the ninth crusade in 1270. After the death of Henri II.'s four sons by Catherine de Médicis, three of whom reigned, as François II., Charles IX., and Henri III., the Valois line of Kings ended. The son of Antoine de Bourbon and Jeanne d'Albret, the famed Henri de Navarre, then ascended the throne of France as the first of the Bourbon Kings.

Poitiers, whose daughter had been married to a brother of this Guise, the Duc de Mayenne, Henri at first proposed François de Lorraine to the Princess as an eligible *parti*. Her reply was scornful: "Would you allow, Sire, that she who would have to carry my train should become my sister-in-law, and that the daughter of Madame de Valentinois [Diane] should go alongside of me?"

This settled the matter. In spite of the objections of the King of Navarre, Henri II. at length compelled him to agree to the marriage of his daughter with the brilliant but extravagant young Duc de Vendôme.

Henri d'Albret only did so, however, after first scolding Vendôme roundly on the subject of his prodigality, and telling him plainly that when he became his son-in-law, and the heir to Navarre, he would have to pull in his horns and behave himself better. Marguerite liked the idea of the match even less than did her jovial scapegrace of a husband, but she had to give way to the will of the King, and to her daughter, whose determination to marry Vendôme was as great as it had been not to marry Cleves.

Upon the return of Henry II. from a journey to Turin in Piedmont, over which country he now ruled, he stopped at the sumptuous old château of the Bourbons at Moulins, which had been taken by Louise de Savoie from the unfortunate Constable de Bourbon and annexed to the Crown. Here Henri decided, in October 1548, that the marriage of Jeanne should be celebrated without any further delay, and accordingly sent for the bride's father and mother to come and join him there at once, while promising to Henri d'Albret to give him an income of fifteen thousand livres yearly, secured on the revenues of Gascony.

As the King of Navarre was himself the Governor of Gascony for the King of France, he was satisfied with this arrangement, which he determined to see carried out according to the letter.

With great magnificence the marriage of Jeanne was celebrated at Moulins on October 20th, 1548. When,

shortly after the marriage, the happy pair went off together to the Duchy of Vendôme, Queen Marguerite wept bitterly, when Henri II. wrote facetiously concerning this occurrence to Montmorency : "She hardly loves her son-in-law."

That afterwards Marguerite was, however, reconciled to the match which made of her daughter the mother of the future gallant Henri IV. of France is evident to all those who have read her licentious work, the "Heptameron." Therein, with great good-humour, she relates a *risqué* story concerning an adventure which befel her daughter Jeanne and her husband Antoine de Bourbon while on their honeymoon.

Marguerite de Valois, Queen of Navarre, died at Odos, near Tarbes, on December 21st, 1549, in all the odour of sanctity as a Catholic, and not as one of the Reformed faith, towards which she had for a considerable period of her life shown such a considerable leaning. The cause of her death was a chill, contracted while standing on her balcony watching a comet. The Lutherans raised a great outcry against the deceased Princess, as having been nothing better than an apostate, when they learned of her death with crucifix in hand, after receiving the last rites of the Church from which she had formerly endeavoured to wean her mother, Louise de Savoie, and her brother, François I.

Nor had the Catholics, who remembered her former protection of those whom they sought to burn as heretics, a good word to say for her memory. The former quasi-ruler of France, the clever Marguerite, died, in fact, regretted by very few, and least of all by her husband.

The King of Navarre, after thinking for a time of marrying again, resolved that a bachelor existence was, after all, more to his liking. Completely reconciling himself to his son-in-law, he called him with his daughter Jeanne to his Court, and entrusted the Duc de Vendôme with the larger share in the administration of his domains.

That Henri d'Albret was in some ways an extraordinary man is proved by a strange tale related of him at the time

of the birth of his grandson, who became Henri IV., King of France and Navarre. He told his daughter Jeanne that only if she would sing a hymn during the whole time of her accouchement would he make her offspring heir to his Kingdom. Jeanne, with an unusual courage, stood the test, and sang accordingly during the time that she was giving birth to the first of the Bourbon Kings, one who was to continue in his own person the rivalry with Spain that had commenced with his great-uncle François I.

The further career of this Monarch's great rival, Charles V., was terminated when, after having failed to secure the succession to the Empire for his son Philip II., he in 1555 prepared to resign the Imperial Crown to his brother Ferdinand, and then actually abandoned the Sovereignty of the Low Countries, Spain, and the rest of his hereditary dominions to his son.

A martyr to the gout, the Emperor then retired to a pleasant retreat which he had prepared for himself in the monastery of St. Justus, or Yuste, near Placentia in Estramadura. His wife Isabella had died in 1539, and his sister Éléonore died after the Emperor's retreat. Having suffered on many occasions tortures from the gout, the great Charles V. died at Yuste of a malignant fever upon the 21st day of September, 1558.

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