

The History of Protestantism – Volume Third – Book Twenty- first – The Thirty Years' War

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A Voice from the Philadelphian Church Age by Rev. James Aitken
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BOOK TWENTY-FIRST

THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR.

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In the education of the young Gustavus, who, as a man, was to play so conspicuous a part in the drama about to open, there was nothing lacking which could give him hardiness of body, bravery of spirit, vigor of intellect, and largeness of soul. Though his cradle was placed in a palace, it was surrounded with little of the splendor and nothing of the effeminacy

which commonly attend the early lot of those who are royally born. The father was struggling for his crown when the son first saw the light.

Around him, from the first, were commotions and storms. These could admit of no life but a plain and frugal one, verging it may be on roughness, but which brought with it an ample recompense for the inconveniences it imposed, in the health, the buoyancy, and the cheerfulness which it engendered. He grew hale and strong in the pure cold air to which he was continually exposed. "Amid the starry nights and dark forests of his fatherland, he nursed the seriousness which was a part of his nature."[\[2\]](#)

Meanwhile the mind of the future monarch was developing under influences as healthy and stirring as those by which his body was being braced. His father took him with him both to the senate and the camp. In the one he learned to think as the statesman, in the other he imbibed the spirit of the soldier. Yet greater care was taken to develop and strengthen his higher powers. Masters were appointed him in the various languages, ancient and modern; and at the age of twelve he could speak Latin, French, German, and Italian with fluency, and understood Spanish and English tolerably.[\[3\]](#) We hear of his reading Greek with ease, but this is more doubtful. He had studied Grotius. This was a range of accomplishment which no monarch in Northern Europe of his time could boast. Of the prudence and success with which, when he ascended the throne, he set about correcting the abuses and confusions of half a century in his hereditary dominions, and the rigor with which he prosecuted his first wars, we are not here called to speak. The career of Gustavus Adolphus comes into our view at the point where it first specially touches Protestantism. The Thirty Years' War had been going on some years before he appeared on that bloody stage, and mingled in its awful strife.

The first grand settlement between the Romanists and the

Protestants was the Pacification of Augsburg, in 1555. This Pacification gathered up in one great edict all the advantages which Protestantism had acquired during its previous existence of nearly forty years, and it expressed them all in one single word – Toleration. The same word which summed up the gains of Protestantism also summed up the losses of the empire; for the empire had been by pronouncing its ban upon Luther and his followers, and now at the end of forty years, and after all the great wars of Charles V undertaken against the Protestants, the empire was compelled to say, “I tolerate you.”

So far had Protestantism molded the law of Christendom, reared a barrier around itself, and set limits to the intolerant and despotic forces that assailed it from without. But this Toleration was neither Perfect in itself, nor was it faithfully observed. It was limited to Protestantism in its Lutheran form, for Calvinists were excluded from it, and, not to speak of the many points which it left open to opposite interpretations, and which were continually giving rise to quarrels, perpetual infringements were taking place on the rights guaranteed under it. The Protestants had long complained of these breaches of the Pacification, but could obtain no redress; and in the view of the general policy of the Popish Powers, which was to sweep away the Pacification of Augsburg altogether as soon as they were strong enough, a number of Protestant princes joined together for mutual defense. On the 4th of May, 1608, was formed the “Protestant Union.” At the head of this Union was Frederick IV, the Elector of the Palatinate.

The answer to this was the counter-institution, in the following year, of the “Catholic League.” It was formed on July 10th, 1609, and its chief was Maximilian, Duke of Bavaria. Maximilian was a fanatical disciple of the Jesuits, and in the League now formed, and the terrible war to which it led, we see the work of the Society of Jesus. The Duke of

Bavaria was joined by Duke Leopold of Austria, and the Prince-bishops of Wurzburg, Ratisbon, Augsburg, Constance, Strasburg, Passau, and by several abbots.

The leading object of the League was the restoration of the Popish faith over Germany, and the extirpation of Protestantism. This was to be accomplished by force of arms. Any moment might bring the outbreak; and Maximilian had all army of Bavarians, zealots like himself, waiting the summons, which, as matters then stood, could not be long deferred. We behold Protestantism entering on its third grand phase in Germany.

The first was the Illumination. From the open Bible, unlocked by the recovered Hebrew and Greek tongues, and from the closets and pulpits of great theologians and scholars, came forth the light, and the darkness which had shrouded the world for a thousand years began to be dispersed. This was the beginning of that world-overturning yet world-restoring movement. The second phase was that of Confession and Martyrdom. During that period societies and States were founding themselves upon the fundamental principle of Protestantism – namely, submission to the Word of God – and were covering Christendom with a new and higher life, individual and national. Protestantism opens its second century with its third grand phase, which is War. The Old now begins clearly to perceive that the New can establish itself only upon its ruins, and accordingly it girds on the sword to fight. The battle-field is all Germany: into that vast arena descend men of all nations, not only of Europe, but even from parts of Asia: the length of the day of battle is thirty years.

Some have preferred this as an indictment against Protestantism; see, it has been said, what convulsions it has brought on. It is true that if Protestantism had never existed this unprecedented conflict would never have taken place, for had the Old been left in unchallenged possession it would have

been at peace. It is also true that neither literature nor philosophy ever shook the world with storms like these. But this only proves that conscience alone, quickened by the Word of God, was able to render the service which the world needed; for the Old had to be displaced at whatever cost of tumult and disturbance, that the New, which cannot be shaken, might be set up.

Let us trace the first risings of this great commotion. The "Catholic League" having been formed, and Maximilian of Bavaria placed at the head of it, the Jesuits began to intrigue in order to find work for the army which the duke held in readiness strike. It needed but a spark to kindle a flame.

The spark fell. The "Majestats-Brief," or Royal Letter, granted by Rudolph II, and which was the charter of the Bohemian Protestants, began to be encroached upon. The privileges which that charter conceded to the Protestants, of not only retaining the old churches but of building new ones where they were needed, were denied to those who lived upon the Ecclesiastical States. The Jesuits openly said that this edict of toleration was of no value, seeing the king had been terrified into granting it, and that the time was near when it would be swept away altogether. This sort of talk gave great uneasiness and alarm; alarm was speedily converted into indignation by the disposition now openly evinced by the court to overturn the Majestats-Brief, and confiscate all the rights of the Protestants. Count Thurn, Burgrave of Carlstein, a popular functionary, was dismissed, and his vacant office was filled by two nobles who were specially obnoxious to the Protestants, as prominent enemies of their faith and noted persecutors of their brethren. They were accused of hunting their Protestant tenantry with dogs to mass, of forbidding them the rights of baptism, of marriage, and of burial, and so compelling them to return to the Roman Church. The arm of injustice began to be put forth against the Protestants on the

Ecclesiastical States, whose rights were more loosely defined. Their church in the town of Klostergrab was demolished; that at Braunau was forcibly shut up, and the citizens who had opposed these violent proceedings were thrown into prison. Count Thurn, who had been elected by his fellow-Protestants to the office of Defender of the Church's civil rights, thought himself called upon to organize measures of defense.

Deputies were summoned to Prague from every circle of the kingdom for deliberation. They petitioned the emperor to set free those whom he had cast into prison; but the imperial reply, so far from opening the doors of the gaol, justified the demolition of the churches, branded the opposers of that act as rebels, and dropped some significant threats against all who should oppose the royal will. Bohemia was in a flame. The deputies armed themselves, and believing that this harsh policy had been dictated by the two new members of the vice-regal Council of Prate, they proceeded to the palace, and forcing their way into the hall where the Council was sitting, they laid hold – as we have already narrated – on the two obnoxious members, Martinitz and Slavata, and, “according to a good old Bohemian custom,” as one of the deputies termed it, they threw them out at the window. They sustained no harm from their fall, but starting to their feet, made off from their enemies. This was on the 23rd of May, 1618: the Thirty Years' War had begun.

Thirty directors were appointed as a provisional government. Taking possession of all the offices of state and the national revenues, the directors summoned Bohemia to arms. Count Thurn was placed at the head of the army, and the entire kingdom joined the insurrection, three towns excepted – Budweis, Krummau, and Pilsen – in which the majority of the inhabitants were Romanists. The Emperor Matthias was terrified by this display of union and courage on the part of the Bohemians. Innumerable perils at that hour environed his throne. His hereditary States of Austria were nearly as disaffected as

Bohemia itself – a spark might kindle them also into revolt: the Protestants were numerous even in them, and, united by a strong bond of sympathy, were not unlikely to make common cause with their brethren. The emperor, dreading a universal conflagration, which might consume his dynasty, made haste to pacify the Bohemian insurgents before they should arrive under the walls of Vienna, and urge their demands for redress in his own palace. Negotiations were in progress, with the best hopes of a pacific issue; but just at that moment the Emperor Matthias died, and was succeeded by the fanatical and stem Ferdinand II.

There followed with starting rapidity a succession of significant events, all adverse to Bohemia and to the cause of Protestantism. These occurrences form the prologue, as it were, of that great drama of horrors which we are about to narrate. Some of them have already come before us in connection with the history of Protestantism in Bohemia. First of all came the accession of Silesia and Moravia to the insurrection; the deposition of Ferdinand II as King of Bohemia, and the election of Frederick, Elector of the Palatinate, in his room. This was followed by the victorious march of Count Thurn and his army to Vienna. The appearance of the Bohemian army under the walls of the capital raised the Protestant nobles in Vienna, who, while the Bohemian balls were falling on the royal palace, forced their way into Ferdinand's presence, and insisted that he should make peace with Count Thurn by guaranteeing toleration to the Protestants of his empire. One of the Austrian magnates was so urgent that he seized the monarch by the button, and exclaimed, "Ferdinand, wilt thou sign it?" But Ferdinand was immovable. In spite of the extremity in which he stood, he would neither flee from his capital nor make concessions to the Protestants. Suddenly, and while the altercation was still going on, a trumpet-blast was heard in the court of the palace. Five hundred cuirassiers had arrived at that critical moment, under General Dampierre, to defend the monarch. This turned the

tide. Vienna was preserved to the Papacy, and with Vienna the Austrian dominions and the imperial throne. There followed the retreat of the Bohemian host from under the walls of the capital; the election of Ferdinand, at the Diet of Frankfort, to the dignity of emperor; the equipment of an army to crush the insurrection in Bohemia; and, in fine, the battle of the Weissenburg under the walls of Prague, which by a single stroke brought the "winter kingdom" of Frederick to an end, laid the provinces of Bohemia, Silesia, and Moravia at the feet of Ferdinand, and enabled him to inaugurate an iron era of persecution by setting up the scaffold at Prague, on which the flower of the country's rank and genius and virtue were offered up in the holocaust we have already described. Such was the series of minor acts which led up to the greater tragedies. Though sufficiently serious in themselves, they are dwarfed into comparative insignificance by the stupendous horrors that tower up behind them.

Before entering on details, we must first of all sketch the general features of this terrible affair. It had long been felt that the antagonism between the old and the new faiths – which every day partook more of passion and less of devotion, and with which so many dynastic and national interests had come to be bound up – would, in the issue, bring on a bloody catastrophe. That catastrophe came at last; but it needed the space of a generation to exhaust its vengeance and consummate its woes. The war was prolonged beyond all previous precedent, mainly from this cause, that no one of the parties engaged in it so far overtopped the others as to be able to end the strife by striking a great and decisive blow. The conflict dragged slowly on from year to year, bearing down before it leaders, soldiers, cities, and provinces, as the lava-flood, slowly descending the mountain-side, buries vineyard and pine-forest, smiling village and populous city, under all ocean of molten rocks.

The armies by which this long-continued and fearfully

destructive war was waged were not of overwhelming numbers, according to our modern ideas. The host on either side rarely exceeded 40,000; it oftener fell below than rose above this number; and almost all the great battles of the war were fought with even fewer men. It was then held to be more than doubtful whether a general could efficiently command a greater army than 40,000, or could advantageously employ a more numerous host on one theater.

Once, it is true, Wallenstein assembled round his standard nearly 100,000; but this vast multitude, in point of strategical disposition and obedience to command, hardly deserved the name of an army. It was rather a congeries of fighting and marauding bands, scattered over great part of Germany – a scourge to the unhappy provinces, and a terror to those who had called it into existence. Even when the army-roll exhibited 100,000 names, it was difficult to bring into action the half of that number of fighting men, the absentees were always so numerous, from sickness, from desertion, from the necessity of collecting provisions, and from the greed of plunder. The Bohemian army of 1620 was speedily reduced in the field to one-half of its original numbers; the other half was famished, frozen, or forced to desert by lack of pay, not less than four millions and a half of guildens being owing to it at the close of the campaign. No military chest of those days – not even that of the emperor, and much less that of any of the princes – was rich enough to pay an army of 40,000; and few bankers could be persuaded to lend to monarchs whose ordinary revenues were so disproportionate to their enormous war expenditure. The army was left to feed itself. When one province was eaten up, the army changed to another, which was devoured in its turn. The verdant earth was changed to sackcloth. Citizens and peasants fled in terror-stricken crowds. In the van of the army rose the wail of despair and anguish: in its rear, famine came stalking on in a pavilion of cloud and fire and vapor of smoke.

The masses that swarm and welter in the abyss Germany now became we cannot particularize. But out of the dust, the smoke, and the flame there emerge, towering above the others, a few gigantic forms, which let us name. Ernest of Mansfeld, the fantastic Brunswicker and Bernhard of Weimar form one group. Arrayed against these are Maximilian of Bavaria, and the generals of the League – Tilly and Pappenheim, leaders of the imperial host; the stern, inscrutable Wallenstein, Altringer, and the great Frenchmen, Conde and Turenne; among the Swedes, Horn, Bauer, Torstenson, Wrangel, and over all, lifting himself grandly above the others, is the warrior-prince Gustavus Adolphus. What a prodigious combination of military genius, raised in each case to its highest degree of intensity, by the greatness of the occasion and the wish to cope with a renowned antagonist or rival! The war is one of brilliant battles, of terrible sieges, but of quick alternations of fortune, the conqueror of today becoming often the vanquished of tomorrow. The evolution of political results, however, is slow, and they are often as quickly lost as they had been tediously and laboriously won.

This great war divides itself into three grand periods, the first being from 1618 to 1630. That was the epoch of the imperial victories. Almost defeated at the outset, Ferdinand II brought back success to his standards by the aid of Wallensiein and his immense hordes; and in proportion as the imperial host triumphed, Ferdinand's claims on Germany rose higher and higher: his object being to make his will as absolute and arbitrary over the whole Fatherland as it was in his paternal estates of Austria. In short, the emperor had revived the project which his ancestor Charles V had so nearly realized in his war with the princes of the Schmalkald League – namely, that of making himself the one sole master of Germany.

At the end of the first period we find that the Popish Power has spread itself like a mighty flood over the whole of

Germany to the North Sea. But now, with the commencement of the second period – which extends from 1630 to 1634 – the opposing tide of Protestantism begins to set in, and continues to flow, with irresistible force, from north to south, till it has overspread two-thirds of the Fatherland. Nor does the death of its great champion arrest it. Even after the fall of Gustavus Adolphus the Swedish warriors continued for some time to win victories, and still farther to extend the territorial area of Protestantism. The third and closing period of the war extends from 1634 to 1648, and during this time victory and defeat perpetually oscillated from side to side, and shifted from one part of the field to another. The Swedes came down in a mighty wave, which rolled on unchecked till it reached the middle of Germany, the good fortune which attended them receding at times, and then again returning. The French, greedy of booty, spread themselves along the Rhine, hunger and pestilence traversing in their wake the wasted land. In the Swedish army one general after another perished in battle, yet with singular daring and obstinacy the army kept the field, and whether victorious or vanquished in particular battles, always insisted on the former claim of civil and religious liberty to Protestants. In opposition to the Swedes, and quite as immovable, is seen the Prince of the League, Maximilian of Bavaria, and the campaigns which he now fought are amongst the most brilliant which his dynasty have ever achieved. The fanatical Ferdinand II had by this time gone to his grave; the soberer and more tolerant Ferdinand III had succeeded, but he could not disengage himself from the terrible struggle, and it went on for some time longer; but at last peace began to be talked about. Nature itself seemed to cry for a cessation of the awful conflict; cities, towns, and villages were in flames; the land was empty of men; the high-roads were without passengers, and briars and weeds were covering the once richly cultivated fields. Several States had now withdrawn from the conflict: the theater of war was being gradually narrowed, and the House of Hapsburg was eventually so hedged in that it was compelled to come to terms. The countries which had been the

seat of the struggle were all but utterly ruined. Germany had lost three-fourths of its population.[4] "Over the brawling of parties a terrible Destiny moved its wings; it lifts up leaders and again casts them down into the bloody mire; the greatest human power is helpless in its hand; at last, satisfied with murder and corpses, it turns its face slowly from the land that is become only a great field of the dead." [5]

CHAPTER 2 [Back to Top](#) THE ARMY AND THE CAMP.

The Battle-fields of the Seventeenth and of the Nineteenth Centuries – All Nationalities drawn into this War – Motley Host around the Banners of the League – Carnage – The Camping-ground – The General's Tent – Officers' Tents – Soldiers' Huts – Change in Method of Fortifying Camps – Sentinels and Outposts – All Languages heard in the Camp – A Flying Plague – Plundering of the Surrounding Country – Prayers and Divine Service – Gambling – Huts of the Sutlers – Camp Signals – Oscillation between Abundance and Famine – Scenes of Profusion – Picture of Famine in the Camp – Superstitions – Morals – Duels. BEFORE narrating the successive stages of this most extraordinary war, and summing up its gains to the cause of Protestantism, and the general progress of the world, let us briefly sketch its more prominent characteristics. The picture is not like anything with which we are now acquainted. The battles of our own day are on a vaster scale, and the carnage of a modern field is far greater than was that of the battle-fields of 200 years ago; but the miseries attending a campaign now are much less, and the destruction inflicted by war on the country which becomes its seat is not nearly so terrible as it was in the times of which we write. Altogether, the balance of humanity is in favor of war as carried on in modern times, though it is still, and ever must be, one of the most terrible scourges with which the earth is liable to be visited.

The Thirty Years' War was not so much German as (ecumenical. Not only did individual foreign nationalities respond to the

recruiting-drum, as crows flock to a battle-field, lured thither by the effluvia of corpses, but all the peoples of Christian Europe were drawn into its all-embracing vortex. From the west and from the east, from the north and from the south, came men to fight on the German plains, and mingle their blood with the waters of the Rhine, the Danube, and the Elbe. Englishmen and Scotchmen crossed the sea and hastened to place themselves under one or other of the opposing standards. Danes, Swedes, Finns, crowding to the theater of action, and mingling with the Netherlanders, contended with them in the bloody fray in behalf of the Protestant liberties. The Laplander, hearing amid his snows the bruit of this great conflict, yoked his reindeer, and hurried in his sledge across the ice, brining with him furs for the clothing of the Swedish troops. The imperial army was even more varied in respect of nationality, of speech, of costume, and of manners. A motley host of Romish Walloons, of Irish adventurers, of Spaniards and Italians were assembled under the banners of the League. Almost every Slav race broke into the land in this day of confusion. The light horseman of the Cossacks was the object of special terror. His movements were rapid, and he passed along plundering and slaughtering without much distinction of friend or foe. There came a mingling of Mohammedans in the corps raised in the provinces which abutted on the Turkish frontier. But most hated of all were the Croats, because they were of all others the most barbarous and the most cruel. So multiform was the host that now covered the Fatherland! We know not where in history another such assemblage of ruffians, plunderers, and murderers is to be beheld as is now seen settling down in Germany. Had the slaughter been confined to the battle-field, the carnage would have been comparatively trifling; but all the land was a battle-field, and every day of the thirty years was a day of battle, for not a day but blood was shed. The times of the Goths furnish us with no such dark picture. When these nations descended from the North to overthrow the Roman Empire, they pressed forward and did not return on their course. The cities, the cultivation, and the

men who were trampled down in their march rose up again when they had passed. But the destroying host which we now see collecting from the ends of the earth, and assembling in Germany, does not depart from the land it has invaded. It abides for the space of a generation. It comes to make the land a tomb, and to bury itself in the same vast sepulcher to which it consigned the Germans; for only the merest remnant of that multitudinous host ever returned home. It drew destruction upon itself in the destruction which it inflicted upon the land.

When the field-master received orders to look out for new camping-ground, he chose a spot if possible near a flowing stream, and one capable of being fortified. His first care was to measure off a certain space, in the center of the ground. There was pitched the general's tent. That tent rose in the midst of the host, distinguished from the others by its superior size and greater grandeur. Over it floated the imperial standard, and there the general abode as in the heart of a fortress. Around this central tent was an open space, on which other tent must not be pitched, and which was walled in by spikes stuck in the ground, and sometimes by a more substantial rampart. Immediately outside the space appropriated to the general and his staff were the tents of the officers. They were made of canvas, and conical in form. Outside these, running in parallel rows or streets, were the huts of the common soldiers. They were composed of boards and straw, and the soldiers were huddled together in them, two and four, with their wives, daughters, boys, and dogs. The whole formed a great square or circle, regiment lying alongside regiment, the encampment being strongly fortified; and out beyond its defense there stretched away a wide cleared space, to admit of the enemy being espied a long while before he could make his near approach.

In former times it had been customary to utilize the baggage wagons in fortifying an encampment. The wagons were ranged all

round the tents, sometimes in double, sometimes in treble line; they were fastened the one to the other by iron chains, forming a rampart not easily to be breached by an enemy. Such, as we have already seen, were the fortifications within which the Hussites were wont to encamp. But by the time of which we write this method of defense had been abandoned. Armies in the field now sought to protect themselves by ditches, walls, and other field fortifications. At the outlets or portals of the camp were posted sentinels, who stood grasping in the one hand the musket, its butt-end resting on the ground, and in the other holding the burning torch. At a greater distance were troops of horsemen and pickets of sharp-shooters, to detain the enemy should he appear, and give time to those within the entrenchments to get under arms.

The camp was a city. It was a reproduction of the ancient Babel, for in it were to be heard all the tongues of Europe and some of those of Asia. The German language predominated, but it was almost lost within the encampment by adulteration from so many foreign sources, and especially by the ample addition of oaths and terms of blasphemy. Into the encampment were gathered all the peculiarities, prejudices, and hates of the various nationalities of Europe. These burned all the more fiercely by reason of the narrow space in which they were cooped up, and it was no easy matter to maintain the peace between the several regiments, or even in the same regiment, and prevent the outbreak of war within the camp itself. Other cities cannot change their site, they are tied with their wickedness to the spot on which they stand; but this city was a movable plague, it flitted from province to province, throwing a stream of moral Poison into the air. Even in a friendly country the camp was an insufferable nuisance. Within its walls was, of course, neither seed-time nor harvest, and the provinces, cities, and villages around had to feed it. Hardly had the ground been selected, or the first tent set up, when orders were sent out to all the inhabitants of the surrounding country to bring wood, straw, meat, and provender

to the army. On all the roads rolled trams of wagons, laden with provisions, for the camp. Drove of cattle might be seen moving toward the same point. The villages for miles around speedily vanished from sight, the thatch was torn off their roofs, and their woodwork carried away by the soldiers for the building of their own huts, and only the crumbling clay walls were left, to be swept away by the first tempest. Their former inhabitants found refuge in the woods, or with their acquaintances in some remoter village. Besides this general sack a great deal of private plundering and stealing went on; soldiers were continually prowling about in all directions, and Sutlers were constantly driving to and from the camp with what articles they had been able to collect, and which they meant to retail to the soldiers. While the men lounged about in the rows and avenues of the encampment, drinking, gambling, or settling points of national or individual honor with their side-arms, the women cooked, washed, mended clothes, or quarreled with one another, their vituperation often happily unintelligible to the object of it, because uttered in a tongue the other did not understand.

Every morning the drum beat, and an accompanying herald called the soldiers to prayers. This practice was observed even in the imperial camp. On Sunday only did the preacher of the regiment conduct public worship, the soldiers with their families being assembled before him, and seated orderly upon the ground. They were forbidden, during the time of Divine service, to lie about in their huts, or to visit the tents of the Sutlers; and the latter were not to sell drink or food to any one during these hours. In the camp of Gustavus Adolphus prayers were read twice a day. The military discipline enforced by that great leader was much more strict, and the moral decorum of his army far higher, as the comparatively untouched aspect of the fields and villages around bore witness.

In the open space within the enclosure of the camp, near the

guard-house, stood the gambling-tables, the ground around being strewn over with mantles, for the convenience of the players. Instead of the slow shuffling of the cards, the speedier throw of the dice was often had recourse to, to decide the stakes; and when the dice were forbidden, the players hid themselves behind hedges and there pursued their game, staking their food, their weapons, their horses, and their booty, when booty they happened to possess. Behind the tent of the upper officer, separated by a broad street, stood the stalls and huts of the Sutlers, butchers, and master of the cook-shops; the price of all foods and drinks being fixed by a certain officer. The luxury and profusion that prevailed in the officers' tents, where the most expensive wines were drunk, and only viands prepared by a French cook were eaten, offered an indifferent example of economy and carefulness to the common soldier. The military signals of the camp were the beat of a large drum for the foot-soldier, and the peal of a trumpet for the cavalry. When any important operation was to be undertaken on the morrow, a herald, attired in a bright silk robe, embroidered before and behind with the arms of his prince, rode through the host on the previous evening, attended by the trumpeter, and announced the order for the coming day. This was fatal to discipline, inasmuch as it gave warning to the lounge and the plunderer to set out during the night in search of booty.

The camp oscillated between overflowing abundance and stark famine. When the army had won a battle, and victory gave them the plunder of a city as the recompense of their bravery, there came a good time to the soldiers. Food and drink were then plentiful, and of course cheap. In the last year of the war a cow might be bought in the Bavarian host for almost literally the smallest coin. Then, too, came good times to the merchants in the camp, for then they could command any amount of sale, and obtain any price for their wares. The soldiers tricked themselves out with expensive feathers, scarlet hose, with gold lacings, and rich sables, and they purchased showy

dresses and mules for the females of their establishments. Grooms rode out dressed from head to heel in velvet. The Croats in the winter of 1630-31 were so amply supplied with the precious metals that not only were their girdles filled and distended with the number of their gold coins, but they wore golden plates as breast-plates. Paul Stockman, Pastor of Lutzen, a small town in Saxony, relates that before the battle of Lutzen one soldier rode a horse adorned with gold and silver stars, and another had his steed ornamented with 300 silver moons.[1]

The camp-women, and sometimes the horsemen, arrayed themselves in altar-cloths, mass-robcs, and priests' coats. The toppers pledged one another in the most expensive wines, which they drank out of the altar-cups; and from their stolen gold they fabricated long chains, from which they were accustomed to wrench off a link when they had a reckoning to discharge or a debt to pay.

The longer the war continued, the less frequent and less joyous became these halcyon days. Want then began to be more frequent in the camp than superfluity. "The spoiling of the provinces avenged itself frightfully on the spoilers themselves. The pale specter of hunger, the forerunner of plague, crept through the lanes of the camp, and raised its bony hand before the door of every straw hut. Then the supplies from the neighborhood stopped; neither fatted ox nor laden cart was now seen moving towards the camp. The price of living became at these times exorbitant; for example, in 1640 a loaf of bread could not be purchased by the Swedish army in the neighborhood of Gotha for a less sum than a ducat. The sojourn in the camp became, even for the most inured soldier, unendurable. Everywhere were hollow-eyed parchment faces; in every row of huts were sick and dying; the neighborhood of the camp was infected by the putrid bodies of dead horses and mules; all around was a desert of untilled fields, and blackened ruins of villages, and the camp itself became a

dismal city of the dead. The accompaniments of the host, the women and children namely, speedily vanished in the burial-trenches; only the most wretched dogs kept themselves alive on the most disgusting food; the others were killed and eaten.[2] At such a time the army melted quickly, away, and no skill of the ablest leader could avert its ruin.”[3]

There arose a mingled and luxuriant crop of Norse, German, and Roman superstitions in the camp. The soldiers had unbounded faith in charms and incantations, and sought by their use to render their weapons powerful and themselves invulnerable. They had prayers and forms of words by which they hoped to obtain the mastery in the fight, and they wore amulets to protect them from the deadly bullet and the fatal thrust of dagger. The camp was visited by gypsies and soothsayers, who sold secret talismans to the soldiers as infallible protections in the hour of danger. Blessings, conjurations, witchcrafts, in all their various forms abounded in the imperial army as much as did guns and swords and pikes. The soldiers fell all the same in the deadly breach, in the shock of battle, and in the day of pale famine, The morals of the camp were without shame, speaking generally. Almost every virtue perished but that of soldierly honor and fidelity to one's flag, so long as one served under it; for the mercenary often changed his master, and with him the cause for which he fought. The mood of mind prevalent in the camp is well hit off by Schiller's Norseman's song – “A sharp sword is my field, plunder is my plough, the earth is my bed, the sky is my covering, my cloak is my house, and wine is my eternal life.” Duels were of daily occurrence, and when at last they were forbidden, the soldiers sought secret places beyond the lines, where they settled their quarrels. Gustavus Adolphus punished dueling with death, even in the case of his highest officers, but no law could suppress the practice.

CHAPTER 3 [Back to Top](#) THE MARCH AND ITS DEVASTATIONS.

Germany before the War – Its Husbandry – Its Villages – Its

Cities – Dress, &c., of the Citizens – Schools – Its Protestantism – Memories of the Past – Foreign Soldiers Enter Thuringia – Their Oppressions of the Peasants – Exactions – Portents – Demoralization of Society – Villagers Driven into Hiding-places – Cruelties on Protestant Pastors – Michel Ludwig – George Faber – John Otto – Andrew Pochmann – The Pastor of Stelzen. To know the desolation to which Germany was reduced by the long war, it is necessary to recall the picture of what it was before it became the theater of that unspeakable tragedy. In 1618, the opening year of a dismal era, Germany was accounted a rich country. Under the influence of a long peace its towns had enlarged in size, its villages had increased in number, and its smiling fields testified to the excellence of its husbandry. The early dew of the Reformation was not yet exhaled. The sweet breath of that morning gave it a healthy moral vigor, quickened its art and industry, and filled the land with all good things. Wealth abounded in the cities, and even the country people lived in circumstances of comfort and ease.

In Thuringia and Franconia the villages were numerous. They were not left open and without defense. Some of them were surrounded with a broad trench or ditch; others were defended with stone walls, in which were openings or gateways opposite all the principal streets, with heavy doors to shut them in at night. Nor was the churchyard left unprotected; walls enclosed the resting-places of the dead; and these, oftener than once, formed the last refuge of the living. As a further security against surprise or molestation, village and meadow were patrolled night and day by watchmen. The houses were built of wood or clay; they stood close to each other, ranged in narrow streets, and though their exteriors were mean, within they were not deficient in furnishings and comfort.

The fruit-trees stood round the village, perfuming the air with their spring blossoms, and delighting the eye with their autumn fruits. At the village gates, or under the boughs of

one of its embowering trees, a fountain would gush out, and pour its crystal waters into a stone trough. Here weary traveler might halt, and here ox or horse, toiling under the load, might drink. The quiet courtyards were filled with domestic fowls; squadrons of white geese sallied across the stubble-fields, or, like fleet at anchor, basked in the sun; teams of horses were ranged in the stalls, and among them might be some great hard-boned descendant of the old charger.

But the special pride of the husbandman were the flocks of sheep and oxen that roamed in the meadow, or grazed on the hill-side. Besides the ordinary cereals, crops of flax and hops covered his fields. It is believed that the cultivation of Germany in 1618 was not inferior to its cultivation in 1818.

The cities were strongly fortified: their walls were not infrequently double, flanked by towers, and defended by broad and deep moats. It was observed that stone walls crumbled under the stroke of cannon-balls, and this led to the adoption of external defenses, formed of earthen mounds, as in the case of the Antwerp citadel. Colleges, gymnasia, and printing-presses flourished in the towns, as did trade and commerce. The great road passing by Nuremberg, that ancient entrepot of the commerce of the West, diffused over Germany the merchandise which still continued to flow, in part at least, in its old channel. The Sunday was not honored as it ought to have been within their gates. When Divine service was over, the citizens were wont to assemble on the exchange, where amusement or business would profane the sacred hours. They were much given to feasting: their attire was richer than at the present day: the burghers wore velvets, silks, and laces, and adorned themselves with feathers, gold and silver clasps, and finely mounted side-arms. The table of the citizen was regulated by a sumptuary law: the rich were not to exceed the number of courses prescribed to them; and the ordinary citizen was not to dine in plainer style than was appointed his rank.

Dancing parties were forbidden after sunset. Those who went out at night had to carry lanterns or torches: ultimately torches were interdicted, and a metal basket fixed at the street-corners, filled with blazing tar-wood, would dispel the darkness.

Since the Reformation, a school had existed in every town and village in which there was a church. In the decline of the Lutheran Reformation, the incumbent discharged, in many cases, the duties of both pastor and schoolmaster. He instructed the youth on the week-days, and preached to their parents on the Sunday. Sometimes there was also a schoolmistress. A small fee was exacted from the scholars. The capacity of reading and writing was pretty generally diffused amongst the people. Catechisms, Psalters, and Bibles were common in the houses of the Protestants. The hymns of Luther were sung in their sanctuaries and dwellings, and might often be heard resounding from garden and rural lane. The existing generation of Germans were the grandchildren of the men who had been the contemporaries of Luther. They loved to recall the wonders of the olden time, when more eyes were turned upon Wittemberg than upon Rome, and the Reformer filled a larger space in the world's gaze than either the emperor or the Pope. As they sat under the shade of their linden-trees, the father would tell the son how Tetzel came with his great red cross; how a monk left his cell to cry aloud that "God only can forgive sin," and how the pardon-monger fled at the sound of his voice; how the Pope next took up the quarrel, and launched his bull, which Luther burned; how the emperor unsheathed his great sword, but instead of extinguishing, only spread the conflagration wider. He would speak of the great day of Worms, of the ever-memorable victory at Spires; and how the princes and knights of old were wont to ride to the Diet, or march to battle, singing Luther's hymns, and having verses of Holy Scripture blazoned on their banners. He would tell how in those days the tents of Protestantism spread themselves out till they filled the land, and how the hosts of Rome retreated

and pitched their encampment afar off. But when he compared the present with the past, he would heave a sigh. "Alas!" we hear the aged narrator say, "the glory is departed." The fire is now cold on the national hearth; no longer do eloquent doctors and chivalrous princes arise to do battle for the Protestantism of the Fatherland. Alas! the roll of victories is closed, and the territory over which the Reformation stretched its scepter grows narrower every year. Deep shadows gather on the horizon, and through its darkness may be seen the shapes of mustering hosts, while dreadful sounds as of battle strike upon the ear. It is a night of storms that is descending on the grandchildren of the Reformers.

At last came the gathering of foreign troops, and their converging march on the scene of operations. Startling forms began to show themselves on the frontiers of Thuringia, and its vast expanse of glade and forest, of village and town, became the scene of oft-repeated alarms and of frightful sufferings. Foreign soldiers, with the savage looks of battle, and raiment besmeared with blood, marched into its villages, and entering its thresholds, took possession of house and bed, and terrifying the owner and family, peremptorily demanded provisions and contributions. Not content with what was supplied them for their present necessities, they destroyed and plundered whatever their eyes lighted upon. After 1626, these scenes continued year by year, growing only the worse each successive year. Band followed band, and more than one army seated itself in the villages of Thuringia for the winter. The demands of the soldiery were endless, and compliance was enforced by blows and cruel torturings.

The peasant most probably had hidden his treasures in the earth on the approach of the host; but he saw with terror the foreign man-at-arms exercising a power, which to him seemed magical, of discovering the place where his hoards were concealed. If it happened that the soldier was baffled in the search, the fate of the poor man was even worse, for then he

himself was seized, and by torments which it would be painful to describe, was compelled to discover where his money and goods lay buried. On the fate of his wife and his daughters we shall be silent. The greatest imaginable horrors were so customary that their non-perpetration was a matter of surprise. Of all was the unhappy husbandman plundered. His bondman was carried off to serve in the war; his team was unyoked from the plough to drag the baggage or the cannon; his flocks and herds were driven off from the meadow to be slaughtered and eaten by the army; and the man who had risen in affluence in the morning, was stripped of all and left penniless before night.

It was not till after the death of Gustavus Adolphus that the sufferings of the country people reached their maximum. The stricter discipline maintained by that great leader had its effect not only in emboldening the peasants, and giving them some little sense of security in these awful times, but also in restraining the other military corps, and rendering their license less capricious and reckless than it otherwise would have been.

There was some system in the levying of supplies and the recruiting of soldiers during the life of Gustavus; but after the fall of the Swedish king these bonds were relaxed, and the greatest sufferings of the past appeared tolerable in comparison with the evils that now afflicted the Germans. In addition to their other endurances, they were oppressed by superstitious terrors and forebodings. Their minds, full of superstition, became the prey of credulous fancies. They interpreted everything, if removed in the least from the ordinary course, into a portent of calamity. They saw terrible sights in the sky, they heard strange and menacing voices speaking out of heaven and specters gliding past on the earth. In the Dukedom of Hildburghausen, white crosses lighted up the firmament when the enemy approached. When the soldiers entered the office of the town clerk, they were met by a spirit

clothed in white, who waved them back. After their departure, there was heard during eight days, in the choir of the burned church, a loud snorting and sighing. At Gumpershausen was a girl whose visions and revelations spread excitement over the whole district. She had been visited, she said, by a little angel, who appeared first in a red and then in a blue mantle, and who, sitting in her sight upon the bed, cried, "Woe!" to the inhabitants, and admonished them against blasphemy and cursing, and foretold the most frightful shedding of blood if they did not leave off their wickedness.[1] After the terror came defiance and despair. An utter demoralization of society followed. Wives deserted their husbands, and children their parents. The army passed on, but the vices and diseases which they had brought with them continued to linger in the devastated and half-peopled villages behind them. To other vices, drunkenness was added. Excess in ardent spirits had deformed the German peasantry since the period of the Peasant-war, and now it became a prevalent habit, and regard for the rights and property of one's neighbor soon ceased. At the beginning of the war, village aided village, and mutually lightened each other's calamities so far as was in their power. When a village was robbed of its cattle, and sold to the adjoining one by the marauding host, that other village returned the oxen to their original owners on repayment of the price which they had paid to the soldiers. Even in Franconia these mutual services were frequently exchanged between Popish and Protestant communities. But gradually, their oppression and their demoralization advancing step by step, the country people began to steal and plunder like the soldiers. Armed bands would cross the boundaries of their commune, and carry off from their neighbors whatsoever they coveted. Brigandage was now added to robbery. They lurked in the woods and the mountain passes, lying in wait for the stragglers of the army, and often took a red revenge. How sad the change! The woodman, who had once on a time awakened all the echoes of the forest glades with his artless songs, now terrified them with the shrieks of his victim. A bunting hatred arose between the

soldiers and the peasantry, which lasted till the very end of the war, and the frightful traces of which long survived the conflict.

So long as their money lasted, the villagers bought themselves off from the obligation of having the soldiers billeted upon them; but when their money was spent they were without defense. Watchmen were stationed on the steeples and high places in the neighborhood, who gave warning the moment they descried on the far-off horizon the approach of the host. The villagers would then bring out their furniture and valuables, and convey them to hiding-places selected weeks before, and themselves live the while in these places a most miserable life. They dived into the darkest parts of the forests; they burrowed in the bleakest moors; they lurked in old clay pits and in masses of fallen masonry; and to this day the people of those parts show with much interest the retreats where their wretched forefathers sought refuge from the fury of the soldiery. The peasant always came back to his village – too commonly to find it only a ruin; but his attachment to the spot set him eagerly to work to rebuild his overturned habitation, and sow the little seed he had saved in the down-trodden soil. He had been robbed of his horse, it may be, but he would harness himself to the plough, and obeying the force of habit, would continue the processes of tilling and sowing, though he had but small hopes of reaping. The little left him he was careful to conceal, and strove to look even poorer than he was. He taught himself to live amid dirt and squalor and apparent poverty, and he even extinguished, the fire on his hearth, lest its light, shining through the casement, should attract to his dwelling any straggler who might be on the outlook for a comfortable lodging for the night. “His scanty food he concealed in places from which even the ruthless enemy turned away in horror, such as graves, coffins, and amongst skulls.”[2]

The clergy were the chief consolers of the people in these

miserable scenes, and at the same time the chief sufferers in them. The flint brunt of the imperial troops fell on the village pastor; his church was first spoiled, then burned down, and his flock scattered. He would then assemble his congregation, or such as remained of them, for worship in a granary or similar place, or on the open common, or in a wood. Not infrequently were himself and his family singled out by the imperial soldiers as the special objects of rudeness and violence. His house was commonly the first to be robbed, his family the first to suffer outrage; but generally the pastors took patiently the spoiling of their goods and the buffetings of their persons, and by their heroic behavior did much to support the hearts of the people in those awful times.

We give a few instances extracted from the brief registers of those times. Michel Ludwig was pastor in Sonnenfeld since 1633. When the times of suffering came he preached in the wood, under the open heaven, to his flock. He summoned his congregation with the drum, for bell he had none, and armed men were on the outlook while he preached. He continued these ministrations during eight years, till his congregation had entirely disappeared. A Swedish colonel invited the brave man to be preacher to the regiment, and he became at a later date president of the field consistory near Torstenson, and superintendent at Weimar.

Instances occur of studious habits pursued through these unsettled times. George Faber, at Gellershausen, preached to a little flock of some three or four at the constant peril of life. He rose every morning at three, studied and carefully committed to memory his sermon, besides writing learned commentaries on several books of the Bible.

John Otto, Rector of Eisfeld in 1635, just married, in addition to the duties of his office had to teach the public school during eight years, and supported himself by threshing oats, cutting wood, and similar occupations. The record of these vicissitudes is contained in jottings by himself in his

Euclid. Forty-two years he held his office in honor. His successor, John Schmidt, was a famous Latin scholar, and owed his appointment to the fact of his being found reading a Greek poem in the guard-house, to which he had been taken by the soldiers.

The story of Andrew Pochmann, afterwards superintendent, illustrates the life led in those times, so full of deadly dangers, narrow escapes, and marvelous interpositions, which strengthened the belief of the men who experienced them in a watchful Providence which protected them, while millions were perishing around them. Pochmann was an orphan, who had been carried off with two brothers by the Croats. Escaping with his brothers during the night, he found means of entering a Latin school. Being a second time taken by the soldiers, he was made quarter-master gunner. In the garrison he continued his studies, and finding among his comrades scholars from Paris and London, he practiced with them the speaking of Latin. Once, when sick, he lay down by the watch-fire with his powder-flask, containing a pound and a half of powder, under his sleeve. As he lay, the fire reached his sleeve and burned a large portion of it, but without exploding his powder-flask. He awoke to find himself alone in the deserted camp, and without a farthing in his pocket. Among the ashes of the now extinct watch-fire he found two thalers, and with these he set out for Gotha. On the way he halted at Langensalza, and turned into a small and lonely house on the wall. He was received by an old woman, who, commiserating his wretched plight, as shown in his haggard looks and emaciated frame, laid him upon a bed to rest. His hostess chanced to be a plague nurse, and the couch on which he was laid had but recently been occupied by a plague patient. The disease was raging in the town; nevertheless, the poor wanderer remained unattacked, and went on his way, to close his life amid happier scenes than those that had marked its opening.

The village and Pastor of Stelzen will also interest us. The

spring of the Itz was a holy place in even pagan times. It rises at the foot of the mountains, where they sink down in terraces to the banks of the Maine, and gushes out from the corner of a cave, which is overshadowed by ancient beeches and linden-trees. Near this well stood, before the era of the Reformation, a chapel to the Virgin; and at times hundreds of nobles, with an endless retinue of servants, and troops of pilgrims would assemble on the spot. In 1632 the village in the neighborhood of the well was burned down, and only the church, school-house, and a shepherd's hut remained standing. The pastor, Nicolas Schubert, was reduced to extreme misery. In the ensuing winter we find him inditing the following heart-rending letter to the magistrate: – "I have nothing more, except my eight small naked children; I live in a very old and dangerously dilapidated school-house, without floors or chimneys, in which I find it impossible to study, or to do anything to help myself. I am in want of food, clothes – in short, of everything. – Given at the place of my misery – Stelzen. – Your respectful, poor, and burned-up pastor."

Pastor Schubert was removed, whether to a richer living we know not – a poorer it could not be. His successor was also plundered, and received in addition a blow from a dagger by a soldier. A second successor was unable to keep himself alive. After that, for fourteen years the parish had no pastor. Every third Sunday the neighboring clergyman visited and conducted Divine service in the destroyed village. At last, in 1647, the church itself was burned to the bare walls. Such was the temporal and spiritual destitution that now overwhelmed that land which, half a century before, had been so full of "the bread that perisheth," and also of that "which endures to eternal life."[\[3\]](#)

CHAPTER 4 [Back to Top](#) CONQUEST OF NORTH GERMANY BY FERDINAND II AND THE "CATHOLIC LEAGUE."

Ferdinand II's Aims – Extinction of Protestantism and the German Liberties – Ban of the Empire pronounced on Frederick V

– Apathy of the Protestant Princes – They Withdraw from the Protestant Union – Count Mansfeld – Duke of Brunswick – The Number and Devastation of their Armies – Heidelberg Taken – The Palatinate Occupied – James I of England – Outwitted by Ferdinand and Philip II – Electorate of the Rhine Given to the Duke of Bavaria – Treaty between England, Holland, and Denmark – Christian IV of Denmark – Leads the Protestant Host – Ferdinand II Raises an Army – Wallenstein – His Character – Grandeur – Personal Appearance -His Method of Maintaining an Army – Movements of the Campaign of 1626 – Battle of Lutter – Victory of Tilly – Campaign of 1627 – North Germany Occupied by the League – Further Projects of Ferdinand FROM this general picture of the war, which shows us fanaticism and ruffianism holding saturnalia inside the camp, and terror and devastation extending their gloomy area from day to day outside of it, we turn to follow the progress of its campaigns and battles, and the slow and gradual evolution of its moral results, till they issue in the Peace of Westphalia, which gave a larger measure of toleration to the Protestants than they had ever hitherto enjoyed.

The iron hand of military violence, moved by the Jesuits, was at this hour crushing out Protestantism in Bohemia, in Hungary, in Transylvania, in Styria, and in Carinthia. Dragonnades, confiscations, and executions were there the order of the day. The nobles were dying on the scaffold, the ministers were shut up in prison or chained to the galleys, churches and school-houses were lying in ruins, and the people, driven into exile or slaughtered by soldiers, had disappeared from the land, and such as remained had found refuge within the pale of the Church of Rome. But the extermination of the Protestant faith in his own dominions could not satisfy the vast zeal of Ferdinand II. He aimed at nothing less than its overthrow throughout all Germany. When there would not be one Protestant church or a single Lutheran throughout that whole extent of territory lying between the German Sea and the Carpathian chain, then, and only then,

would Ferdinand have accomplished the work for which the Jesuits had trained him, and fulfilled the vow he made when he lay prostrate before the Virgin of Loretto. But ambition was combined with his fanaticism. He aimed also at sweeping away all the charters and constitutions which conferred independent rights on the German States, and subjecting both princes and people to his own will. Henceforward, Germany should know only two masters: the Church of Rome was to reign supreme and uncontrolled in things spiritual, and he himself should exercise an equally absolute sway in things political and civil. It was a two-fold tide of despotism that was about to overflow the countries of the Lutheran Reformation.

Having inaugurated a reaction on the east of Germany, Ferdinand now set on foot a "Catholic restoration" on the west of it. He launched this part of his scheme by fulminating against Frederick V, Palatine of the Rhine, the ban of the empire. Frederick had offended by assuming the crown of Bohemia. After reigning during only one winter he was chased from Prague, as we have seen, by the arms of the Catholic League. But the matter did not end there: the occasion offered a fair pretext for advancing the scheme of restoring the Church of Rome once more to supreme and universal dominancy in Germany. Ferdinand accordingly passed sentence on Frederick, depriving him of his dominions and dignities, as a traitor to the emperor and a disturber of the public peace. He empowered Maximilian of Bavaria, as head of the League, to execute the ban – that is, to take military possession of the Palatinate. Now was the time for the princes of the Protestant Union to unsheathe the sword, and by wielding it in defense of the Palatine, their confederate, who had risked more in the common cause than any one of them all, to prove their zeal and sincerity in the great object for which they were associated. They would, at the same time, shut the door at which the triumphant tide of armed Romanism was sure to flow in and overwhelm their own dominions. But, unhappily for themselves and their cause, instead of acting in the spirit of their

Confederacy, they displayed an extraordinary degree of pusillanimity and coldness. The terror of Ferdinand and the Catholic Leslie had fallen upon them, and they left their chief to his fate, congratulating themselves that their superior prudence had saved them from the disasters by which Frederick was overtaken. The free cities of the Confederacy forsook him; and, as if to mark still more their indifference to the cause to which they had so lately given their most solemn pledge, they withdrew from the Union, and the example of cowardly defection thus set by them was soon followed by the princes. How sure a sign of the approach of evil days! We behold zeal on the Popish side, and only faint-heartedness and indifference on that of the Protestants.

The troops of the League, under Duke Maximilian's famous general, Tilly, were now on their march to the Palatinate; but the Protestant princes and free cities sat still, content to see the fall of that powerful Protestant province, without lifting a finger on its behalf. At that moment a soldier of fortune, whose wealth lay in his sword, assembled an army of 20,000, and came forward to fill the vacant place of the cities and princes. Ernest, Count Mansfeld, offered battle to the troops of Spain and Bavaria, on behalf of the Elector Frederick. Mansfeld was soon joined by the Margrave of Baden, with a splendid troop. Christian, Duke of Brunswick, who had conceived a romantic passion for Elizabeth of Bohemia, the Electress-Palatine, whose glove he always wore in his hat, also joined Count Mansfeld, with an army of some 20,000, which he had raised in Lower Saxony, and which he maintained without pay, a secret he had learnt from Mansfeld.

These combined hosts, which the hope of plunder, quite as much as the desire of replacing Frederick V on his throne, had drawn together, could not be much if at all below 50,000. They were terrible scourges to the country which became the scene of their marches and of their battles. They alighted like a flock of vultures on the rich chapters and bishoprics of the

Rhine. During the summers of 1621 and 1622, they marched backwards and forwards, as the fortune of battle impelled them, in that rich valley, robbing the peasantry, levying contributions upon the towns, slaughtering their opponents, and being themselves slaughtered in turn. When hard pressed they would cross the river into France, and continue, in that new and unexhausted field, their devastations and plunderings. But ultimately the arms of Tilly prevailed. After murderous conflicts, in which both sides sustained terrible loss, the bands of Mansfeld retreated northward, leaving the cities and lands of the Palatinate to be occupied by the troops of the League. On the 17th of September, 1622, Heidelberg was taken, after a terrible storm; its magnificent palace was partially burned, its university was closed, and the treasures of its world-renowned library were carried away in fifty wagon-loads to Rome. The rich city of Mannheim was taken by the soldiers of the League in the November following. Thus the gates of the Palatinate were opened to the invading hosts, and they entered and gleaned where the troops of Mansfeld and Brunswick had reaped the first rich harvest.

The man whom we have seen first driven from the throne of Bohemia, and next despoiled of his hereditary dominions was, as our readers know, the son-in-law of the King of England. It is with some astonishment that we see James I standing by a quiet spectator of the ruin of his daughter's husband. Elizabeth, and the great statesmen who gave such glory to her throne, would have seen in the swelling wave, crested with victory, that was setting in upon Germany, peril to England; and, even though the happiness of no relation had been at stake, would, for the safety of her throne and the welfare of her realm, have found means of moderating, if not arresting, the reaction, before it had overwhelmed those princes and lands where she must ever look for her trustiest allies. But James I and his minister Buckingham had neither the capacity to devise, nor the spirit to pursue, so large a policy as this. They allowed themselves to be befooled by the two

leading Popish Powers. Ferdinand of Austria buoyed up the English monarch with hopes that he would yet restore his son-in-law to his Electorate, although he had already decided that Frederick should see his dominions no more; and Philip II took care to amuse the English king with the proposal of a Spanish marriage for his son, and James was mean-spirited enough to be willing to wed the heir of his crown to the daughter of the man who, had he been able to compass his designs, would have left him neither throne nor kingdom. The dupe of both Austria and Spain, James I. sat still till the ruin of the Elector Frederick was almost completed. When he saw what had happened he was willing to give both money and troops, but it was too late. The occupation of Frederick's dominions by the army of the League made the proffered assistance not only useless it gave it even an air of irony. The Electorate of the Rhine was bestowed upon the Duke of Bavaria, as a recompense for his services.[1]

The territory was added to the area of Romanism, the Protestant ministers were driven out, and Jesuits and priests crowded in flocks to take possession of the newly subjugated domains. The former sovereign of these domains found asylum in a corner of Holland. It was a bitter cup to Elizabeth, the wife of Frederick, and the daughter of the King of England, who is reported to have said that she would rather live on bread and water as a queen than, occupying a lower station, inhabit the most magnificent mansion, and sit down at the most luxurious table.[2]

Other princes, besides the King of England, now opened their eyes. The Elector of Saxony, the descendant of that Maurice who had chased Charles V. across the Alps of the Tyrol, and wrested from him by force of arms the Treaty of Passau, which gave toleration to the Lutherans, was not only indifferent to the misfortunes of the Elector Frederick, but saw without concern the cruel suppression of Protestantism in Bohemia. Content to be left in peace in his own dominions, and not ill-

pleased, it may be, to see his rivals the Calvinists humbled, he refused to act the part which his descent and his political power made incumbent upon him. The Elector of Brandenburg, the next in rank to Saxony, showed himself at this crisis equally unpatriotic and shortsighted. But now they saw – what they might have foreseen long before, but for the blindness that selfishness ever inflicts that the policy of Ferdinand had placed them in a new and most critical position.[3] East and west the Catholic reaction had hemmed them in; Protestantism had disappeared in the kingdoms beyond the Danube, and now the Rhine Electorate had undergone a forced conversion. On all sides the wave of a triumphant reaction was rolling onward, and how soon it might sweep over their own territories, now left almost like islands in the midst of a raging sea, they could not tell. The tremendous blunder they had committed was plain enough, but how to remedy it was more than their wisdom could say.

At this moment the situation of affairs in England changed, and a prospect began to open up of a European coalition against the Powers of Spain and Austria. The “Spanish sleeping-cup,” as the English nation termed it, had been rudely dashed from the lip of James I, and the monarch saw that he had been practiced upon by Philip II. The marriage with the Infanta of Spain was broken off at the last moment; there followed a rapture with that Power, and the English king, smarting from the insult, applied to Parliament (February, 1624) for the means of reinstating Frederick in the Palatinate by force of arms.[4] The Parliament, who had felt the nation lowered, and the Protestant cause brought into peril, by the truckling of the king, heartily responded to the royal request, and voted a liberal subsidy. Mansfeld and Brunswick came over to London, where they met with a splendid reception. A new army was provided for them, and they sailed to begin operations on the Rhine; but the expedition did not prosper. Before they had struck a single blow the plague broke out in the camp of Mansfeld, and swept away half his army,

amid revolting horrors. Brunswick had no better fortune than his companion. He was over-taken by Tilly on the Dutch frontier, and experienced a tremendous defeat. During the winter that followed, the two generals wandered about with the remains of their army, and a few new recruits, whom they had persuaded to join their banners, but they accomplished nothing save the terror they inspired in the districts which they visited, and the money given them by the inhabitants, on the condition of their departure with their banditti.

Charles I having now succeeded his father on the throne of England, the war was resumed on a larger scale, and with a more persistent energy. On the 9th of December, 1625, a treaty was concluded at the Hague between England, Holland, and Denmark, for opposing by joint arms the power of Hapsburg, and reinstating the Elector Frederick.[5] It was a grave question who should head the expedition as leader of its armies. Proposals had been made to Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, but at that moment he had on his hands a war with Poland, and could not embark in another and more onerous campaign. England was not in a condition for carrying on hostilities in Germany on her own account. Holland had not yet ended its great struggle with Spain, and dared not expend on other countries the strength so much needed within itself. Of the three contracting Powers, Denmark was the one which was most at liberty to charge itself with the main burden of the enterprise. It was ultimately arranged that the Danish king should conduct the campaign, and the support of the joint enterprise was distributed among the parties as follows: – Denmark was to raise an army of 30,000, or thereabouts; England was to furnish L 30,000, and Holland L 5,000, month by month, as subsidy. The latter engaged, moreover, should the imperial army press upon the King of Denmark, to make a diversion next summer by placing a fair army in the field, and by contributing a number of ships to strengthen the English fleet on the coast.[6]

Christian IV of Denmark, who was now placed at the head of the Protestant armies in this great war, was one of the most courageous, enlightened, and patriotic monarchs of his time. He hid under a rough exterior and bluff manners a mind of great shrewdness, and a generous and noble disposition. He labored with equal wisdom and success to elevate the condition of the middle class of his subjects. He lightened their burdens, he improved their finance, and he incited them to engage in the pursuits of commerce and trade. These measures, which laid the foundations of that material prosperity which Denmark long enjoyed, made him beloved at home, and greatly raised his influence abroad. His kingdom, he knew, had risen by the Reformation, and its standing, political and social, was fatally menaced by the Popish reaction now in progress.

As Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, he was a prince of the German Empire, and might therefore, without wounding the self-love of others, take a prominent position in checking a movement which threatened the liberties of all Germany, as well as the independence of his own dominions. The appearance of Christian IV at the head of the army of the Protestant Confederacy makes it necessary that we should introduce ourselves to another – a different, but a very powerful figure – that now stood up on the other side. The combinations on the one side rendered it advisable that Ferdinand should make a new disposition of the forces on his. Hitherto he had carried on the war with the arms of the Catholic League. Maximilian of Bavaria and his general, Tilly, occupied the foreground, and were the most prominent actors in the business. Ferdinand now resolved to come to the front in person, by raising an army of his own, and appointing a general to lead it. But a formidable obstacle met him on the threshold of his new project – his military chest was empty. He had gathered many millions from his confiscations in Bohemia, but these had been swallowed up by the Jesuits, or spent on the wars in Hungary, and nothing remained wherewith to fight the battles of the “Restoration.” In his difficulty, he applied to one of his generals, who had

served with distinction against the Turks and Venetians, and had borne arms nearer home in Bohemia and Hungary. This soldier was Albrecht von Wallenstein, a man of undeniable abilities, but questionable designs. It was this gloomy personage who gave Ferdinand an army.

The same war-like race which had sent forth Zisca to fight the battles of the Hussite Reformers, gave Wallenstein to Rome. He was born on the 15th of September, 1583, of Protestant parents, who had, indeed, been Calixtines through several generations. Being early left an orphan, he was adopted by an uncle, who sent him to the Jesuit college at Olmutz. The Fathers could have no difficulty in discerning the genius of the boy, and they would spare no pains to adapt that genius to the purposes in which they might afterwards have occasion to employ it. The Jesuits had already fashioned a class of men for the war, of whom they had every reason to be proud, and who will remain to all time monuments of their skill and of the power of their maxims in making human souls pliant and terrible instruments of their will. Ferdinand of Austria, Maximilian of Bavaria, and his general, Tilly, were their handiwork. To these they were about to add a fourth. With a dark soul, a resolute will, and a heart which ambition had rendered hard as the nether mill-stone, the Jesuits beheld in Wallenstein a war-machine of their own creating, in the presence of which they themselves at times trembled. The same hands which had fashioned these terrible instruments put them forth, and moved them to and fro over the vast stage which we see swimming in blood.

Wallenstein was now in the prime of life. He had acquired in former campaigns great experience in the raising and disciplining of troops. To his fame as a soldier he now added the prestige of an enormous fortune. An exceedingly rich old widow had fallen in love with him, and overcome by the philter she gave him, and not, it is to be presumed, by the love of her gold, he married her. Next came the confiscations of

estates in Bohemia, and Wallenstein bought at absurdly low prices not fewer than sixty-seven estates.[7] Ferdinand gave him in addition the Duchy of Friedland, containing nine towns, fifty-seven castles, and villages. After the king, he was the richest landed proprietor in Bohemia Not content with these hoards, he sought to increase his goods by trading with the bankers, by lending to the court, and by imposing taxes on both friend and foe.

But if his revenues were immense, amounting to many millions of florins annually, his expenditure was great. He lived surrounded by the pomp of an Eastern monarch. His table was sumptuous, and some hundred guests sat down at it daily. Six gates gave entrance to his palace, which still stands on the right bank of the Moldau, on the slope of the Hradschin at Prague. The pile is immense, and similar chateaux were erected on his numerous estates elsewhere. His chamberlains were twenty-four, and were selected from the noblest families in Bohemia. Sixty pages, in blue velvet dresses bordered with gold, waited on him. Fifty men-at-arms kept guard, day and night, in his antechamber. A thousand persons formed the usual complement of his household. Upwards of a thousand homes filled the stalls of his stables, and fed from marble mangers. When he journeyed, ten trumpeters with silver bugles preceded the march; there followed a hundred carriages, laden with his servants and baggage; sixty carriages and fifty led homes conveyed his suite; and last of all, suitably escorted, came the chariot of the man who formed the center of all this splendor.

Wallenstein, although the champion of Rome, neither believed her creed nor loved her clergy. He would, admit no priest into his camp, wishing, doubtless, to be master there himself. He issued his orders in few but peremptory words, and exacted instant and blind obedience. The slightest infraction of discipline brought down swift and severe chastisement upon the person guilty of it. But though rigid in all matters of

discipline, he winked at the grossest excesses of his troops outside the camp, and shut his ear to the oft-repeated complaints of the pillagings and murders which they committed upon the peasantry. The most unbounded license was tolerated in his camp, and only one thing was needful – implicit submission to his authority. He had a quick eye for talent, and never hesitated to draw from the crowd, and reward with promotion, those whom he thought fitted to serve him in a higher rank. He was a diligent student of the stars, and never undertook anything of moment without first trying to discover, with the help of an Italian astrologer whom he kept under his roof, whether the constellations promised success, or threatened disaster, to the project he was meditating. Like all who have been believers in the occult sciences, he was reserved, haughty, inscrutable, and whether in the saloons of his palace, or in his tent, there was a halo of mystery around him. No one shared his secrets, no one could read his thoughts: on his face there never came smile; nor did mirth ever brighten the countenances of those who stood around him. In his palace no heavy footfall, no loud voices, might be heard: all noises must be hushed; silence and awe must wait continually in that grand but gloomy chamber, where Wallenstein sat apart from his fellows, while the stars, as they traced their path in the firmament, were slowly working out the brilliant destinies which an eternal Fate had decreed for him. The master-passions of his soul were pride and ambition; and if he served Rome it was because he judged that this was his road to those immense dignities and powers which he had been born to possess. He followed his star.

We must add the picture of his personal appearance as Michiels has drawn it. "His tall, thin figure; his haughty attitude; the stern expression of his pale face; his wide forehead, that seemed formed to command; his black hair, close shorn and harsh; his little dark eyes, in which the flame of authority shone; his haughty and suspicious look; his thick moustaches and tufted beard, produced, at the first glance, a startling

sensation. His usual dress consisted of a justaucorps of elk-skin, covered by a white doublet and cloak; round his neck he wore a Spanish ruff, in his hat fluttered a large and red plume, while scarlet pantaloons and boots of Cordovan leather, carefully padded on account of the gout, completed his ordinary attire.”[8]

Such was the man to whom Ferdinand of Austria applied for assistance in raising an army.

Wallenstein’s grandeur had not as yet developed to so colossal a pitch as to overshadow his sovereign, but his ambition was already fully grown, and in the necessities of Ferdinand he saw another stage opening in his own advancement. He undertook at once to raise an army for the emperor. “How many does your Majesty require?” he asked. “Twenty thousand,” replied Ferdinand. “Twenty thousand ?” responded Wallenstein, with an air of surprise. “That is not enough; say forty thousand or fifty thousand.”[9] The monarch hinted that there might be a difficulty in provisioning so many. “Fifty thousand,” promptly responded Wallenstein, “will have abundance where twenty thousand would starve.”

The calculation by which he arrived at this conclusion was sure, but atrocious. A force of only twenty thousand might find their entrance barred into a rich province, whereas an army of fifty thousand was strong enough to force admission anywhere, and to remain so long as there was anything to eat or to waste. The general meant that the army should subsist by plunder; and fifty thousand would cost the emperor no more than twenty thousand, for neither would cost him anything. The royal permission was given, and an army which speed fly attained this number was soon in the field. It was a mighty assemblage of various nationalities, daring characters and diverse faiths; and, however formidable to the cities and provinces amid which it was encamped, it adored and obeyed the iron man around whom it was gathered.

In the autumn of 1625 six armies were in the field, prepared to resume the bloody strife, and devastate the land they professed to liberate. The winter of 1625 passed without any event of moment. With the spring of 1626 the campaign was opened in earnest. The King of Denmark, with 30,000 troops, had passed the winter in the neighborhood of Bremen, and now, putting his army in motion, he acted along the right bank of the Weser.

Tilly, with the army of the League, descended along the left bank of the same river, in the hope of meeting the Danish force and joining battle with it. Wallenstein, who did not care to share his victories and divide his laurels with Tilly, had encamped on the Elbe, and strongly fortified himself at the bridge of Dessau. It would be easy for him to march across the country to the Weser, and fall upon the rear of the King of Denmark, should the latter come to an engagement with Tilly. Christian IV saw the danger, and arranged with Count Mansfeld, who had under him a finely equipped force, to make a diversion in his favor, by marching through Germany to Hungary, joining Gabriel Bethlen, and attacking Vienna. This maneuver would draw off Wallenstein, and leave him to cope with only the troops under Tilly. Duke Christian of Brunswick had orders to enter Westphalia, and thence extend his operations into the Palatinate; and Duke John Ernest of Saxe-Weimar, who was also in the field, was to act in Saxony, and assist Mansfeld in executing the diversion by which Wallenstein was to be drawn off from the theater of war between the Weser and the Elbe, and allow the campaign to be decided by a trial of strength between Christian IV and the general of the League.

Count Mansfeld set about executing his part of the plan. He marched against Wallenstein, attacked him in his strong position on the Elbe, but he was routed with great loss. He retreated through Silesia, pursued by his terrible antagonist, and arrived in Hungary, but only to find a cold reception from

Prince Bethlen. Worn out by toil and defeat, he set out to return to England by way of Venice; it was his last journey, for falling sick, he died by the way. He was soon followed to the grave by his two companions in arms, the Duke of Brunswick and Ernest of Saxe-Weimar.

Of the four generals on the Protestant side, only one now survived, Christian IV of Denmark. The deaths of these leaders, and the dispersion of their corps, decided the fate of the campaign. Tilly, his army reinforced by detachments which Wallenstein had sent to his aid, now bore down on the Danish host, which was retreating northwards. He overtook it at Lutter, in Bernburg, and compelled it to accept battle. The Danish monarch three times rallied his soldiers, and led them against the enemy, but in vain did Christian IV contend against greatly superior numbers. The Danes were completely routed; 4,000 lay dead on the field; the killed included many officers. Artillery, ammunition, and standards became the booty of the imperialists, and the Danish king, escaping through a narrow defile with a remnant of his cavalry, presented himself, on the evening of the day of battle, at the gates of Wolfenbittel.

Pursuing his victory, and driving the Danes before him, Tilly made himself master of the Weser and the territories of Brunswick. Still advancing, he entered Hanover, crossed the Elbe, and spread the troops of the League over the territories of Brandenburg. The year closed with the King of Denmark in Holstein, and the League master of great part of North Germany.

In the spring of next year (1627), Wallenstein returned from Hungary, tracing a second time the march of his troops through Silesia and Germany in a black line of desolation. On joining Tilly, the combined army amounted to 80,000. The two generals, having now no enemy in their path capable of opposing them, resumed their victorious advance. Rapidly overrunning the Dukedoms of Mecklenburg, and putting garrisons in all the

fortresses, they soon made themselves masters of the whole of Germany to the North Sea. Wallenstein next poured his troops into Schleswig-Holstein, and attacked Christian IV in his own territories, and soon the Danish king saw his dominions and sovereignty all but wrested from him.

So disastrous for the Protestant interests was the issue of the campaign, illustrating how questionable in such a controversy is the interference of the sword, and how uncertain the results which it works out. Not only had the Protestants not recovered the Palatinate of the Rhine, but the tide of Popish and imperialist victory had rolled on, along the course of the Weser and the Elbe, stopping only on the shores of the Baltic. The Elector of Brandenburg saw the imperial troops at the gate of Berlin, and had to send in his submission to Ferdinand. The Dukes of Mecklenburg had been placed under the ban of the empire, and expelled from their territories. The Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel had been compelled to abandon the Danish alliance. The King of Denmark had lost all his fortresses in Germany; his army had been dispersed; and Schleswig-Holstein was trembling in the balance. Wallenstein was master of most of the German towns on the shores of the Baltic and the North Sea, but these successes only instigated to greater. The duke was at that moment revolving mighty projects, which would vastly extend both his own and the emperor's power. He dropped hints from which it was plain that he meditated putting down all the German princes, with their "German liberty," and installing one emperor and one law in the Fatherland. He would dethrone the King of Denmark, and proclaim Ferdinand in his room. The whole of Germany, Denmark included, was to be governed from Vienna. There was to be one exception: the Dukedoms of Mecklenburg had become his own special principality, and as this was but a narrow land territory, he proposed to add thereto the dominion of the seas. By way of carrying out this dream of a vast maritime empire, he had already assumed the title of "Admiral of the North and Baltic Seas." He had cast his eyes

on two points of the Baltic shore, the towns of Rugen and Stralsund, as specially adapted for being the site of his arsenals and dockyards, where he might fit out his fleets, to be sent forth on the errands of peaceful commerce, or more probably on the hostile expeditions of conquest.

Such was the wretched condition of Germany when the year 1627 closed upon it. Everywhere the League had been triumphant, and all was gloom – nay, darkness. The land lay beaten down and trampled upon by its two masters, a fanatical emperor and a dark, inscrutable, and insatiably ambitious soldier. Its princes had been humiliated, its towns garrisoned with foreign troops, and an army of banditti, now swollen to 100,000, were marching hither and thither in it, and in the exercise of a boundless license were converting its fair fields into a wilderness. As if the calamities of the present were not enough, its masters were revolving new schemes of confiscation and oppression, which would complete the ruin they had commenced, and plunge the Fatherland into an abyss of misery.

CHAPTER 5 [Back to Top](#) EDICT OF RESTITUTION.

Edict of Restitution – Its Injustice – Amount of Property to be Restored – Imperial Commissaries – Commencement at Augsburg – Bulk of Property Seized by Ferdinand and the Jesuits – Greater Projects meditated – Denmark and Sweden marked for Conquest – Retribution – Ferdinand asked to Disarm – Combination against Ferdinand – Father Joseph – Outwits the Emperor – Ferdinand and the Jesuits Plot their own Undoing. THE party of the League were now masters of Germany. From the foot of the Tyrol and the banks of the Danube all northwards to the shores of the Baltic, and the coast of Denmark, the Jesuit might survey the land and proudly say, “I am lord of it all.” Like the persecutor of early times, he might rear his pillar, and write upon it that once Lutheranism existed here, but now it was extinct, and henceforth Rome resumed her sway. Such were the hopes confidently entertained by the Fathers, and accordingly the year 1629 was signalized by an edict which

surpassed in its sweeping injustice all that had gone before it. Protestantism had been slain by the sword of Wallenstein, and the decree that was now launched was meant to consign it to its grave.

On the 6th of March, 1629, was issued the famous "Edict of Restitution." This commanded that all the archbishoprics, bishoprics, abbacies, and monasteries, in short all the property and goods which had belonged to the Romish Church, and which since the Religious Peace of Passau had been taken possession of by the Protestants, should be restored. This was a revolution the extent of which it was not easy to calculate, seeing it overturned a state of things which had existed for now nearly a century, and implied the transference of an amount of property so vast as to affect almost every interest and person in Germany. "It was a coup-d'etat as furious," says Michiels, "as if the French were now to be asked to restore the clerical property seized during the Revolution." [1]

Part of that property went to the payment of the Protestant ministers: good part of it was held by the princes; in some cases it formed the entire source of their revenue; its restitution would beggar some of them, and irritate all of them. The princes might plead that the settlement which this edict proposed to overturn had lasted now seventy-five years; that it had been acquiesced in by the silence of four preceding emperors, and that these secularizations had received a legal ratification at the Pacification of Augsburg in 1555, when a proposed clause enjoining restitution had been rejected. They might farther plead that they were entitled to an equal share in those foundations which had been contributed by their common ancestors, and that the edict would disturb the balance of the constitution of Germany, by creating an overwhelming majority of Popish votes in the Diet.

The hardships of the edict were still farther intensified by the addition of a clause which touched the conscience. Popish landed proprietors were empowered to compel their vassals to

adopt their religion, or leave the country. When it was objected that this was contrary to the spirit of the Religious Peace, it was coolly replied that "Catholic proprietors of estates were no farther bound than to allow their Protestant subjects full liberty to emigrate." [2]

Commissaries were appointed for carrying out the edict; and all unlawful possessors of church benefices, and all the Protestant States without exception, were ordered, under pain of the ban of the empire, to make immediate restitution of their usurped possessions. Behind the imperial Commissaries stood two powerful armies, ready with their swords to enforce the orders of the Commissaries touching the execution of the edict.

The decree fell upon Germany like a thunderbolt. The bishoprics alone were extensive enough to form a kingdom; the abbacies were numberless; lands and houses scattered throughout all Northern Germany would have to be reft from their proprietors, powerful princes would be left without a penny, and thousands would have to exile themselves; in short, endless confusion would ensue. The Elector of Saxony and the Duke of Brandenburg, whose equanimity had not been disturbed so long as religion only was in question, were now alarmed in earnest. They could no longer hide from themselves that the destruction of the Protestant religion, and the ruin of the German liberties, had been resolved on by the emperor and the Catholic League.

A commencement was made of the edict in Augsburg. This was eminently a city of Protestant memories, for there the Augustan Confession had been read, and the Religious Peace concluded, and that doubtless made this city a delicious conquest to the Jesuits. Augsburg was again placed under the government of its bishop, and all the Lutheran churches were shut up. In all the free cities the Romish worship was restored by the soldiers. As regards the richer bishoprics, the emperor, having regard to the maxim that all well-

regulated charity begins at home, got the chapters to elect his sons to them. His second son, Leopold William, a lad of fifteen already nominated Bishop of Strasburg, Passau, Breslau, and Olmutz, obtained as his share of the spoil gathered under the edict, the Bishopric of Halberstadt, and the Archiepiscopates of Magdeburg and Bremen. When the ancient heritages of the Benedictines, Augustines, and other orders came to be distributed anew, by whom should they be claimed but by the Jesuits, an order which had no existence when these foundations were first created! To benefice a youth of fifteen, and endow the new order of Loyola, with this wealth, Ferdinand called "making restitution to the original owners." "If its confiscation was called plunder, it could not be made good by fresh robbery." [3]

Meanwhile the camarilla at Vienna, whose counsels had given birth to this Edict of Restitution, with all the mischiefs with which it was pregnant to its authors, but which it had not yet disclosed, were indulging in dreams of yet greater conquest. The tide of success which had flowed upon them so suddenly had turned their heads, and nothing was too impracticable or chimerical for them to attempt. East and west they beheld the trophies of their victories. The once powerful Protestant Churches of Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary were in ruins; the Palatinate of the Rhine, including that second fountain of Calvinism, Heidelberg, had been added to their dominions; their victorious arms had been carried along the Weser, the Elbe, and the Oder, and had stopped only on the shores of the Baltic. But there was no reason why the Baltic should be the boundary of their triumphs. They would make a new departure. They would carry their victories into the North Sea, and recover for Rome the Kingdoms of Denmark and Sweden. When they had reached this furthest limit on the north, they would return and would essay with their adventurous arms France and England. In both of these countries Protestantism seemed on the ebb, and the thrones so lately occupied by all Elizabeth and a Henry IV, were now filled by pedantic or

senile sovereigns, and a second period of juvenescence seemed there to be awaiting their Church. This was the moment when the "Catholic Restoration" had reached its height, when the House of Hapsburg was in its glory, and when the scheme of gigantic dominion at which Loyola aimed when he founded his order, had approached more nearly than ever before or since its full and perfect consummation.

The dreams of aggression which were now inflaming the imaginations of the Jesuits were shared in by Ferdinand; although, as was natural, he contemplated these anticipated achievements more from the point of his own and his house's aggrandizement, and less from that of the exaltation of the Vatican, and the propagation over Europe of that teaching which it styles Christianity. The emperor viewed the contemplated conquests as sound in principle, and he could not see why they should not be found as easily practicable as they were undoubtedly right. He had a general of consummate ability, and an army of 100,000 strong, that cost him nothing: might he not with a force so overwhelming walk to and fro over Europe, as he had done over Germany, and prescribe to its peoples what law they were to obey, and what creed they were to believe? This he meant assuredly to do in that vast territory which stretches from the Balkan and the Carpathians to the German Sea, and the northern coast of Sweden. The next conquest of his arms he fully intended should be the two Kingdoms of Denmark and Sweden; and then changing the German Confederacy into an absolute monarchy, sweeping away the charters and rights of its several States, which he regarded but as so much rubbish, shutting up all its heretical churches, and permitting only the Roman religion to be professed, the whole to the extreme north of Sweden would be brought under what he accounted "the best political constitution – namely, one king,, one law, one God." [4]

But to the emperor, and the Jesuits, his counselors, giddy with the achievements of the past, and yet more so with the

dreams of the future, defeat was treading upon the heels of success. Retribution came sooner than Ferdinand had foreseen, and in a way he could not calculate, inasmuch as it grew out of those very schemes, the success of which seemed to guard him against any such reverse as that which was now approaching. The man who had lifted him up to his dizzy height was to be, indirectly, the occasion of his downfall. The first turn in the tide was visible in the jealousy which at this stage sprang up between Ferdinand and the Catholic League. The emperor had become suddenly too powerful to be safe for Catholic interests, and the Jesuits of the League resolved to humble or to break him. So long as Ferdinand was content to owe his victories to Maximilian of Bavaria as head of the League, and conquer only by the sword of Tilly, the Jesuits were willing to permit him to go on. He was their servant while he leaned upon the League, and they could use him or throw him aside as they found it expedient. The moment they saw him disposed to use his power for personal or dynastic ends in opposition to the interests of the order, they could check him, or even strip him of that power altogether. But it was wholly different when Ferdinand separated his military operations from those of the League, called Wallenstein to his service, raised an army of overwhelming numbers, and was winning victories which, although they brought with them the spread of the Roman faith, brought with them still more power to the House of Hapsburg, and glory to its general, Wallenstein. Ferdinand was now dangerous, and they must take measures for curtailing a power that was becoming formidable to themselves. Maximilian of Bavaria summoned a meeting of the League at Heidelberg, and after discussing the matter, a demand was sent to the emperor that he should disarm – that is, dismiss Wallenstein, and dissolve his army.^[5] Remove the pedestal, thought the meeting, and the figure will fall.

Other parties came forward to urge the same demand on Ferdinand. These were the princes of Germany, to whom the army of Wallenstein had become a terror, a scourge, and a

destruction. We can imagine, or rather we cannot imagine, the state of that land with an assemblage of banditti, now swollen to somewhere about 100,000, [6] roaming over it, reaping the harvest of its fields, gathering the spoil of its cities, torturing the inhabitants to compel them to disclose their treasures, causing whole villages on the line of their march, or in the neighborhood of their encampment, to disappear, and leaving their occupants to find a home in the woods. The position of the princes was no longer endurable. It did not matter much whether they were with or against Ferdinand. The ruffians assembled under Wallenstein selected as the scene of their encampment not the most heterodox, but the most fertile province, and carried away the cattle, the gold, and the goods which it contained, without stopping to inquire whether the owner was a Romanist or a Protestant. "Brandenburg estimated its losses at 20,000,000, Pomerania at 10,000,000, Hesse-Cassel at 7,000,000 of dollars, and the rest in proportion. The cry for redress was loud, urgent, and universal; on this point Catholics and Protestants were agreed." [7]

Ferdinand for some time obstinately shut his ear to the complaints and accusations which reached him on all sides against his general and his army. At last he deemed it prudent to make some concession to the general outcry. He dismissed 18,000 of his soldiers. Under the standard of Wallenstein there remained more marauders than had been sent away; but, over and above, the master-grievance still existed – Wallenstein was still in command, and neither the League nor the princes would be at rest till he too had quitted the emperor's service.

A council of the princes was held at Ratisbon (June, 1630), and the demand was renewed, and again pressed upon Ferdinand. Host painful it was to dismiss the man to whom he owed his greatness; but with a singular unanimity the demand was joined in by the whole Electoral College, by the princes of the League, the Protestant princes, and by the ambassadors of

France and of Spain. Along with the ambassadors of France had come a Capuchin friar, Father Joseph, whom Richelieu had sent as an admirable instrument for working on the emperor. This monk has received the credit, of giving the last touch that turned the scale in this delicate affair. "The voice of a monk," says Schiller, "was to Ferdinand the voice of God." Ferdinand was then negotiating for the election of his son as King of the Romans, with the view of his succeeding him in the empire.

"It will be necessary," softly whispered the Capuchin, "to gratify the electors on this occasion, and thereby facilitate your son's election to the Roman crown. When this object has been gained, Wallenstein will always be ready to resume his former station." [8] The argument of Father Joseph prevailed; Wallenstein's dismissal was determined on; and when it was intimated to him the general submitted, only saying to the messenger who brought the unwelcome tidings, that he had learned his errand from the stars before his arrival. Ferdinand faded to carry his son's election as King of the Romans; and when he found how he had been outwitted, he vented his rage, exclaiming, "A rascally Capuchin has disarmed me with his rosary, and crammed into his cowl six electoral bonnets." [9]

All parties in this transaction appear as if smitten with blindness and infatuation. We behold each in turn laying the train for its own overthrow. The cause of Protestantism seemed eternally ruined in the land of Luther, and lo, the emperor and the Jesuits combine to lift it up! Ferdinand prepares the means for his own discomfiture and humiliation when in the first place he quarrels with the League, and in the second when he issues the Edict of Restitution. He drives both Jesuits and Protestants from him in turn. Next it is the Jesuits who plot their own undoing. They compel the emperor to reduce his army, and not only so, but they also make him dismiss a general who is more to him than an army. And what is

yet more strange, the time they select for making these great changes is the moment when a hero, who had bound victory to his standards by his surpassing bravery and skill, was stepping upon the shore of Northern Germany to do battle for a faith which they had trodden into the dust, and the name of which would soon, they hoped, perish from the Fatherland.

CHAPTER 6 [Back to Top](#) ARRIVAL OF GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS IN GERMANY.

The Reaction – Its Limits – Preparatory Campaigns of Gustavus – All Ready – No Alternative left to Gustavus – His Motives – His Character – His Farewell to the Diet – His Parting Address – Embarkation – Lands in Germany – Contempt of Gustavus by the Court of Vienna – Marches on Stettin – Is Admitted into it – Takes Possession of Pomerania – Imperialists Driven out of Mecklenburg – Alliance with France – Edict of Restitution – John George, Elector of Saxony – His Project – The Convention at Leipsic – Its Failure. THE Catholic reaction, borne onwards by the force of the imperial arms, had rolled up to the borders of Sweden, chasing before it Christian of Denmark, and every one who had striven to stem its advancing torrent. But a mightier Potentate than Ferdinand or any earthly emperor had fixed the limits of the reaction, and decreed that beyond the line it had now reached it should not pass. From the remote regions of the North Sea a deliverer came forth, summoned by a Divine voice, and guided by a Divine hand, empowered to roll back its swelling wave, and bid the nations it had overwhelmed stand up and again assume, the rights of free men. The champion who now arose to confront Rome was Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden.

A sincere Protestant, as well as valorous soldier, Gustavus Adolphus had seen with pain and alarm the troops of the League and of the emperor overrun the States of Germany, drive away the ministers of the Reformed faith, and set up the overturned altars of Rome. The cry of the oppressed peoples had reached him once and again, but circumstances did not permit of his interfering in the great quarrel. On ascending the throne, he

had the disorders of half a century in his own dominions to rectify. This was a laborious task, but it was executed with an intelligence that replaced stagnation with life and prosperity. The external relations of his kingdom next claimed his attention. These called him to engage, first, in a war with Denmark; and, secondly, in a war with Russia. A third war he was compelled to wage with Poland. His title to the throne of Sweden had been brought into question by the Polish sovereign, who maintained that the rightful heirs were to be found in the other line of Gustavus Vasa. The Romanists sided with the King of Poland, in the hope of being able to wrest the sovereignty from the hands of a Protestant, and of bringing back the kingdom to the See of Rome; and thus Gustavus Adolphus found that he had to do battle at the same time for the possession of his crown and the Protestantism of his realm. This contest, which was completely successful, was terminated in 1629, and it left Sweden mistress of a large and important section of the Baltic coast. These campaigns formed the preparation for the fourth and greatest war in which the monarch and people of Sweden were destined to embark. The reforms set on foot within the country had vastly augmented its resources. The power which Gustavus had acquired over the Baltic, and the towns which he held on its coast, kept open to him the gate of entrance into Germany; and the generals and warriors whom he had trained in these wars were such as had not been seen in Europe since the decline of the Spanish school. All these requisites, unsuspected by himself, had been slowly preparing, and now they were completed: he could command the sinews of war; he had an open road to the great battle-field, and he had warriors worthy of being his companions in arms, and able to act their part in the conflict to which he was about to lead them.

If Gustavus Adolphus was now, what he had never been before, ready to engage in the worldwide strife, it is not less true that that strife had reached a stage which left him no alternative but to take part in it, if ever he would do so

with the chance of success. Victory had carried the Popish arms to the waters of the Baltic: the possessions he held on the coast of that sea were in danger of being wrested from him; but his foes would not stop there; they would cross the ocean; they would assail him on his own soil, and extinguish his sovereignty and the Protestantism of his realm together. Wallenstein had suggested such a scheme of conquest to his master, and Ferdinand would not be at rest till he had extended his sway to the extreme north of Sweden.[1]

Such was the situation in which the Swedish monarch now found himself placed. He rightly interpreted that situation. He knew that he could not avoid war by sitting still; that if he did not go to meet his enemies on the plains of Germany, they would seek him out in his own sea-girt kingdom, where he should fight at greater disadvantage. Therefore he chose the bolder and safer course.

But these reasons, wise though they were, were not the only, nor indeed the strongest motives that influenced Gustavus Adolphus in adopting this course. He was a devout Christian and an enlightened Protestant, as well as a brave warrior, and he took into consideration the seat crisis which had arrived in the affairs of Europe and of Protestantism, and the part that fell to himself in this emergency. He saw the religion and the liberty of Christendom on the point of being trodden out by the armed hordes of an emperor whose councilors were Jesuits, and whose generals were content to sink the soldier in the ruthless banditti-leader; and to whom could the oppressed nations look if not to himself? England was indifferent, France was unwilling, Holland was unable, and, unless Protestantism was to be saved by miracle, he must gird on the sword and essay the Herculean task. He knew the slender means and the small army with which he must confront an enemy who had inexhaustible resources at his command, and innumerable soldiers, with the prestige of invincibility, under his banner; but if the difficulty of the enterprise was

immense, and might well inspire caution or even fear, it was of a nature surpassingly grand, and might well kindle enthusiasm, and beget a sublime faith that He whose cause it was, and who, by the very perils with which He was surrounding him, seemed to be forcing him out into the field of battle, would bear him safely through all the dangers of the great venture, and by his hand deliver his people. It was in this faith that Gustavus Adolphus became the champion of Protestantism.

“In one respect,” says Hausser, “Gustavus Adolphus was a unique personage in this century: he was animated by the fresh, unbroken, youthful spirit of the early days of the Reformation, like that which characterized such men as Frederick of Saxony and Philip of Hesse. If it can be said of any ruler in the first half of the sixteenth century, that he was filled with Protestant zeal and sincere enthusiasm for the greatness of his cause, it may be said of him and of him alone. To a world full of mean artifices, miserable intrigues, and narrow-minded men, he exhibited once more the characteristics and qualities of a true hero. This explains why he called forth enthusiasm where it had been for many decades unknown – why he succeeded in kindling men’s minds for ideas which had been engulfed in the miseries of the times. Sacred things were no idle sport with him.”[\[2\]](#)

Having resolved to present himself on the great arena, in the faith of uplifting a cause which already appeared almost utterly ruined, Gustavus Adolphus, “like a dying man,” says Gfrorer, “set his house in order,” by making arrangements for the defense and government of his kingdom in his absence. On the 20th of May, 1630, he assembled the Diet at Stockholm, to bid the States a solemn farewell.”[\[3\]](#) Taking in his arms his infant daughter Christina, then only five years old,[\[4\]](#) he presented her to the assembled nobles and deputies, who swore fidelity to her as their sovereign, in the event of her royal father failing on the battle-field. The touching spectacle

melted all present into tears, and the emotion of the king was so great that it was some time before he was able to proceed in his farewell address to the States.

When at length he found words, the brave and devoted prince assured his people that it was no light cause which had led him to embark in this new war. God was his witness that he had not sought this contest. That contest exposed himself to great dangers, and it laid heavy burdens on them; but, however full of risks and sacrifices, he dared not decline an enterprise to which he was summoned by the cry of his perishing brethren. Even should he and his subjects prefer their own ease to the deliverance of the oppressed, it would not be long till they should have abundant cause to repent their selfishness. The same armed bigotry which had wrought such desolation in Germany, was at that hour meditating the overthrow of their own throne, and the destruction of their own religion and independence. They must not think to escape by abiding within their own seas and shutting themselves out from others. Who could tell whether Sweden had not attained her present place among the nations for such a time as this? Turning to his councilors of state, he bade them seek to be filled with wisdom, that they might govern with equity. Addressing his nobles, he exhorted them to emulate the bravery of "those Gothic heroes who humbled in the dust the pride of ancient Rome." The pastors he earnestly recommended to cultivate unity, and to exemplify in their own lives the virtues they preached to others. For all classes of his subjects he offered his earnest prayers, that order might bless their cities, fertility clothe their fields, and plenty cheer their homes; and then, with the tenderness of a father taking leave of his children – for the mind of the hero-prince was oppressed by the presentiment that he should see them no more – he said, "I bid you all an affectionate – it may be an eternal farewell."[\[5\]](#)

A few days after this solemn parting, the king embarked his

army of 15,000 at Elfsnabhen. It was a small host to essay so great an enterprise; but it was led by a great general, and the heroism and devotion of the chief burned in the breasts of the soldiers. Up to the water's edge the shore was black with the crowds which had assembled to witness the embarkation, and to take, it might be, their last look of their beloved sovereign. Contrary winds detained the fleet a few days, but at last the breeze veered round, and bore away the magnanimous prince, with his chivalrous host, from a shore to which he but too truly presaged he should return no more. In a few days the opposite coast of the Baltic rose out of the waves, and the fleet cast anchor before the Isle of Rugen, on the coast of Pomerania. On the 24th of June, 1630 – exactly 100 years after the presentation of the Augsburg Confession to Charles V – Gustavus Adolphus landed on the shore of Germany. The king was the first to step on land, and advancing a few paces before the soldiers, he kneeled down in presence of the army, and gave thanks to God for conveying the host in safety across the deep, and prayed that success might crown their endeavors.

The powerful Popish monarch who had put his foot upon the neck of Germany, heard with easy and haughty unconcern of the landing of Gustavus Adolphus. The significance of that landing was but little understood on either the Romish or the Protestant side. Ferdinand could not see that the mighty fabric of his power could be shaken, or the triumphant tide of his arms rolled back, by the little host that had just crossed the Baltic. When the courtiers of Vienna heard of the coming of Gustavus “they looked in the State Almanack to see where the country of the little Gothic king was situated.”[6] The princes of Germany, trodden into the dust, were nearly as unable to understand that deliverance had dawned for them in the advent of the northern hero. Front the powerful thrones of England and France they might have looked for help; but what succor could a petty kingdom like Sweden bring them? They could not recognize their deliverer coming in a guise so humble. Gustavus Adolphus was a foreigner. They almost wished

that he had not interfered in their matters; and greatly as they longed to be lifted out of the mire, they were content well-nigh to be as they were, rather than owe their emancipation to a stranger. These degenerate princes were to be taught the power of that Protestantism from which they had so greatly declined. At what altar had Gustavus and his followers kindled that heroism which enabled them to command victory, if not at that of the Reformed faith? This it was that made them the deliverers of those who had lost their liberty by losing their Protestantism.

Eager to invest his arms with the prestige of a first success, the Swedish king set out for Stettin, and arrived under its walls before the imperial troops had time to occupy it. Stettin was the capital of Pomerania; but its importance lay in its commanding the mouths of the Oder, and leaving open in the rear of Gustavus a passage to Sweden, should fortune compel him to retreat. He demanded that; the town should receive a Swedish garrison. The citizens, but too familiar with the horrors of a foreign occupation, and not knowing as yet the difference between the orderly and disciplined soldiers of Gustavus and the marauders who served under Tilly and Wallenstein, were unwilling to open their gates. Still more unwilling was their Duke Bogislaus, who added the timidity of age to that of constitution. This prince longed to be freed from the terrors and the oppressions of Ferdinand, but he trembled at the coming of Gustavus, fearing that the emperor would visit with a double vengeance his compliance with the Swedish monarch's wishes. Bogislaus begged to be permitted to remain neutral. But Gustavus told him that he must choose between himself and Ferdinand, and that he must decide at once.

Influenced by the present rather than by the remote danger, Bogislaus opened the gates of Stettin, and the Swedish troops entered. Instead of plundering their houses the soldiers went with the citizens to church, and soon established a reputation

which proved second only to their valor in its influence on their future success. The occupation of this town was a masterly stroke. It gave the king a basis of operations on the mainland, it covered his rear, and it secured his communication with Sweden.

Step by step Gustavus Adolphus advanced into North Germany. His host swelled and multiplied the farther his banners were borne. The soldiers who had formed the armies of Count Mansfeld and the Duke of Brunswick, and the corps disbanded by Wallenstein, flocked in crowds to his standard, and exchanged their plundering habits for the order and bravery of well-disciplined troops. The capture of town after town added every day new pledges of final success. The inequality of his force in point of numbers was more than balanced by his great superiority in tactics. Combining the most determined resolution with the most consummate prudence, he went on driving the imperialists before him, and by the end of autumn almost the whole of Pomerania was in his possession. It was on these first efforts that the final issue must depend, and not one false step had he made in them. "Napoleon considered him to be the first general of all times, chiefly because during a dangerous and tedious campaign, from June, 1630, to the autumn of 1631, he advanced slowly, but surely, towards the center of Germany without suffering any repulse worth mentioning." [7]

When winter approached, the imperial generals, wearied with their defeats, sent plenipotentiaries to the camp of the Swedes to sue for a cessation of hostilities, but they found they had to do with an enemy who, clad in sheep's-skin, felt no winter in the climate of Germany. The reply of Gustavus to the proposal that both sides should go into winter quarters was, "The Swedes are soldiers in winter as well as in summer." [8] The imperialist soldiers were farther harassed by the peasantry, who now avenged upon them the pillagings and murders they had been guilty of in their advance. Desertion was thinning and disorganization weakening their ranks, and

the imperial commander in Pomerania, Torquato Conte, took the opportunity of resigning a command which, while adding nothing to his wealth, was every day lessening his reputation.

Flying before the victorious arms of Gustavus Adolphus, and abandoning in their retreat wagons and standards,[\[9\]](#) to be gathered up by the Swedes, the imperial troops took refuge in Brandenburg, where they prepared for themselves future calamities by oppressing and plundering the inhabitants, although the subjects of a ruler who was the ally of their emperor. The king would have followed the enemy into the Duchy of Brandenburg, had not the gates of Kustrin, opened to admit the imperialists, been closed upon himself. He now turned his victorious arms towards Mecklenburg, whose dukes the Emperor Ferdinand had stripped of their territory and driven into exile. The capture of Demmin gave him entrance into this territory, where success continued to attend his arms. By the end of February, 1631, the king had taken fully eighty cities, strongholds, and redoubts in Pomerania and Mecklenburg.[\[10\]](#)

At this stage there came a little help to the Protestant hero from a somewhat suspicious quarter, France. Cardinal Richelieu, who was now supreme in that kingdom, had revived the foreign policy of Henry IV, which was directed to the end of humbling the House of Austria, and his quick eye saw in the Swedish warrior a fit instrument, as he thought, for achieving his purpose. It was a delicate matter for a "prince of the Church" to enter into an alliance with a heretical king, but Richelieu trusted that in return for the subsidy he offered to Gustavus he would be allowed the regulation and control of the war. He found, however, in Adolphus his master. The Treaty of Balwarde (January, 1631) secured to Gustavus a subsidy of 400,000 dollars, for the attainment of interests common to France and Sweden, but left to the latter Power the political and military direction. This was a diplomatic victory of no small importance to the Swedish monarch. The capture of two important places, Colberg and Frankfort-on-the-Oder, which

followed soon after, shed fresh luster on the Swedish arms, and made the expedition of Gustavus Adolphus appear still more prominent in the eyes of Europe.

Even the Protestant princes of Germany began to show a little heart. They had basely truckled to the Emperor Ferdinand; not a finger had they lifted to stem the torrent of the Catholic reaction; but now, conscious that a mighty power had arrived in the midst of them, they began to talk of reasserting their rights. They were yet too proud to accept of help from the stranger, but his presence among them, and the success that was crowning his efforts in a war which ought to have been undertaken by themselves, helped to rouse them from that shameful and criminal apathy into which they had fallen, and which indisposed them for the least effort to recover the much of which they had been stripped, or to retain the little that had been left to them. At this moment Ferdinand of Austria did his best, though all unintentionally, to stimulate their feeble efforts, and to make them join their arms with those of the Swedish monarch in fighting the battle of a common Protestantism. The emperor issued orders to his officers to put in execution the Edict of Restitution. The enforcement of this edict would sweep into the Treasury of the emperor and of the Roman Church a vast amount of Protestant property in the two most powerful Protestant electorates in Germany, those of Saxony and Brandenburg, and would specially irritate the two most important allies whom the emperor had among the Protestant princes. The hour was certainly ill-chosen for such a proceeding, when Wallenstein had been dismissed, when defeat after defeat was scattering the imperial armies, and when the advancing tide of Swedish success was threatening to sweep away all the fruits of Ferdinand's former victories even more rapidly than he had achieved them. But, the Court of Vienna believing that its hold on Germany was firm ever to be loosened, and despising this assault from the little Sweden, Ferdinand, acting doubtless by the advice of the Jesuits, gave orders to proceed with the plunder of his Protestant allies.

It was only now that the veil was fully lifted from the eyes of John George, Elector of Saxony. This prince exhibits little save contrast to the pious, magnanimous, and public-spirited Electors of Saxony of a former day. His private and personal manners were coarse; he dressed slovenly, and fed gluttonously. His public policy was utterly selfish. He had long been the dupe of the emperor, his sottish understanding and groveling aims preventing him from seeing the gulf into which he was sinking. But now, finding himself threatened with annihilation, he resolved to adopt a decisive policy. As Elector of Saxony he was the leader of the Protestant princes, and he now purposed to place himself at their head, and form a third party in Germany, which would oppose the emperor on the one side, and the King of Sweden on the other. The Elector of Saxony would not lower himself by joining with Gustavus Adolphus. He did not need the hand of the northern stranger to pull him out of the mire; he would extricate himself.

Proceeding in the execution of his plans, destined, he believed, to restore the German liberties, the Elector of Saxony summoned a convention of the Protestant States, to meet at Leipsic in February, 1631. The assemblage was brilliant, but can hardly be said to have been powerful. The princes and deputies who composed it would never have had the courage to meet, had they not known that they assembled under the shadow of the Swedish arms, which they affected to despise. Their convention lasted three months, and their time was divided between feasting and attempts to frame a program of united action. The Jesuits jeered. "The poor little Lutheran princes," said they, "are holding a little convention at Leipsic.

Who is there?" they asked. "A princeling and a half. What are they going to do? Make a little war." The princes did not make a war either little or great: they contented themselves with petitioning the emperor to remove the grievances of which they complained. They begged him especially to revoke the Edict of

Restitution, and to withdraw his troops from their cities and fortresses. To this petition not the least heed was ever paid. The princes did not even form a league among themselves; they thought they had done enough when they fixed the number of soldiers that each was to furnish, in the event of their forming a league some other time.[11] This was a truly pitiable spectacle. The princes saw their country devastated, their cities occupied by foreign troops, their religion and their liberties proscribed – in short, all that gave glory and renown to Germany smitten down by the hand of tyranny, yet the power and the spirit alike were wanting for the vindication of their rights, and amid the ruin of every virtue their pride alone survived; for we see them turning away with disdain from the strong arm that is extended towards them for the purpose of pulling them out of the gulf. Plain it was that the hour of their deliverance was yet distant.

CHAPTER 7 [Back to Top](#) FALL OF MAGDEBURG AND VICTORY OF LEIPSIC.

Magdeburg – Its Wealth and Importance – Coveted by both Parties – It declares against the Imperialists – Its Administrator – Count von Tilly – His Career – Personal Appearance – Magdeburg Invested – Refuse a Swedish Garrison – Suburbs Burned – The Assault – The Defense – Council of War – The Cannonading Ceases – False Hopes – The City Stormed and Taken – Entry of Tilly – Horrors of the Sack – Total Destruction of the City – Gustavus Blamed for not Raising the Siege – His Defense – The Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony now Join him – Battle of Leipsic – Plan of Battle – Total Rout of the Imperialists – All is Changed. WHILE the convention of Leipsic was making boastful speeches, and the Jesuits were firing off derisive pasquils, and Ferdinand of Austria was maintaining a haughty and apparently an unconcerned attitude in presence of the invading Swedes, Gustavus Adolphus was adding victory to victory, and every day marching farther into the heart of Germany. His advance at last caused alarm to the

imperial generals, and it was resolved to trifle no longer with the matter, but to adopt the most energetic measures to oppose the progress of the northern arms. This brings us to one of the most thrilling incidents of the war – the siege and capture of Magdeburg.

This ancient and wealthy city stood on the left bank of the Elbe. It was strongly fortified, being enclosed on its land sides by lofty walls and broad ditches. The commerce on its river had greatly enriched the citizens, and the republican form of their government had nourished in their breasts a spirit of independence and bravery. In those days, when neither trade nor liberty was widely diffused, Magdeburg had fewer rivals to contend with than now, and it surpassed in riches and freedom most of the cities in Germany. This made it a prize earnestly coveted by both sides. If it should fall into the hands of the Swedes, its situation and strength would make it an admirable storehouse and arsenal for the army; and, on the other hand, should the imperialists gain possession of it, it would give them a basis of operations from which to threaten Gustavus Adolphus in his rear, and would put it into their power to close against him one of his main exits from Germany, should defeat compel him to retreat towards the Baltic. Its government was somewhat anomalous at this moment. It was the capital of a rich bishopric, which had for some time been in possession of the Protestant princes of the House of Brandenburg.

Its present administrator, Christian William, had made himself obnoxious to Ferdinand, by taking part with the King of Denmark in his invasion of the empire; and the chapter, dreading the effects of the emperor's anger, deposed Christian William, and elected the second son of the Elector of Saxony in his room. The emperor, however, disallowed this election, and appointed his own son Leopold to the dignity; but Christian William of Brandenburg, having made friends with the magistrates and the citizens, resumed his government of the

city, and having roused the inhabitants by pointing to the devastations which the imperial troops had committed on their territory, and having held out to them hopes of succor from the Swedes, whose victorious leader was approaching nearer every day, he induced them to declare war against the emperor. They joined battle with small bodies of imperialists, and succeeded in defeating them, and they had even surprised the town of Halle, when the advance of the main army under Tilly compelled them to fall back and shut themselves up in Magdeburg.

Before entering on the sad story of Magdeburg's heroic defense and tragic fall, let us look at the man who was destined to be the chief actor in the scenes of carnage about to ensue. Count von Tilly was born in Liege, of a noble family. He received his military education in the Netherlands, then the most famous school for generals. By nature cold, of gloomy disposition, and cherishing an austere but sincere bigotry, he had served with equal zeal and ability in almost all the wars of the period against Protestantism. His sword had been drawn on the bloody fields of the Low Countries; he had combated against the Protestant armies in Hungary and Bohemia, and when the wars came to an end in these countries, because there were no more Protestants to slay, he had been appointed to lead the armies of the League. When Wallenstein was dismissed he was made generalissimo of the Emperor Ferdinand, and it is in this capacity that we now find him before the walls of Magdeburg. Schiller has drawn his personal appearance with the power of a master. "His strange and terrific aspect," says he, "was in unison with his character. Of low stature, thin, with hollow cheeks, a long nose, a broad and wrinkled forehead, large whiskers, and a pointed chin; he was generally attired in a Spanish doublet of green silk, with slashed sleeves, with a small and peaked hat upon his head, surmounted by a red feather, which hung down his back. His whole aspect recalled to recollection the Duke of Alva, the scourge of the Flemings, and his actions were by no means calculated to remove the

impression.”[1]

Tilly knew too well the art of war to despise his great opponent. “This is a player,” said he of Gustavus Adolphus, “from whom we gain much if we merely lose nothing.”

Magdeburg was first invested by Count Pappenheim, an ardent supporter of the House of Austria, and accounted the first cavalry general of his age. He was soon joined by Tilly at the head of his army, and the city was more closely invested than ever. The line of walls to be defended was extensive, the garrison was small, and the citizens, when they saw the imperialist banners on all sides of them, began to repent having declined the offer of Gustavus Adolphus to aid in the defense with a regiment of his soldiers. Faction, unhappily, divided the citizens, and they refused to admit the Swedish garrison within their walls; nor, wealthy though they were, would they even advance money enough to levy troops sufficient for their defense. The Swedish monarch was pained at the course they chose to adopt, but the city was now shut in, and all he could do was to send Count Falkenberg, a brave and experienced officer, to direct the military operations, and aid with his counsel the Administrator Christian William.

All during the winter of 1630-31, Magdeburg continued to be invested; but the siege made slow progress owing to the circumstance that the two generals, Tilly and Pappenheim, were compelled to withdraw, to withstand the advance of Gustavus Adolphus, leaving inferior men to command in their absence. But in March, 1631, the two great leaders returned, and the operations of the siege were resumed with rigor. After the first few days the outposts and suburbs were abandoned, and, being set fire to by the imperialists, were reduced to ashes. The battle now advanced to the walls and gates. During all the month of April the storm of assault and resistance raged fiercely round the fortifications. The citizens armed themselves to supplement the smallness of the garrison, and day and night fought on the walls. Daily battle thinned their

numbers, want began to impair their strength, but their frequent sallies told the besiegers that their spirit and bravery remained unabated. Their detestation of the tyranny of Ferdinand, their determination to retain their Protestant faith, and their hopes of relief from Gustavus Adolphus, who they knew was in their neighborhood, made them unanimous in their resolution to defend the place to the last.

The approach of the Swedish hero was as greatly dreaded in the camp of Tilly, as it was longed for in the city of Magdeburg. A march of three days, it was known., would bring him before the walls, and then the imperialists would be between two fires; they would have the Swedes, flushed with victory, in their rear, and the besieged, armed with despair, in their front. Tilly often directed anxious eyes into the distance, fearing to discover the Swedish banners on the horizon. He assembled a council of war, to debate whether he should raise the siege, or attempt carrying Magdeburg by storm. It was resolved to storm the city before Gustavus should arrive. No breach had yet been made in the walls, and the besiegers must add stratagem to force, would they take the place. It was resolved to follow the precedent of the siege of Maestricht, where a sudden cessation of the cannonading had done more to open the gates than all the fire of the artillery. On the 9th of May, at noon, the cannon of Tilly ceased firing, and the besiegers removed a few of the guns. "Ah!" said the citizens of Magdeburg, joyfully, "we are saved; the Swedish hero is approaching, and the hosts of Tilly are about to flee." All that night the cannon of the besiegers remained silent. This confirmed the impression of the citizens that the siege was about to be raised. The danger which had so long hung above them and inflicted so fearful a strain on their energies being gone, as they believed, the weariness and exhaustion that now overpowered them were in proportion to the former tension. The stillness seemed deep after the nights of fire and tempest through which they had passed. The silver of morning appeared in the east; still all was calm. The sun of a May day beamed

forth, and showed the imperial encampment apparently reposing.

One-half of the garrison, by order of Falkenberg, had been withdrawn from the walls, the wearied citizens were drowned in sleep, and the few who were awake were about to repair to the churches to offer thanks for their deliverance, when, at seven of the morning, sudden as the awakening of a quiescent volcano, a terrific storm broke over the city.

The roar of cannon, the ringing of the tocsin, the shouts of assailants, blending in one frightful thunder-burst, awoke the citizens. Stunned and terrified, they seized their arms and rushed into the street, only to find the enemy pouring into the town over the ramparts and through two of the gates, of which they had already gained possession. Falkenberg, as he was hurrying from post to post, was cut down at the commencement of the assault. His fall was fatal to the defense, for the attack not having been foreseen, no plan of resistance had been arranged; and though the citizens, knowing the horrors that were entering with the soldiers, fought with a desperate bravery, they were unable – without a leader, and without a plan – to stem the torrent of armed men who were every minute pouring into their city. It was easy scaling the walls, when defended by only a handful of men; it was equally easy forcing the gates, when the guards had been withdrawn to fight on the ramparts. Every moment the odds against the citizens were becoming more overwhelming, and by twelve o'clock all resistance was at an end, and Magdeburg was in the hands of the enemy.

Tilly now entered with the army. He took possession of the principal streets with his troops, and pointing his shotted cannon upon the masses of the citizens, compelled them to retire into their houses, there to await their fate. Regiment after regiment poured into Magdeburg. There entered, besides the German troops, the pitiless Walloons, followed by the yet more terrible Croats. What a horde of ruffianism! Although an army of wolves or tigers had been collected into Magdeburg,

the danger would not have been half .so terrible as that which now hung over the city from this assemblage of men, inflamed by every brutal passion, who stood wailing the signal to spring upon their prey.

Silence was signal enough: even Tilly dared not have withstood these men in their dreadful purpose. "And now began a scene of carnage," says Schiller, "which history has no language, poetry no pencil, to portray. Neither the innocence of childhood nor the helplessness of old age, neither youth, sex, rank, nor beauty could disarm the fury of the conquerors. Wives were dishonored in the arms of their husbands, and daughters at the feet of their parents." Infants were murdered at the breast, or tossed from pike to pike of the Croats, and then flung into the fire. Fifty-three women were found in a single church, their hands tied and their throats cut. Some ladies of wealth and beauty were tied to the stirrups of the soldiers' horses, and led away captive. It were a wickedness even to write all the shameful and horrible things that were done: how much greater a wickedness was it to do them! Some of the officers of the League, shocked at the awful sights, ventured to approach Tilly, and beg him to put a stop to the carnage. "Come back in an hour," was his answer, "and I shall see what can be done. The soldier must have some recompense for his danger and toils." The tempest of shrieks, and wailings, and shoutings, of murder and rapine, the rattling of musketry and the clashing of swords, continued to rage, while the general stood by, a calm spectator of the woes and crimes that were passing around him.

The city had been set fire to in several places, and a strong wind springing up, the conflagration raged with a fury which no one sought to control. The roar of the flames was now added to the other sounds of terror that rose from the doomed spot. The fire ran along the city with great rapidity, and swept houses, churches, and whole streets before it; but amid the smoke, the falling buildings, and the streets flowing with

blood, the plunderer continued to prowl, and the murderer to pursue his victim, till the glowing and almost burning air drove the miscreants back to their camp. Magdeburg had ceased to exist; this fair, populous, and wealthy city, one of the finest in Germany, was now a field of blackened ruins.

Every edifice had fallen a prey to the flames, with the exception of a church and a convent, which the soldiers assisted the monks to save, and 150 fishermen's huts which stood on the banks of the Elbe. "The thing is so horrible," says a contemporary writer, "that I am afraid to mention it further. According to the general belief here, above 40,000 of all conditions have ended their days in the streets and houses by fire and sword."[\[2\]](#)

The same German party who had declined, with an air of offended dignity, the help of Gustavus Adolphus, now blamed him for not having extended his assistance to Magdeburg. This made it necessary for the Swedish monarch to explain publicly why he had not raised the siege. He showed conclusively that he could not have done so without risking the whole success of his expedition, and this he did not feel justified in doing for the sake of a single city. He had resolved, he said, the moment he heard of the danger of Magdeburg, to march to its relief: but first the Elector of Saxony refused a passage for his troops through his dominions; and, secondly, the Elector of Brandenburg was equally unwilling to guarantee an open retreat for his army through his territory in case of defeat. The fate of Magdeburg was thus mainly owing to the vacillating and cowardly policy of these two Electors, who had, up to that moment, not made it plain to Gustavus whether they were his friends or his enemies, and whether they were to abide with the League or join their arms with his in defense of Protestantism.

But the fall of Magdeburg was helpful to the Protestant cause. It sent a thrill of horror through Germany, and it alarmed the wavering Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony, who began to see

that the end of that neutrality which they thought so dexterous would be that they would be the last to be devoured by the imperial arms. Accordingly, first the Landgrave of Hesse made a firm compact with Gustavus Adolphus, and ever after continued his staunchest friend. A raid which Tilly made into his territories after leaving Magdeburg helped powerfully to this alliance with the Swedish king. The next to become the ally of Gustavus was the Elector of Brandenburg – not, however, till the Swedes had marched to Berlin, and Gustavus, pointing his cannon at the palace, demanded of the Elector that he should say whether he was for him or against him. Last of all, the Elector of Saxony, who had endured such distress and irresolution of mind, and who now received a visit from Tilly and his marauders – their track marked, as usual, by frightful devastation – came at length to a decision, and joined his arms with those of Gustavus. This opened the way for the crowning victory of the campaign, which established the fortunes of Gustavus, and broke in pieces the army of the emperor.

Strengthened by these alliances, Gustavus crossed the Elbe. The next day his forces were joined by the Saxon army, 35,000 strong. At a council of war which was held here, it was debated whether the confederated host was strong enough to risk a battle, or whether the war should be protracted. “If we decide upon a battle,” said Gustavus, “a crown and two electorates are at stake.” The die was cast in favor of fighting. Gustavus put his army in motion to meet Tilly, who lay encamped in a strong and advantageous position near Leipsic. On the evening of the 6th September, 1631, Gustavus learned that he was within half a dozen miles of the imperialists. That night he dreamed that he had caught Tilly by the hair of his head, but that all his exertions could not secure his prisoner before he had succeeded in biting him on the left arm.[\[3\]](#) Next morning the two hostile armies were in sight of each other. Gustavus had seen the dawn of this day with deep anxiety. For the first time he was in presence of

the whole imperial host, under its hitherto unconquered leader, and the issue of this day's battle would decide whether the object for which he had crossed the Baltic was to be attained, and Germany set free from her chains, or whether defeat lowered over himself, and political and religious bondage over the Fatherland. Christendom waited with anxiety the issue of the event.

The army of Tilly was drawn up in a single far-extending line on a rising ground on the plain of Breitenfeld, within a mile of Leipsic. The cannon were planted on the heights which rose behind the army, so as to sweep the plain, but making it impossible for the imperial troops to advance without coming within the range of their own fire. The infantry was placed in the center, where Tilly himself commanded; the cavalry formed the wings, with Furstenberg on the right, and Pappenheim on the left. The Swedish army was arranged into center and wings, each two columns in depth. Teuffel commanded in the center, Horn led the left wing, and the king himself the right, fronting Pappenheim. The Saxon troops, under the Elector, were stationed a little in the rear, on the left, at some distance from the Swedish main body, the king deeming it prudent to separate Saxon from Swedish valor; and the event justified his forethought. The battle was joined at noon. It began with a cannonading, which lasted two hours. At two o'clock Pappenheim began the attack by throwing his cavalry upon the right wing of the Swedes, which was commanded by the king. The wind was blowing from the west, and the dust from the new-ploughed hind was driven in clouds in the face of the Swedes. To avoid the annoyance the king wheeled rapidly to the north, and the troops of Pappenheim, rushing in at the void which the king's movement had left between the right wing and the center, were met in front by the second column of the wing, and assailed in the rear by the first column, led by the king, and after a desperate and prolonged conflict they were nearly all cut in pieces. Pappenheim was driven from the field, with the loss of his ordnance. While this struggle was

proceeding between the two confronting wings, Tilly descended from the heights, and attacked the left wing of the Swedish army. To avoid the severe fire with which the Swedes received him, he turned off to attack the Saxons, who, mostly raw recruits, gave way and fled, carrying the Elector with them, who stopped only when he had reached Eilenburg.^[4] Only one division under Arnim remained on the field, and saved the Saxon honor.

Deeming the victory won, the imperialists raised the cry of pursuit. Some 8,000 or 9,000 left the field on the track of the flying Saxons, numbers of whom were overtaken and slaughtered. Gustavus seized the moment to fall upon the flank of the imperial center, and soon effectually routed it, with the exception of two regiments concealed by the smoke and dust. The center of the imperialists had been broken, and their left wing driven from the field, when the troops under Furstenberg, who had returned from chasing the Saxons, assailed with desperate fury the left wing of the Swedes. The conflict had almost ceased on the other parts of the field, and the last and most terrible burst of the tempest was here to discharge itself, and the fate of the day to be decided. Foot and horse, cuirassier, pikeman, and musketeer were drawn hither, and mingled in fearful and bloody conflict. The sun was now sinking in the west, and his slanting beam fell on the quiet dead, scattered over the field, but still that heaving mass in the center kept surging and boiling; cuirass and helmet, pike-head and uplifted sword, darting back the rays of the sun, which was descending lower and lower in the horizon. The mass was growing perceptibly smaller, as soldier and horse fell beneath saber or bullet, and were trampled into the bloody mire. Tilly and his imperialists were fighting for the renown of a hundred battles, which was fast vanishing. The most obstinate valor could not long hold out against the overwhelming odds of the Swedish warriors; and a remnant of the imperialists, favored by the dusk of evening, and the cloud and dust that veiled the battle-field, escaped from the

conflict – the remnant of those terrible battalions which had inflicted such devastation on Germany.[5]

When Gustavus Adolphus rode out of the field, all was changed. He was no longer “the little Gothic king;” he was now the powerful conqueror, the terror of the Popish and the hope of the Protestant princes of Germany. The butchers of Magdeburg had been trampled into the bloody dust of Breitenfeld. The imperialist army had been annihilated; their leader, whom some called the first captain of the age, had left his glory on the field from which he was fleeing; the road into the center of Germany was open to the conqueror; the mighty projects of the Jesuits were menaced with overthrow; and the throne of the emperor was beginning to totter.

CHAPTER 8 [Back to Top](#) CONQUEST OF THE RHINE AND BAVARIA – BATTLE OF LUTZEN.

Thanksgiving – Two Roads – Gustavus Marches to the Rhine – Submission of Erfurt, Wurzburg, Frankfort – Capture of Mainz – Gustavus’ Court -Future Arrangements for Germany – The King’s Plans – Stipulations for Peace – Terms Rejected – Gustavus Enters Bavaria – Defeat and Death of Tilly – Wallenstein Recalled – His Terms – The Saxons in Bohemia -Gustavus at Augsburg – At Ingolstadt – His Encampment at Nuremberg – Camp of Wallenstein – Famine and Death – Wallenstein Invades Saxony – Gustavus Follows him – The Two Armies Meet at Lutzen – Morning of the Battle – The King’s Address to his Troops – The Battle – Capture and Recapture of Trenches and Cannon – Murderous Conflicts – The King Wounded – He Falls. WHEN he saw how the day had gone, the first act of Gustavus Adolphus was to fall on his knees on the blood-besprinkled plain, and to give thanks for the victory which had crowned his arms.[1] On this field the God of battles had “cast down the mighty,” and “exalted them of low degree.”

There was now an end to the jeers of the Jesuits, and the supercilious insolences of Ferdinand. Having offered his

prayer, Gustavus rose up to prosecute, in the mightier strength with which victory had clothed him, the great enterprise which had brought him across the sea. He encamped for the night between the city of Leipsic and the field of battle. On that field 7,000 imperialists lay dead, and in addition 5,000 had been wounded or taken prisoners. The loss of the Swedes did not exceed 700; that of the Saxons amounted to 2,000, who had fallen on the field, or been cut down in the pursuit. In a few days the Elector of Saxony, who had accompanied his soldiers in their flight, believing all to be lost, returned to the camp of the king, finding him still victorious, and a council of war was held to decide on the measures to be adopted for the further prosecution of the war. Two roads were open to Gustavus – one to Vienna, and the other to the Rhine; which of the two shall he choose? If the king had marched on Vienna, taking Prague on his way, it is probable that he would have been able to dictate a peace on his own terms at the gates of the Austrian capital. His renowned chancellor, Oxenstierna, was of opinion that this was the course which Gustavus ought to have followed.^[2] But the king did not then fully know the importance of the victory of Breitenfeld, and the blow it had inflicted on the imperial cause; nor could he expect any material succors in Bohemia, where Protestantism was almost entirely trampled out; so, sending the Elector of Saxony southwards, where every operation against the Popish States would help to confirm his own Protestant loyalty, still doubtful, the Swedish monarch directed his own march to the West, where the free cities, and the Protestant princes, waited his coming to shake off the yoke of Ferdinand, and rally round the standard of the Protestant Liberator.

His progress was a triumphal march. The fugitive Tilly had collected a few new regiments to oppose his advance, but he had marshaled them only to be routed by the victorious Swedes. The strongly fortified city of Erfurt fell to the arms of Gustavus; Gotha and Weimar also opened their gates to him. He

exacted an oath of allegiance from their inhabitants, as he did of every town of any importance, of which he took possession, leaving a garrison on his departure, to secure its loyalty. The army now entered the Thuringian Forest, cresset lights hung upon the trees enabling it to thread its densest thickets in perfect safety. On the 30th September, 1631, the king crossed the frontier of Franconia. The cities opened their gates to him, most of them willingly, and a few after a faint show of resistance. To all of them the conqueror extended protection of their civil rights, and liberty of worship.

The Bishops of Wurzburg and Bamberg trembled when they saw the Swedes pouring like a torrent into their territories. These two ecclesiastics were among the most zealous members of the League, and the most virulent enemies of the Protestants, and they and the towns of their principalities anticipated the same treatment at the hands of the conquerors which they in similar circumstances had inflicted on others. Their fortresses, cities, and territories were speedily in possession of Gustavus, but to their glad surprise, instead of the desecration of their churches, or the persecution of their persons, they beheld only a brilliant example of toleration. The Protestant worship was set up in their cities, but the Roman service was permitted to be practiced as before. The Bishop of Wurzburg, however, had not remained to be witness of this act of moderation. He had fled to Paris at the approach of Gustavus. In the fortress of Marienburg, which the Swedish king carried by storm, he found the valuable library of the Jesuits, which he caused to be transported to Upsala. This formed some compensation for the more valuable library of Heidelberg which had been transferred to Rome. On the 17th of November he entered Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and marched his army in a magnificent procession through it. "He appeared in the midst of his troops, clad in cloth of scarlet and gold, riding a handsome Spanish jennet, bare-headed, with a bright and handsome countenance, and returning with graceful courtesy

the cheers and salutations of the spectators.”[3] From the furthest shore of Pomerania, to the point where he had now arrived, the banks of the Maine, the king had held his victorious way without being once compelled to recede, and without encountering a single defeat. “Here, in the heart of Germany, he received the Protestant States like a German emperor of the olden time.”[4]

Traversing the Ecclesiastical States that stretch from the Maine to the Rhine, “the Priest’s Row,” the milk and honey of which regaled his soldiers after the sterile districts through which they had passed, Gustavus crossed the Rhine, and laid siege (11th December) to the wealthy city of Mainz. In two days it capitulated, and the king entered it in state, attended by the Landgrave of Hesse. After this he returned to Frankfort, where he fixed his abode for a short while.[5]

If the summer had been passed in deeds of arms, the winter was not less busily occupied in securing the fruits of these dangers and toils. Gustavus’ queen, to whom he was tenderly attached, joined him at Mainz, to which he again repaired; so too did his chancellor, the famous Oxenstierna, on whose wisdom he so confidently and justly relied. The city of Mainz and the banks of the Rhine resounded with the din and shone with the splendor of the old imperial times. Couriers were hourly arriving and departing; ambassadors from foreign States were daily receiving audience; the Protestant princes, and the deputies from the imperial towns, were crowding to pay their homage to, or solicit the protection of, the victorious chief; uniforms and royal equipages crowded the street; and while the bugle’s note and the drum’s roll were heard without, inside the palace negotiations were going on, treaties were being framed, the future condition and relations of Germany were being discussed and decided upon, and efforts were being made to frame a basis of peace, such as might adjust the balance between Popish and Protestant ,Germany, and restore rest to the weary land, and security to its trembling inhabitants.

When the king set out from Sweden to begin this gigantic enterprise, his one paramount object was the restoration of Protestantism, whose overthrow was owing quite as much to the pusillanimity of the princes, as to the power of the imperial arms. He felt "a divine impulse" impelling him onwards, and he obeyed, without settling, even with himself, what recompense he should have for all his risks and toils, or what material guarantees it might be necessary to exact, not only for the security of a re-established Protestantism, but also for the defense of his own kingdom of Sweden, which the success of his expedition would make an object of hostility to the Popish princes. The Elector of Brandenburg had sounded him on this point before he entered his dominions, and Gustavus had frankly replied that if the exiles were restored, religious liberty granted in the States, and himself secured against attack from the Hapsburgs in his own country, he would be satisfied. But now, in the midst of Germany, and taking a near view of matters as success on the battle-field had shaped them, and especially considering the too obvious lukewarmness and imbecility of the Protestant princes, it is probable that the guarantees that would have satisfied him at an earlier stage, he no longer deemed sufficient.

It is even possible that he would not have declined a controlling power over the princes, somewhat like that which the emperor wielded. We do not necessarily impute ambitious views to Gustavus Adolphus, when we admit the Possibility of some such arrangement as this having shaped itself before his mind; for it might seem to him that otherwise the existence of a Protestant Germany was not possible. He would have been guilty of something like folly, if he had not taken the best means in his power to perpetuate what he accounted of so great value, and to save which from destruction he had undertaken so long a march, and fought so many battles; and when he looked round on the princes he might well ask himself, "Is there one of them to whom I can with perfect confidence commit this great trust?" We do not say that he had formed this plan; but

if the fruits of his victories were not to be dissipated, some such plan he would ultimately have been compelled to have recourse to; and amidst a crowd of insincere, pusillanimous, and incompetent princes, where could a head to such a confederacy have been found if not in the one only man of zeal, and spirit, and capacity that the cause had at its service?

The restorations that the Swedish king at this hour contemplated, and the aspect which the future Germany would have worn, had he lived to put the crown upon his enterprise, may be gathered from the stipulations which he demanded when the Roman Catholic party made overtures of peace to him. These were the following: 1st. The Edict of Restitution shall be null and void.

2nd. Both the Roman and the Protestant religion shall be tolerated in town and country.

3rd. Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia shall be restored to their former condition; all the exiles shall return to their estates.

4th. The Elector-Palatine, Frederick V., shall be restored to his country.

5th. The Bavarian Electorate shall cease; the electoral vote shall be restored to the Palatinate.

6th. The practice of the Protestant religion, and all civil privileges, shall be restored to Augsburg.

7th. All Jesuits, as disturbers of the public peace, and authors of the present difficulties, shall be banished from the empire.

8th. Protestants as well as Romanists shall be admitted into every institution.

9th. The monasteries in the Duchy of Wurtemberg which have been illegally taken possession of by the Romanists shall be restored.

10th. Out of gratitude for the salvation of the German Empire, your Majesty the King of Sweden shall be elected King of Rome.

11th. All expenses incurred in the imperial cities and in the

Duchy of Wurtemberg by the Edict of Restitution shall be repaid. 498

12th. There shall be as many Lutheran as Catholic canons appointed to the cathedral.[6] We have two lists of these conditions – one by Khevenhiller,[7] and another by Richelieu.[8] In the latter list the 10th article, which stipulates that Gustavus should be made King of the Romans, is wanting. To be King of Rome was to hold in reversion the empire; but this article is far from being authenticated.

Such were the terms on which the conqueror was willing to sheathe his sword and make peace with the emperor. Substantially, they implied the return of Germany to its condition before the war (*status quo ante bellum*); and they were not only just and equitable, but, though Richelieu thought otherwise, extremely moderate, when we think that they were presented by a king, in the heart of Germany, at the head of a victorious host, to another sovereign whose army was all but annihilated, and the road to whose capital stood open to the conqueror. The stipulations, in brief, were the free profession of religion to both Romanists and Lutherans throughout the empire.[9] The terms were rejected, and the war was resumed.

In the middle of February, 1532, the king put his army in motion, advancing southward into Bavaria, that he might attack the League in the chief seat of its power. The fallen Tilly made a last effort to retrieve his fame by the overthrow of his great antagonist. Having collected the wreck of his routed host, with the addition of some new levies:, he waited on the banks of the river Lech for the approach of Gustavus. The defeat of the general of the League was complete: both the army and its leader were utterly lost; the former being dispersed, and Tilly dying of his wounds a few days after the battle. It delights us to be able to pay a tribute to the memory of the warrior whom we now see expiring at the age of seventy-three. He was inflamed with bigotry, but he was

sincere and open, and had not stained himself with the low vices and shameless hypocrisy of the Jesuits, nor with the dark arts which Wallenstein studied. He was chaste and temperate – virtues beyond price in every age, but especially in an age like that in which Tilly lived. The cloud on his glory is the sack of Magdeburg, but retribution soon followed in the eclipse of Leipsic. After that the sun-light of his face never returned. He complained that the world spoke in of him, and that those whom he had faithfully served had left him desolate in his age. He died grasping the crucifix, and expended his parting breath in repeating a verse from the Psalms – “In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust.”[10]

The overthrow of Tilly, and the utter rout of his army, had left the frontiers of Austria without defense; and the emperor saw with alarm that the road to his capital was open to the victorious Swede if he chose to pursue it. The whole of Germany between the Rhine and the Danube was in possession of Gustavus, and a new army must be found if Ferdinand would prevent the conqueror seating himself in Vienna. Even granting that an army were raised, who was to command it? All his generals had fallen by the sword; one only survived, but how could Ferdinand approach him, seeing he had requited his great services by dismissal? But the desperate straits to which he was reduced left the emperor no alternative, and he made overtures to Wallenstein. That consummately able, but vaultingly ambitious man, listened to the royal proposals, but deigned them no reply.

Living in a style of magnificence that threw Ferdinand and all the sovereigns of the day into the shade, Wallenstein professed to have no desire to return to the toils of a military life. The emperor in distress sent again and again to the duke. At last Wallenstein was moved. He would succor the empire at its need; he would organize an army, but he would not command it. He set to work; the spell of his name was still omnipotent. In three months he had raised 50,000 men,

and he sent to the emperor to tell him that the army was ready, and that he waited only till he should name the man who was to command it, when he would hand it over to his Majesty. Every one knew that the troops would soon disperse if the man who had raised them was not at their head.

Again the imperial ambassadors kneeled before Wallenstein. They begged him to undertake the command of the army which he had equipped. The duke was inexorable. Other ambassadors were sent, but they entreated in vain. At last came the prince of Eggenberg, and now Wallenstein was won, but on terms that would be incredible were they not amply authenticated. The treaty concluded in April, 1632, provided that the Duke of Friedland should be generalissimo not only of the army, but of the emperor, of the arch-dukes, and of the Austrian crown. The emperor must never be present in the army, much less command it. As ordinary reward an Austrian hereditary territory was to be bestowed on Wallenstein; as extraordinary he was to have sovereign jurisdiction over all the conquered territories, and nearly all Germany was to be conquered. He was to possess, moreover, the sole power of confiscating estates; he only could pardon; and the emperor's forgiveness was to be valid only when ratified by the duke.[\[11\]](#) These conditions constituted Wallenstein the real master of the empire. To Ferdinand there remained only the title of king and the shadow of power. Thus, the man who had hid the rankling wound inflicted by dismissal beneath, apparently, the most placid of submissions, exacted a terrible revenge; but in so using the advantage which the calamities of his friends put in his power, he over-reached himself, as the sequel proved.

Again we behold the duke at the head of the imperial armies. His first efforts were followed by success. He entered Bohemia, which had been occupied by the Saxon troops after the battle of Leipsic. The Saxons had taken down the martyrs' heads on the Bridge-tower of Prague, as we have already narrated, and they had re-established for a brief period, the

Protestant worship in the city of Huss; but they retreated before the soldiers of Wallenstein, together with their spiritless Elector, who was but too glad of an excuse for returning to his palace and his table. Bohemia was again subjugated to the scepter of Ferdinand, and Wallenstein turned westward to measure swords with a very different antagonist – Gustavus Adolphus.

We parted from the King of Sweden at the passage of the Lech, where Tilly received his mortal wound. From this point Gustavus marched on towards Augsburg, where he arrived on the 8th of April, 1632. The Augsburg of that day was renowned for the multitude of its merchants and the opulence of its bankers. It was the city of the Fuggers and the Baumgartens, at whose door monarchs knocked when they would place an army in the field. These men lived in stately mansions, surrounded by gardens which outvied the royal park at Blots. It was in one of their parterres that the tulip first unfolded its gorgeous petals beneath the sun of Europe.

But Augsburg wore in Protestant eyes a yet greater attraction, from the circumstance that its name was linked with the immortal Confession in which the young Protestant Church expressed her belief at the foot of the throne of Charles V. Here, too, had been framed the Pacification, which Ferdinand had flagrantly violated, and which the hero now at her gates had taken up arms to restore. Will Augsburg welcome the Protestant champion? Incredible as it may seem, she closes her gates against him. Gustavus began to prepare for a siege by digging trenches; the guns of the city ramparts fired upon his soldiers while so engaged; but he did not reply, for he was loth to deface a single stone of a place so sacred. Before opening his cannonade he made trial if haply he might rekindle the old fire that once burned so brightly in this venerable town. His appeal was successful, and on the 10th of April, Augsburg capitulated. On the 14th the king made his public entry, going straight to St. Ann's Church, where the

Lutheran Litany was sung, after the silence of many years, and Fabricius, the king's chaplain, preached, taking Psalm 12:5 as his text. After sermon the king repaired to the market-place, where the citizens took an oath of fealty to himself and to the crown of Sweden.[12]

The king left Augsburg next day, and proceeded to Ingolstadt. He thought to take this city and dislodge the nest of Jesuits within it, but being strongly fortified, its siege would have occupied more time than its importance justified; and so, leaving Ingolstadt, Gustavus directed his course to Munich. The capital of Bavaria was thus added to the towns that had submitted to his arms, and now the whole country of the League, Ingolstadt excepted, was his. He had carried his arms from the shores of the Baltic to the foot of the Tyrol, from the banks of the Oder to those of the Rhine. The monarchs of Denmark and France, jealous of his advances, and not knowing where they would end, here met him with offers of mediating between him and the emperor and establishing peace. Gustavus frankly told them that he had drawn the sword for the vindication of the rights of the Protestants of the empire, and that he would not sheathe it so long as the object for which he had begun the war remained unaccomplished.

The king now moved toward Nuremberg, where he established his camp, which he fortified with a ditch eight feet deep and twelve wide,[13] within which rose redoubts and bastions mounted with 300 cannon. Wallenstein, advancing from Bohemia, and joined by the army under the Elector of Bavaria, pitched his camp of 60,000 men on the other side of the town. Europe watched with breathless anxiety, expecting every day the decisive trial of strength between these two armies. Gustavus strove by every expedient to draw his great antagonist into battle, but Wallenstein had adopted a strategy of famine. The plan succeeded. The land was not able to bear two such mighty hosts, and the scene of the encampment became a field of horrors. The horses died in thousands for want of forage; the

steaming putridity of the unburied carcasses poisoned the air, and the effluvia, joined to the famine, proved more fatal to the soldiers of both camps than would the bloodiest battle. In the city of Nuremberg 10,000 inhabitants died. Gustavus Adolphus had lost 20,000 of his soldiers; the imperialists had lost, it is to be presumed, an equal number; the villages around Nuremberg were in ashes; the plundered peasantry were expiring on the highway: the most ghastly spectacles met the eye on every side, for the country for leagues had become a graveyard. In the middle of September, Gustavus Adolphus raised his camp and returned to Bavaria, to complete its conquest by the reduction of Ingolstadt. Wallenstein also broke up his encampment, and marched northwards to Saxony. A second time the road had been left open to Vienna, for there was now no army between Gustavus and that capital. While he was revolving a march southward, and the ending of the campaign by the dethronement of the emperor, he received a letter from his chancellor, Oxenstierna, informing him that a treachery was preparing in his rear. The Elector of Saxony was negotiating with Wallenstein, with a view to withdrawing from the Swedish alliance, and joining in affinity with the imperialists. If the powerful principality of Saxony should become hostile, lying as it did between Gustavus and the Baltic, a march on Vienna was impossible. Thus again were the house and throne of the Hapsburgs saved.

Intent on preventing the defection of the Elector of Saxony, all example likely to be followed by other princes, Gustavus Adolphus returned northward by forced marches. Traversing the Bavarian plains, he entered Thuringia, where he was welcomed with the acclamations of the inhabitants of the towns and villages through which he passed. At Erfurt he took a tender leave of his queen, and hastened forward in the direction of Leipsic to meet Wallenstein. On his march he was informed that the enemy was stationed in the villages around Lutzen, a small town not far from the spot where he had gained his great victory of a year ago.

Gustavus darted forward on his prey, but before he could reach Lutzen the night had fallen, and the battle could not be joined. Wallenstein, who had been unaware of the approach of the Swedes, profited by the night's delay to dig trenches on the battle-field, which he filled with musketeers. He also recalled Pappenheim, who had been sent off with a detachment to Cologne. The king passed the night in his carriage, arranging with his generals the order of battle, and waiting the breaking of the day. The morning rose in fog; the king had prayers read by his chaplain, Fabricius; then the army, accompanied by martial music, sang Luther's hymn; after which Gustavus himself led in a second hymn, in which the battalions around him joined in full chorus. The mist still hung over the landscape, concealing the one army from the other; but at ten o'clock it cleared off, revealing to the eyes of the Swedes the long confronting line of the imperialists, and the town of Lutzen in flames, Wallenstein having ordered it to be fired lest, under cover of it, the Swedes should outflank him.[14]

The king, without having broken his fast, mounted his horse. He did not put on his armor before entering the battle: he had forborne its use for some time owing to his corpulence. He wore only a plain buff coat or leather jerkin; replying, it is said, to one who tried to dissuade him from thus exposing his life, that "God was his harness." [15] He addressed in brief but energetic terms first the Swedes, then the Germans, reminding them of the vast issues depending on the battle about to be joined; that on this day their bravery would vindicate, or their cowardice would crush, the religion and liberty of Germany. He exhorted them not to be sparing of their blood in so great a cause, and assured them that posterity would not forget what it owed to the men who had died on the field of Lutzen that they might be free. Having so spoken, Gustavus rode forward, the first of all his army, to meet the enemy.

At the moment when the battle began, it is probable that the

number of the opposing hosts was about equal; but on the arrival of Pappenheim the preponderance was thrown on the side of the imperialists. The calculations of the best authorities make Wallenstein's army amount to about 27,000, and the force under Gustavus Adolphus to from 18,000 to 20,000. The Swedish infantry advanced against the trenches, but were received with a tremendous fire of musketry and artillery. Bearing down with immense impetuosity, they crossed the trenches, captured the battery, and turned the guns against the enemy. The first of the five imperial brigades was routed; the second was in disorder; the third was wavering, Wallenstein, with three regiments of horse, galloped to the spot, shouting with a voice of thunder, and cleaving in his rage some of the fugitives with his own hand. The flight of his soldiers was arrested. The brigades formed anew, and faced the Swedes. A murderous conflict ensued.

The combatants, locked in a hand-to-hand struggle, could make no use of their firearms. They fought with their swords, pikes, and the butt-end of their muskets; the clash of steel, blending with the groans of those who were being trampled down, resounded over the field. The Swedes, at last overpowered by numbers, were compelled to abandon the cannon they had captured; and when they retreated, a thousand dead and dying covered the spot where the conflict had raged.

Gustavus Adolphus, at the head of his Finland cuirassiers, attacked the left wing of the enemy. The light-mounted Poles and Croats were broken by the shock, and fleeing in disorder, they spread terror and confusion among the rest of the imperial cavalry. At this moment the king was told that his infantry was recrossing the trenches, and that his left wing was wavering. Committing the pursuit of the vanquished Croats to General Horn, he flew on his white steed across the field, followed by the regiment of Steinbock; he leaped the trenches, and spurred to the spot where his soldiers were most closely pressed. Only the Duke of Lauenburg and a few horsemen were

able to keep pace with the king; the squadrons he led had not yet come up, not being able to clear the trenches so easily as the king had done. Gustavus, shortsighted, and eager to discover an opening in the enemy's ranks at which to pour in a charge, approached too close to their line; a musketeer took aim at him, and his shot shattered the king's left arm. By this time his squadrons had come up, and the king attempted to lead them, but overcome by pain, and on the point of fainting, he requested the Duke of Lauenburg to lead him secretly out of the tumult.

As he was retiring he received a second shot through the back. Feeling the wound to be mortal, he said to Lauenburg, "I am gone; look to your own life." A page assisted him to dismount, and while in the act of doing so other cuirassiers gathered around the wounded monarch, and demanded who he was. The page refused to tell, but Gustavus himself made known his name and rank, whereupon the cuirassiers completed the work of death by the discharge of more shots, and the king sunk in the midst of the imperial horsemen. Such were the accounts of the page, who himself was wounded, and died soon after. The king's steed, now set free, galloped with flowing rein and empty saddle over the field, communicating to the Swedish ranks the impression that some disaster had befallen, of which they knew not as yet the full and terrible extent.

CHAPTER 9 [Back to Top](#) DEATH OF GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS.

Battle Renewed – The Cry, "The King is Dead!" – The Duke of Saxe-Weimar takes the Command – Fury of the Swedes – Rout of the Imperialists – Arrival of Pappenheim on the Field – Renewal of Battle a Third Time – Death of Pappenheim – Final Rout of Wallenstein – Wallenstein on the Field of Battle – Retires to Leipsic – Escapes from Germany – Swedes remain Masters of the Field – Cost of the Victory – The King's Body Discovered – Embalmed and Conveyed to Sweden – Grief of the Swedes – Sorrow of Christendom – Character of Gustavus Adolphus – Accomplishes his Mission – Germany not Able to

Receive the Emancipation he Achieved for her. THE fall of Gustavus Adolphus, so far from ending the battle, was in a sort only its beginning. The riderless horse, galloping wildly over the battlefield, only half told its tale. It was possible that the king was only wounded. The bravery of the Swedes was now changed into fury. Horse and foot rushed madly onward to the spot where the king had been seen to enter the thick of the fight, with the intention of rescuing him if alive, of avenging him if dead. The mournful fact was passed in a whisper from one Swedish officer to another, that Gustavus Adolphus was no more. They rode up to the Croats, who were stripping the body in their desire to possess some memorial of the fallen hero, and a terrible conflict ensued over his corpse. No flash of firearm was seen, only the glitter of pike, the clash of sword, and the heavy stroke of musket as it fell on the steel helmet, came from that struggling mass in the center of the field, for again the fight was a hand-to-hand one. The dead fell thick, and a mound of corpses, rising ever higher, with the battle raging widely around it, termed meanwhile the mausoleum of the great warrior.

From the officers the dreadful intelligence soon descended to the ranks. The cry ran from brigade to brigade of the Swedes, "The king is dead!" As the terrible words fell on the soldier's ear his knitted brow grew darker, and he seized his weapon with a yet fiercer grasp. The most sacred life of all had been spilled, and of what value was now his own? He feared not to die on the same field with the king, and a new energy animated the soldier. The brave Bernard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, took the place of Gustavus, and his squadrons advanced to the charge with a fire that showed that the spirit of the fallen hero lived in the troops. They closed in dreadful conflict with the enemy. His left wing was chased completely out of the field; this was followed by the rout of the right wing. Like a whirlwind, the Swedes again passed the trenches, and the artillery, which had clone such murderous execution upon them, was seized, and its thunders directed against the foe. The

heavy battalions of the imperial center were now attacked, and were giving way before the overwhelming impetuosity of their antagonists. At that moment a terrible roar was heard behind the imperial army. The ground shook, and the air was black with volumes of smoke, and lurid with flashes of fire. Their powder wagons had exploded, and bombs and grenades in thousands were shooting wildly into the sky. Wallenstein's army imagined that they had been attacked in the rear; panic and flight were setting in among his troops; another moment and the day would be won by the Swedes.

It was now that Pappenheim, whom Wallenstein's recall found at no great distance, presented himself on the field at the head of fresh troops. All the advantages which the Swedes had gained were suddenly lost, and the battle was begun anew. The newly-arrived cuirassiers and dragoons fell upon the Swedes, who, their numbers thinned, and wearied with their many hours' fighting, fell back; the trenches were again recrossed, and the cannon once more abandoned. Pappenheim himself followed the retreating Swedes, and plunging into the thickest of the fight, wandered over the field in quest of Gustavus, whom he believed to be still living, and whom he burned to meet in single combat. He fell, his breast pierced by two musket-balls, and was carried out of the field by his soldiers.. While he was being borne to the rear, some one whispered into his ear that the man he sought lay slain upon the field. "His dying eye," says Schiller, "sparkled with a gleam of joy." "Tell the Duke of Friedland," said he, "that I am mortally wounded, but that I die happy, knowing that the implacable enemy of my faith has fallen on the same day." [1]

The fall of their leader dispirited his troops, and the tide of battle again turned against the imperialists. The Swedes, seeing the enemy's confusion, with great promptitude filled up the gaps that death had made in their ranks, and forming into one line made a last decisive charge. A third time the trenches were crossed, and the enemy's artillery seized. The

sun was setting as the two armies closed in that last desperate struggle. The ardor of the combatants seemed to grow, and the battle to wax in fury, the nearer the moment when it must end. Each seemed bent on seizing the victory before darkness should descend on the scene and part the combatants. The night came; the rival armies could no longer see the one the other; the trumpet sounded; the torn relics of those magnificent squadrons which had formed in proud and terrible array in the morning now marched out of the field. The victory was claimed by both sides.

Both armies left their artillery on the battlefield, and the victory would rightfully belong to whichever of the two hosts should have the courage or the good fortune to appropriate it.

Far and wide on that field lay the dead, in all places thickly strewn, in some piled in heaps, with whole regiments lying in the exact order in which they had formed, attesting in death the tenacity of that courage which had animated them in life. Wallenstein retired for the night to Leipsic. He had striven to the utmost, during that dreadful day, to add to his other laurels the field of Lutzen. He was to be seen on all parts of the field careering through the smoke and fire, rallying his troops, encouraging the brave, and threatening or punishing the coward. He feared not to go where the shower of bullets was the thickest and deadliest. His cloak was pierced by balls in numerous places. The dead were falling thick around him; but a shield which he saw not covered his head, and he passed scatheless through all the horrors of the day, fate having decreed – though the stars had hidden it from him – that he should die on a less glorious field than that on which his immortal antagonist had breathed his last.

When the sun rose next morning, the dead and dying alone occupied the field of Lutzen. There were the cannon, their thunders hushed, as if in reverence of those who were breathing out their life in low and heavy moanings. The two armies stood off from the spot where the day before they had

wrestled in all the passionate energy of battle. Wallenstein sent his Croats to take possession of the artillery, that he might have a pretext for saying that he had vanquished on the field from the vicinity of which he was at that moment preparing to flee; but when his messengers saw the Swedes drawn up in order of battle at no great distance, they forbore the attempt to execute the orders of their master. The same day Wallenstein was followed to Leipsic by the remnant of his army, but in most miserable plight, without artillery, without standards, almost without arms, covered with wounds; in short, looking the reverse of victors. The duke made a short stay in Leipsic, and soon removed even beyond the bounds of Saxony; in such haste was he to escape from the scene of his alleged triumph, for which the bells of the churches of Austria were at that moment ringing peals of joy! The Duke of Saxe-Weimar, who had succeeded the fallen king in the command of the Swedes, took possession of the battle-field, with all on it; and soon thereafter established himself in Leipsic, thus incontestably proving that the victory was his.[2]

When the terrible cry, "The king is dead!" rang along the Swedish ranks on the day of battle, it struck as a knell of woe on every ear on which it fell. But the soldier had only a moment to think on the extent of the calamity; the uppermost idea in his mind was "to conquer." The field beneath him, with its burden of ghastly horrors, and the enemy vanishing in the distance, was the proof That he had conquered; but now he had time to reflect at what a cost victory had been won! Somewhere on that field on which he was now gazing with an eye in which sadness had taken the place of fury, lay the hero who had yesterday led them forth to battle. This changed victory's paeon into a funeral dirge. How much lay buried with that hero! The safety of Sweden, the hopes of the Protestant princes, the restoration of the Protestant worship in Germany; for what so likely, now that the strong arm which had rolled back the Catholic Restoration was broken, as that the flood would return and again overflow those countries from which its

desolating waters had been dried up?

The first care of the Swedes was to search for the body of their king. The quest was for some time ineffectual; but at last the royal corpse was discovered beneath a heap of slain, stripped of all its ornaments, and most of its clothing, and covered with blood and wounds. The king had fallen near to a great stone, which for a century had stood between Lutzen and the canal, and which from that day has borne, in memory of the event, the name of the "Stone of the Swede." The body of the king was carried to the neighboring town of Weissenfels, and there embalmed and laid out in state. The queen embraced his remains in an agony of grief; his generals stood round his bier in speechless sorrow, gazing on the majestic countenance of him who would no more lead them forth to battle, and striving to turn their thoughts away from the contemplation of a future which his death had so suddenly darkened. His remains were conveyed to Stockholm, and interred in the sepulchres of the Kings of Sweden in the Church of Ritterholm.[3]

"When the great king, lord of the half of Germany, sank in the dust of the battle-field," says Freytag, "a cry of woe went through the whole Protestant territories. In city and country there was a funeral service held; endless were the elegies written upon him; even enemies concealed their joy behind a manly sympathy which was seldom shown in that time to any opponent.

"His end was considered as a national misfortune; to the people the 'Liberator,' the 'Savior,' was lost. Also we, whether Protestants or Catholics, may look, not only with cordial interest upon a pure heroic life, which in the years of its highest power was so suddenly extinguished; we should also consider with thanks the influence which the king had upon the German war. For he has in desperate times defended what Luther obtained for the whole nation – the freedom of thought, and capacity for national development against the frightful enemy of German existence, a soulless despotism in

Church and State.”[4]

So ended, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, the great career of Gustavus Adolphus. His sudden appearance on the scene, and his sudden departure from it, are equally striking. “History,” says Schiller, “so often engaged in the ungrateful task of analyzing; the uniform course of human passions, is sometimes gratified by the appearance of events which strike like a hand from heaven, into the calculated machinery of human affairs, and recall to the contemplative mind the idea of a higher order of things. Such appears to us the sudden vanishing of Gustavus Adolphus from the scene.”[5] It does not pertain to our subject to dwell on his great military genius, and the original tactics which he introduced into the art of war. He was the greatest general in an age of great generals. Among the eight best commanders whom, in his opinion, the world had ever seen, Napoleon gave a place to Gustavus Adolphus.[6]

Gustavus Adolphus falls below the great William of Orange, but he rises high above all his contemporaries, and stands forth, beyond question, as the greatest man of his age. In each of the three departments that constitute greatness he excelled – in the largeness of his moral and intellectual nature; in the grandeur of his aims; and in the all but perfect success that crowned what he undertook. The foundation of his character was his piety. “He was a king,” said Oxenstierna, “God-fearing in all his works and actions even unto death.” From his youth his soul had been visited with impulses which he believed came from beyond the sphere of humanity. His grandfather’s dying words had consecrated him to a sublime but most arduous mission; that mission he could scarcely misunderstand. The thoughts that began to stir within him as he grew to manhood, and the aspects of Providence around him, gave depth and strength to his early impressions, which so grew upon him from day to day that he had no rest.

He saw the labors of the Reformers on the point of being swept

away, the world about to be rolled back into darkness, add the religion and liberty of Christendom overwhelmed by a flood of arms and Jesuitry. Among the princes of Germany he could discern no one who was able or at all willing to cope with the crisis. If the terrible ruin was to be averted, he himself must stand in the breach: he was the last hope of a perishing world. Thus it was that he came across the sea with a feeling that he was the chosen instrument of Providence to set limits to the ruinous reaction that was overwhelming Christendom. In the great generals who had grown up around him; in the army, disciplined and hardened in many a campaign, now gathered under his banners; in the union of great qualities in himself, fitting him for his task; in his power of command; in his love of order and system; in his intuitive faculty of quick and rapid combinations; in his genius for forming plans, and the caution, united with daring courage, which never permitted him to take a single step forward without having secured a line of safe retreat in the rear – in this assemblage of great attributes, so fully possessed and so easily exercised by him, he read the authentication of his great mission.

That mission was publicly and conclusively certified to both friend and foe on the field of Leipsic. That marvelous victory proclaimed Gustavus Adolphus to be one of those saviors whom the Great Ruler, at times, raises up in pity for a fallen race, and whom he employs suddenly and beneficently to change the current of history. A greater consciousness of this breathes henceforward in every word and act of Gustavus. He displays greater elevation of soul, a nobler bearing and a higher faith in his mission; and from this hour his conquests become more rapid and brilliant. He sees One moving before him, and giving him victory; mighty armies and renowned captains are driven before him as chaff is driven before the wind; the gates of proud cities are unlocked at his approach, and the keys of strong fortresses are put into his hand; rivers are divided that he may pass over; and his banners are borne triumphantly onwards till they are seen waving on the

frontier of Austria. Germany was liberated.

But Germany was not able to accept her liberation. The princes who were now delivered from a yoke under which they had groaned, and who might now freely profess the Protestant faith, and re-establish the exercise of the Protestant worship among their subjects, were unable to prize the boon which had been put within their reach. They began to mistrust and intrigue against their deliverer, and to quarrel with the arrangements necessary for securing the fruits of what had been achieved with so much toil and danger.

These unworthy princes put away from them the proffered liberty; and then the deliverer was withdrawn. The man who had passed unharmed over a hundred battle-fields fell by the bullet of an imperial cuirassier. But Gustavus Adolphus had not borne toil and braved danger in vain; nor did he leave his work unfinished, although it seemed so to his contemporaries. Germany, after being chastened by yet other sixteen years of terrible suffering, accepted the boon for which she was not prepared in the lifetime of her great deliverer; for it was the victories of Gustavus Adolphus that made possible, and it was his proposals that formed the basis ultimately of that great charter of toleration under which Christendom finally sat down, and which is known in history as the Pacification of Westphalia.

CHAPTER 10 [Back to Top](#) THE PACIFICATION OF WESTPHALIA.

Gustavus' Mission no Failure – Oxenstierna comes to the Helm – Diet of Heilbronn – Wallenstein's Advice to Ferdinand – Success of the Swedes – Inactivity of Wallenstein – His Offer to Join the Swedes – His Supposed Conspiracy against Ferdinand – He is Assassinated – Defeat of the Swedes – Battle of Nordlingen – Defection of the Elector of Saxony – Peace of Prague – Rejected by the Swedes – Treaty with France – Great Victory of the Swedes – Progress of the War – Isolation of Ferdinand – Cry for Peace – Negotiations at Munster – The

Peace of Westphalia. MOST historians, reviewing the career of Gustavus Adolphus, have given it as their opinion that when he died he had reached the maturity of his glory, but not of his designs. We are disposed to regard this judgment as a narrow and mistaken one. That he had reached the summit of his fame we readily admit; but we also hold that at the moment of his death he had reached the consummation of his plans, so far as their accomplishment rested with himself. Had Gustavus Adolphus crossed the Baltic to found a new kingdom, and reign as head of the German Empire, then indisputably he failed in the object for which he had girded on the sword; and, in the words of Schiller, "the proud edifice of his past greatness sunk into ruins when he died." But this was far indeed from being what the hero of Sweden aimed at. He sought to roll back the Catholic reaction, and to set free the princes and States of Germany from the treble despotism of Ferdinand, of the League, of Rome: this he did. The battle of Leipsic scattered the army of the emperor; the campaigns that followed carried the banners of Gustavus in triumph to the Rhine on the west, and to the very frontier of Austria on the south, including Bavaria, the seat of the League.

The crowning victory of Lutzen set the seal upon all his past achievements, by completing the discomfiture of Ferdinand and of the League, and consummating the emancipation of Germany. When he expired on the last and bloodiest of all his fields, the Fatherland was freed. It does not at all diminish from the perfection of his work, that neither the princes nor the people of Germany were prepared to profit by the boon which he put within their reach. These craven sons of heroic sires were not worthy of freedom. They were incapable of appreciating the character or sympathizing with the grand aims of their liberator; and had Gustavus Adolphus lived, it is probable that these easy-going men, who were so unbending in points of dignity but so pliant in matters of conscience, so zealous for the enlargement of their estates but so lukewarm in the defense of their faith, would have quarreled over the spoils

of his victories, while they undervalued and neglected that which was the greatest of them all – Protestant liberty. He was spared this mortifying sight by his early removal. It does not follow that the fruits of his labors perished. They were postponed, but not lost. They were gathered-in sixteen years after. wards at the Peace of Westphalia.

The Protestant interest of the Thirty Years' War ends with the life of Gustavus. The two parties continued the struggle, and the Fatherland was still deluged with blood; but the moral end of the conflict was lost sight of, and the bearing as well as the aims of the combatants rapidly and sadly degenerated. They fought, not for the vindication of Protestant liberties, but for plunder, or for pay, or at best for victory. To record battles and campaigns waged for these objects is not our purpose, and we shall sufficiently discharge our duty to our subject if we trace rapidly the course of events to their issue in the great European Settlement of 1648, which owed its existence mainly to the man who had laid down his sword on the field of Lutzen.

When Gustavus Adolphus died, the great chancellor and statesman, Oxenstierna, sprang to the helm. His were the ablest hands, after those of Gustavus, to guide the State. Oxenstierna was the friend, as well as the minister, of the deceased monarch; he perfectly knew and thoroughly sympathized with the policy of the king, and of all the survivors he was the best fitted by his genius, his lofty patriotism, and his undoubted Protestantism, to carry out the views of his late master. The Senate of Sweden was equally valorous and prompt. It met at Stockholm on the 16th of March, 1633, and passed a resolution "to prosecute the war against the Roman emperor and Popish League in Germany, until it should please Almighty God to establish a happy peace for the good of his Church."[\[1\]](#) Nor were able generals wanting to the Diet to carry out its resolution. If the deceased king had a not unworthy successor in the State in Oxenstierna, he had also not unmeet

representatives in the field in the generals who had been trained under him. The tactics, the power of rapid combination of masses, the intrepidity, and above all the lofty spirit of Gustavus, to a great degree lived in Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, Bauer, Torstenson, and Wrangel. It was not on the leaders only that Gustavus had stamped his image, he had infused his spirit into the common soldiers, and thus all three – the Diet, the minister, and the army – continued to pursue the career in which the late king had started them, just as a machine, to which a mighty impulse has been communicated, continues to revolve after the strong hand from which the impulse came is withdrawn.

The work which hitherto had been done by one was now divided among many. Gustavus Adolphus had centered in himself the office of minister, of Diet, of diplomatist, of statesman, and of general. The conception of his plans was his, and so too was the execution of them. The comprehensiveness of his mind and the versatility of his genius made these various parts easy and natural to him, and gave him a prodigious advantage over his opponents, by giving a more perfect unity and a quicker dispatch to all his plans. This perfect accord and harmony were henceforward wanting; but it was some time till its loss became apparent. Oxenstierna did his best to maintain the tottering fabric of the German Confederacy, which had shown signs of dissolution even before the fall of Gustavus. Everything depended upon the Protestant princes remaining united, and continuing in alliance with Sweden; and the chancellor succeeded in strengthening the bond of union among his allies, in spite of the jealousies, the interests, and the many difficulties he had to overcome. At the Diet of Heilbronn the Directorship Franconia, Suabia, and the Upper and Lower Rhine was conferred upon him, “the princes of these circles entering into a league with the Crown of Sweden, and with one another, against the emperor, until the civil and religious liberties of Germany should be restored, and Sweden indemnified for the cost of the war.”[2]

If Sweden and her German allies had resolved not to sheathe the sword till the civil and religious liberties of Germany had been restored, not less were the emperor and his allies – the Pope, the King of Spain, and Maximilian of Bavaria – resolved that the war should go on. Wallenstein advised Ferdinand to meet the Protestant States with an unqualified amnesty;[\[3\]](#) and had the emperor done so he would very probably have broken their union, and brought back the more pliant and wavering. But blinded by bigotry and the brilliant prospects of triumph, which he imagined the fall of Gustavus Adolphus had opened to him, he rejected the Duke of Friedland's counsel, and instead of holding out the olive-branch to the Protestants, offered them battle by increasing the number of his army. Hostilities soon again commenced.

Victory still followed the standards of the Swedes. During the campaign of 1633, they overran the territory of Bamberg, swept along the Danube, and took the town of Ratisbon, which gave them the command of Bavaria, the cradle of the League. Their arms were attended with equal success in Suabia, and on the Upper and Lower Rhine. Lower Saxony and Westphalia also became the scene of their triumphs. They crossed and re-crossed Germany, scattering the imperial armies, capturing the enemy's fortresses, and wresting from him the keys of all his important cities, besides other trophies of war. such as cannon, baggage, and standards. One who did not know what had taken place on the field of Lutzen, would have thought that Gustavus Adolphus was still at the head of the Swedish warriors. Their banners, floating triumphant in every part of Germany, again proclaimed the fact that nothing was wanting to the Protestant princes, save hearty zeal and firm concord, to recover all the rights which the Catholic reaction had swept away, and to establish Protestant liberty in Germany as it had existed a century before.

While the Swedish arms had come up to the Austrian frontier, and it seemed as if a few marches and one or two battles would

carry them to the gates of Vienna, the generalissimo of Ferdinand was maintaining a most unaccountable inactivity. Wallenstein lay encamped in Bohemia, with 40,000 soldiers under him, apparently an uninterested spectator of the disasters befalling the empire. Ferdinand sent message after message, each more pressing than that which had preceded it, commanding him to put his army in motion against the invaders. Wallenstein answered, "I go;" but went not. At last he marched to Munsterberg, where he formed an entrenched camp. The Swedes offered him battle, but he declined it. The two armies remained nine days within musket-shot of each other, but neither stirred from their entrenchments. At last the mystery of Wallenstein's inactivity was made plain. Count Terzky, attended by a trumpeter, appeared in the Swedish camp, with proposals of peace from the imperial generalissimo. Wallenstein offered to join the allies, and turn his arms against the emperor, on condition of being made King of Bohemia. He further promised that, should the Bohemian crown be placed on his head, he would recall the exiles, restore the confiscated estates, and establish toleration in that country.[4] So do contemporary historians relate.

Besides his own ambition, the stars had promised this dignity to Wallenstein. The Swedes did not know what to make of this strange proposal; but at last, deeming it an artful trap to seize their army and deliver it up to the emperor, they rejected it. The real intentions of Wallenstein still remain a mystery; but we incline to the belief that he was then meditating some deep revenge on the emperor, whom he had never forgiven for dismissing him, and that he was not less desirous of striking a blow at the Jesuits, who he knew cordially hated him, and were intriguing against him at the court of Vienna. It is said that he was revolving even mightier projects. He harbored the daring purpose of putting down all the lords, lay and ecclesiastical, of Germany, of combining its various countries into one kingdom, and setting over it a single chief. Ferdinand II was to be installed meanwhile as the

nominal sovereign, but Wallenstein would govern through him, as Richelieu did through Louis XIII. The Turks were to be driven out of Europe, and Wallenstein, at the head of a gigantic army, was to make himself Dictator of Christendom. Such was the colossal scheme with which he was credited, and which is said to have alarmed the Pope, excited the jealousy of Richelieu, intensified the hatred of the Jesuits, and made them combine to effect his destruction.[5]

His ruin soon followed. To have sent him his dismissal in the ordinary way would have been to bring on the explosion of the terrible plot. He held the army in his hand, and Ferdinand was not powerful enough to wrest that weapon from him. He could be approached only with the dagger.

Wallenstein was residing at Eger, where he was busily engaged corresponding with his accomplices, and studying the stars. They rolled night by night over his head, without notifying that the hour had come for the execution of his great design. While he waited for the celestial summons, dark preparations were forming round him on earth. On the evening of the 25th of February, 1634, the officers of the garrison who remained loyal to Ferdinand invited the four leading conspirators of Wallenstein to sup with them. The wine was circulating freely after supper, when one of the company rose and gave as a toast, "The House of Austria, Long live Ferdinand!" It was the preconcerted signal. Thirty-six men-at-arms, who had been stationed in the ante-chamber, rushed in, overturned the table, and threw themselves upon their victims. In a few minutes Wallenstein's partisans lay sabered and dying on the floor of the apartment.

This was only a beginning. The great conspirator still lived; but, whatever the prognostication of the stars, his last sands were running. The elements seemed in accord with the violent deeds on foot, for a frightful tempest had burst over Eger, and the black clouds, the howling winds, and the pelting rains favored the assassins. Devereux, followed by twelve

halberdiers, proceeded to Wallenstein's residence, and was at once admitted by the guard, who were accustomed to see him visit the duke at all hours. Wallenstein had retired to rest; but hearing a noise he had got out of bed, and going to the window he opened it and challenged the sentinel.

He had just seated himself in a chair at a table in his night-dress, when Devereux burst open the door and entered with the halberdiers. The man whom armies obeyed, and who was the terror of kings, was before him. Rushing towards him, he shouted, "Thy hour is come, villain!" The duke rose, and attempted to reach the window and summon the guard, but the men-at-arms barred his way. Opening his arms, he received the stroke of their halberds in his breast, and fell bathed in his blood, but without uttering a word. His designs, whatever they were, he took with him to his grave. The wise man had said long before, "As passeth the whirlwind, so the wicked." [6]

After the death of Wallenstein, Ferdinand's son, the King of Hungary, bore the title of generalissimo, but Count Gallas discharged the duty by leading the army. The tide of success now began to turn against the Swedes. They had already lost several important towns, among others Ratisbon, and their misfortunes were crowned by a severe defeat which they encountered under the walls of Nordlingen. Some 12,000 men lay dead on the field, 80 cannon, 4,000 wagons, and 300 standards fell into the hands of the imperialists. The Swedes had lost their superiority in the field; consternation reigned among the members of the Protestant Confederacy, and the free cities; and Oxenstierna, to save the cause from ruin, was obliged, as he believed, to cast himself upon the protection of Richelieu, giving to France, as the price of her help, the province of Alsace. This put the key of Germany into her hands, and her armies poured along the Rhine, and, under pretext of assisting the Swedes, plundered the cities and devastated the provinces.

And now a severer blow befell the Swedes than even the defeat

at Nordlingen. John George, the Elector of Saxony, deserting his confederates, entered into a treaty of peace with the emperor. The weakness of the Protestant cause, all along, had lain, not in the strength of the imperialists, but in the divisions of the German princes, and now this heavy and, for the time, fatal blow was dealt it by the defection of the man who had so largely contributed to. begin the war, by helping the League to take Prague, and suppress the Protestantism of Bohemia. All the Protestant States were invited to enter this peace along with the emperor and elector. It effected no real settlement of differences; it offered no effectual redress of grievances; and, while it swept away nearly all that the Protestants had gained in the war, it left undetermined innumerable points which were sure to become the seeds of conflicts in the future.

Nevertheless, the peace was acceded to by the Elector of Brandenburg, Duke William of Weimar, the Princes of Anhalt, the Dukes of Mecklenburg, the Dukes of Brunswick, Luneburg, the Hanseatic towns, and most of the imperial cities.[\[7\]](#)

This peace, termed the Peace of Prague, from the town where the treaty was framed, was scornfully rejected by the Swedes, and on just grounds. It offered them no indemnification for the expenses they had incurred, and no compensation for the conquests they were to leave behind them. They loudly protested against the princes who had made their reconciliation with the emperor, as guilty of a shameful abandonment of themselves. They had come into Germany at their invitation; they had vindicated the Protestant rights and the German liberties with their blood, and "the sacred life of their king," and now they were to be expelled from the empire without reward, without even thanks, by the very men for whom they had toiled and bled. Rather than be thus dishonored, and lose into the bargain all for which they had fought, they resolved to continue the war.

Oxenstierna, in this extremity of Swedish affairs, turned to

France, and Richelieu met him with offers of assistance. The Swedes and French formed a compact body, and penetrated into the heart of the empire. The Swedes fought with a more desperate bravery than ever. The battles were bloodier. They fell on Saxony, and avenged, in the devastation and slaughter they inflicted, the defection of the Elector. They defeated him in a great battle at Wittsbach, in 1636, the Elector leaving 5,000 men on the field, with baggage, cannon, standards, and silver plate, the booty being enhanced by the capture of some thousands of prisoners. After this, victory oscillates from side to side; now it is the imperialists who triumph on the red field; now it is the Swedes, grown as savage as the imperialists, who remain masters; but though battle succeeds battle, the war makes no progress, and the end for which it was commenced has been entirely lost sight of.

At length there appeared a new Swedish generalissimo, Bernard Torstenson, a pupil of Gustavus Adolphus, and the leader who, of all who had been reared in the same school, approached the most nearly to his great master. He transferred the seat of war from the exhausted provinces to those which had not yet tasted the miseries of the campaigns, He led the Swedish hosts into the Austrian territories which had hitherto been exempted by their remoteness from the calamities tinder which the rest of Germany groaned. "He hurled the torch of war," says Schiller, "even to the very footsteps of the imperial throne." By his great victory at Jancowitz, where the emperor lost his best general, Hatzfeld, and his last army, the whole territory of Austria was thrown open to him. The victorious Swedes, pouring over the frontiers, spread themselves like an inundation over Moravia and Austria. Ferdinand fled to Vienna to save his family and his treasures. The Swedes followed hard on his fleeing steps, carried the entrenchments at the Wolf's Bridge, and showed themselves before the walls of Vienna. Thus, after a long and destructive circuit through every province of Germany, the terrible procession of battles and sieges had returned to the spot whence it set out. The

artillery of the Swedes that now thundered around the Austrian capital must have recalled to the memory of the inhabitants the balls shot into Vienna twenty-seven years ago by the Bohemians. Since that day, whole armies had sunk into the German plains. All the great leaders had fallen in the war. Wallenstein, Tilly, Count Mansfeld, and dozens of inferior generals had gone to the grave. Monarchs, as well as men of lower degree – the great Gustavus and the bigoted Ferdinand – had bowed to the stroke of fate. Richelieu too slept in the marble in which France lays her great statesmen, and the “odor” in which Rome buries her faithful servants. Still, above the graves of those who began it, this war was holding its fearful course, as if it longed to gather beneath its scythe not the German people only, but the nations of Christendom. Now awoke a loud and universal cry for peace.

Even Maximilian of Bavaria had grown weary of the war. The House of Austria was left alone in this great field of blood and corpses, and negotiations for peace were opened at Munster and Osnaburg. These negotiations proceeded slowly. The conflicting interests that had to be reconciled, and the deep-seated jealousies, antipathies, and bigotries that had to be conquered, before the sword could be sheathed, were innumerable. The demands of the negotiating parties rose and fell according to the position of their arms. But at last the great victory – more glorious than any that had preceded it – was achieved. They were exchanging the last shots on the very spot where the first had been fired, namely at Prague, when a messenger brought the news that a peace had been concluded on the 24th of October, 1648. First of all, the new treaty confirmed the old ones of Passau and Augsburg (1552-5), and declared that the interpretation now put upon them was to remain valid in spite of all protests, from any quarter whatsoever. But the new advanced a step beyond the old treaties, and gave still more important results. Besides a number of territorial and political concessions, such as giving Pomerania to Sweden, it extended Toleration to

Calvinists as well as Lutherans. This was the crowning blessing which rose out of these red fields. And to this day the balance of power between Romanist and Protestant has remained substantially as it was fixed by the Pacification of Westphalia.

CHAPTER 11 [Back to Top](#) THE FATHERLAND AFTER THE WAR.

Peace Proclaimed – Banquet at Nuremberg – Varied Feelings awakened by the Peace – Celebration of the Peace in Dolstadt – Symbolical Figures and Procession – The Fatherland after the War – Its Recovery Slow – Invaded by Wandering and Lawless Troops – Poverty of the Inhabitants – Instances of Desolation of the Land – Unexampled Extent of the Calamity – Luther's Warnings Verified. THE peace had been signed. The ambassadors had solemnly shaken hands with one another in token of its ratification, and on all the roads rode trumpeters to carry to city and rural village the news of the happy event. The rude tempests of war had spent themselves, and now mild-eyed Peace looked forth and smiled.

The peace was celebrated at Nuremberg by a great banquet, at which imperialists and Swedes sat down together at the same table, and mingled their rejoicings under the same roof. Brilliant lights illuminated the vaulted roof of the magnificent town-hall. Between the blazing chandeliers were hung thirty kinds of fruits and a profusion of flowers, bound together with gold wire. Four bands were appointed to discourse sweet music, and in six different rooms were assembled the Six classes of invited guests. Two enormous allegorical figures had been erected on the tables – the one an arch of victory, the other a six-sided mountain, covered with mythological and allegorical figures from the Latin and German mythologies. Dinner was served in four courses, each consisting of 150 dishes. Then came the fruits, some of which were served in silver, and others on the boughs of the very trees on which they had grown, and which had been transferred root and all into the banqueting-room. Along the table at

intervals burned fine incense, which filled the spacious hall with a delightful perfume. There was also confectionery in great abundance, made up in a variety of fanciful and fantastic forms. A herald now rose and announced the toast of the day – “The health of his Imperial Majesty of Vienna, and his Royal Majesty of Sweden.” The toast of the newly-concluded peace followed, and was drunk with rapturous cheers by the assembled ambassadors and generals, while a response was thundered from the artillery of the castle. A somewhat perilous play at soldiers now diversified the entertainment. Muskets and swords were brought into the room, and the company, arming themselves and forming in file, marched round the table, and fired off a salvo. After this they marched out, and ascended the streets to the old Margrave’s Castle at the northern gate, and discharged several pieces of ordnance. On their return to the town-hall they were jestingly thanked, and discharged from the service on the ground that now War had sheathed his sword, and Peace began her reign. To regale the poor, two oxen had been killed, and quantities of bread were distributed, and out of a lion’s jaws there ran for six hours white and red wine. Out of a still greater lion’s jaws had run for thirty years tears and blood. As did the ambassadors at Nuremberg, so in every town and half-destroyed village this thrice-welcome peace was celebrated by the rejoicings of the inhabitants.

From the banquet-hall of Nuremberg, let us turn to the homesteads of the people, and mark the varied feelings awakened in their breasts by the cessation of this terrible war. “To the old,” says Gustavus Freytag, “peace appeared like a return of their youth; they saw the rich harvests of their childhood brought back again; the thickly-peopled villages; the merry Sundays under the now cut-down village lindens; the pleasant hours which they had spent with their now dead or impoverished relations and companions – in short, all the pictures that made up the memory of early days they saw reviving again to gladden their age. They found themselves

happier, manlier, and better than they had become in almost thirty years filled with misery and degradation. The young men, that hard, war-begotten, wild generation, felt the approach of a wonderful time; it seemed to them like a fable out of a far-off land; they saw in vista a time when on every field there would wave in the wind thick yellow ears of corn, when in every stall the cows would low, when in every sty would bask a round little pig, when they themselves should drive two horses to the merry crack of the whip, and no hostile soldier would dare to lay rough hands upon their sisters and sweethearts; when they would no longer lie in wait in the bushes with hay-forks and rusty muskets for stragglers; when they would no longer sit as fugitives, in the eerie nights of the forest, on the graves of their stricken comrades; when the roofs of the village houses would be without holes, the yards without crumbling barns; when one would no longer hear the cry of the wolf at the yard-gate; when the village church would again have glass windows and beautiful bells; when in the befouled choir of the church there would stand a new altar, with a silk cover, a silver crucifix, and a gilt cup; and when once again the young men would lead the brides to the altar with the maiden-wreath in their hair. A passionate, pained joy throbbed in every breast; and even war's wildest brood, the common soldiers, felt its convulsive thrill. The callous governing powers even, the princes and their ambassadors, felt that the great fact of peace was the saving of Germany from the last extremity of ruin. Solemnly, and with all the fervor of which the people were capable, was the peace celebrated throughout the land." [1]

As an example of the way in which the peace was welcomed in the smaller towns we take Dolstadt, in the Dukedom of Gotha. The glimpse it gives us of the morals of the Fatherland at this era is far from pleasant, and shows us how far the sons of the Reformers had degenerated; and it paints in affecting colors the character of the men on whom the great calamity of

the Thirty Years' War fell. The Pastor of Dolstadt, vexed from day to day with the impiety of his flock, denounced against them the judgment of Heaven unless they turned from their wickedness. They only laughed at his warnings, and showed him all manner of disrespect. They tore down his hops from the pole, they carried off the corn from his field, and many other injuries, as he complained with tearful eyes in 1634, did they inflict upon him. When he came to die he burst into tears, uttering the following sorrowful exclamation – "Alas! poor Dolstadt, how ill it will go with thee after my departure!" Directing a look towards the church, and surveying it with a heart heavy with sorrow and eyes dim with death, he made his attendants raise him in bed, and again exclaimed, "Ah! dear, dear church, how wilt thou fare after my death! thou shalt be swept into a heap with the broom of judgment!" His prophecy came true. In 1636 the armed corps of Hatzfeld fell upon the place, ravaging and spoiling; the church was plundered, and its wood-work torn down and burned, as Pastor Dekner had not obscurely foretold. In the same year the village had to pay 5,500 guildens of war indemnity. From 1627 to 1637, 29,595 guildens had been exacted of it. The inhabitants dwindled away, and in a short while the place became almost as deserted as the wilderness. In 1636 there were only two married couples in the village. In 1641, first Bannier, and after him the French were quartered there in winter; one half-acre was the whole extent of soil cultivated, and the population amounted to just four persons.

After the Peace of Westphalia, under the fostering care of Duke Ernest, the pious sovereign of Gotha, this as well as the other abandoned villages were quickly re-populated, so that in 1650 there was held also in Dolstadt a festival in honor of the peace. The morning of the 19th of August was ushered in by the singing of hymns. At six o'clock the bells were set a-ringing, and the whole population of the place assembled before the entrance of the village – the women grouped on one side of the path, and the men on the other. Before the females

stood an allegorical figure of Peace, dressed in a robe of green silk, crowned with a green wreath, varied with yellow flowers, and holding in its hand a branch of olive. In front of the men was a symbolical representation of Justice, clothed in white, wearing a green wreath, and holding in one hand a naked sword, and in the other a yellow rod. The young men stood at some distance, with a representation of Mars before them, dressed as a soldier and carrying a cross-bow. In the middle of these groups stood the scholars and villagers, with the pastor at their head, the director of the day's proceedings, and afterwards their narrator. The pastor directed their glance back on the awful tempests which had beat upon them, now happily ended. He told them how often they had had to flee from their homes, fear in their hearts and tears in their eyes; and how glad they were, the storm over, to return, though to enter naked and devastated dwellings, and sit at hearths blackened and cold. "And now let us," he said, "pass in with praise at these same gates, out of which we have often passed in flight; and let us enter the sanctuary of the Eternal with a psalm of thanksgiving, and lifting up our voices with one accord, sing to God on high." Thereupon the whole assembly, wearing green wreaths, and carrying in their hands green branches, marched to the church singing hymns. The villagers had been joined by the gentry and nobility of the neighborhood, and the procession was a long and imposing one. In the church hymns were again sung by voices which trembled with varied emotions; prayers breathed out with touching pathos and solemnity ascended upward; and the pastor, mounting the pulpit, preached a sermon suited to the joyful occasion. Thereafter the whole assemblage gathered in the market-place, and the stripling and the patriarch, the village maiden and the high-bona dame, mingling their voices in one mighty chorus, sang a closing hymn and then dispersed.[2]

The condition of the Fatherland after the war was of the most serious and painful character. Peace had been proclaimed, but many years were needed to staunch the wounds and efface the

deep scars which the war had made. When one has been brought to the grave's brink and again recovers, slowly the pallor departs from the face, and slowly does the dimmed eye brighten and the sickly frame wax strong. So with Germany: the work was both laborious and tedious of re-building its cities, restoring the verdure of its fields and the shade of its forests, and especially reviving its all but extinct population. Unconscionable war taxes, ravaging camps waiting for disbandment, prolonged into the era of peace the miseries that had darkened the period of war. To these were added annoyances of another kind. The whole country swarmed with "masterless bands," made up of runaway serfs and discharged soldiers, with women and camp followers.

After these came troops of beggars and hosts of robbers, who wandered from province to province in quest of prey. "A stream of beggars," says Gustavus Freytag, "of every kind wandered over the country – dismissed soldiers, cripples, homeless people, old and sick people; among the rest, lepers, with certificates from the hospitals; exiles from Bohemia and Hungaria, who had left their home for their religion; expelled nobles from England, Ireland, and Poland; collectors who wished to set free their relations from the Turkish prisons; travelers who had been plundered at wayside inns; a blind pastor, with five children, from Denmark; and not one of this long troop was there who had not a tale of suffering or adventure to recount, in order to procure money or excite admiration."[\[3\]](#)

They forcibly quartered themselves in the villages where there still remained a few inhabitants; and where the population had totally disappeared they took unchallenged possession of the empty dwellings. But the infection of evil habits spreads fast; and the inhabitants, discovering that it was easier to rob than to cultivate the fields, began to make secret incursions into their neighbors' territories, and appropriated whatever they coveted. The Romanists plundered the Protestant

communities, and the Protestants repaid the visit by plundering the Romanists. The gypsy tribes began to swarm and multiply; their wandering hordes would gather in every village. Fantastically dressed, they would encamp round the stone troughs in the market-places, with laden carts, stolen horses, and naked children. Only where there existed a strong municipality could these wild wanderers be kept away. In the Dukedom of Gotha sentinels were placed on the bridges and at the fords of rivers, to sound the alarm when they saw any of these lawless troops approaching. Gradually something like a police force was organized; a register of householders was made, and an account taken of the hind each occupied, and the manner in which he cultivated it, and the taxes fixed which he was to pay. By these means the inhabitants were again broken into habits of industry. Those who had fled to the mountains, or had sought refuge in the cities, or in foreign countries, returned, the villages arose, marriages and baptisms were numerous, and something like its old face began again to be seen on the Fatherland.

The poverty of the inhabitants was so great that they were not able to procure implements to cultivate their fields, and large tracts of Germany long lay fallow, or covered with brushwood. "There were parts of the country where a horseman could ride for many hours without coming to a single inhabited dwelling. A messenger, who hastened from Saxony to Berlin, traveled from morning till evening over uncultivated land, through thorns and thistles, without finding one village in which to rest." [4] In Thuringia and Franconia, fair samples of the rest of Germany, it is calculated that seventy-five per cent of the male population had perished.

They had lost eighty-five per cent. of horses, eighty-three of goats, and eighty-two of cows; the remaining horses were lame and blind, and the sheep in all places were completely annihilated. The population of Hesse had shrunk to a fourth of its former number. Augsburg was reduced from 80,000 to 18,000;

Frankenthal, from 18,000 to 324; Wurtemberg, from 400,000 to 48,000. In the Palatinate but a fiftieth part of the population remained. In Ummerstadt, near Coburg, which before the war had a population of 800, so great was the reduction that in two years not one child was born. It is a bloody history which these facts record.[5]

In olden time, when nations were migrating from one country to another, it would happen that particular territories were even more completely bereft of inhabitants, or when plague smote a city there might be even a more terrible destruction of its people. These depopulations were local, and were easily repaired from the abundant population around the stricken spot; but here was an ancient nation, possessing hundreds of walled towns, numerous villages, with meadow-lands and fields, cultivated for thirty generations, overtaken by a stroke beneath which their cities fell into ruins, their villages sank into heaps, their morals and religion were lost, and the soil, refusing longer to be the servant of man, sent forth only weeds, and offered only a lair to the wild beast.

The prophetic eye of Luther saw the approach of terrible evils to Germany, should the Gospel he had preached not be held fast by her sons. His warnings had been despised, and a night, blacker even than any he had foreseen, descended on the Fatherland.

FOOTNOTES

VOLUME THIRD

BOOK TWENTY-FIRST

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 1

[1] See ante, vol. 2.

[2] Hallenberg, 1., p. 22. History of Gustavus Adolphus, by B. Chapman, M. A.; p. 47; Lond., 1856.

[3] Geijer, 3., p. 5 – apud Chapman, Hist. Gust. Adolph., p. 45.

[4] Frederick Schiller, *The Thirty Years' War*, vol. 1., bk. 1.; Edin., 1828. Ludwig Hausser, *The Period of the Reformation*, vol. 2., part 7., chap. 31; Lond., 1873. B. Chapman, *The History of Gustavus Adolphus, and the Thirty Years' War*, chap. 5; Lond., 1856.

[5] Von Gustav Freytag, *Aus dem Jahrhundert grossen Krieges*, chap. 1, p. 22; Leipsic, 1867.

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 2

[1] Gustav. Freytag, *Jahrhundert dem grossen Krieges*, chap. 2, p. 72.

[2] From the parish registers of Seebergen, near Gotha – apud Gustav. Freytag.

[3] Gustav. Freytag, pp. 72, 73.

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 3

[1] Gustav. Freytag, chap. 3, p. 111.

[2] Gustav. Freytag, p. 116.

[3] Gustav. Freytag, pp. 119-122.

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 4

[1] Chapman, *Hist. of Gustavus Adolphus*, p. 151.

[2] Schiller, *The Thirty Years' War*, bk. 2., pp. 161-173. Chapman, *Hist. of Gustavus Adolphus*, chap. 5, pp. 142-150. Ludwig Hausser, *The Period of the Reformation*, vol. 2., pp. 108,109.

[3] Schiller, *The Thirty Years' War*, vol. 1., pp. 145, 146, 163. Ludwig Hausser, *The Period of the Reformation*, vol. 2., pp. 110, 111.

[4] Schiller, *The Thirty Years' War*, vol. 1., p. 165. Ludwig Hausser, *The Period of the Reformation*, vol. 2., p. 112.

[5] Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., p. 112. Schiller, vol. 1., pp. 172, 173.

[6] Chapman, pp. 159, 160.

[7] Alfred Michiels, p. 60. Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., p. 116.

[8] Alfred Michiels, p. 63.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 59. Schiller, vol. 1., pp. 178, 179.

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 5

- [1] Secret History of the Austrian Government, p. 71.
- [2] Schiller, vol. 1., p. 198.
- [3] Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., p. 126.
- [4] Chapman, p. 184.
- [5] Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., p. 127.
- [6] Schiller, vol. 1., p. 205.
- [7] Schiller, vol. 1., p. 200.
- [8] Schiller, vol. 1., p. 204.
- [9] Ibid., p. 205.

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 6

- [1] Chapman, p. 196.
- [2] Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., pp. 150, 151.
- [3] Schiller, vol. 1., p. 219.
- [4] Chapman, p. 205.
- [5] Schiller, vol. 1., p. 220.
- [6] Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., p. 148.
- [7] Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., p. 157.
- [8] Schiller, vol. 1., p. 226.
- [9] Chapman, p. 219.
- [10] Ibid., p. 234.
- [11] Schiller, vol. 1., pp. 234, 235. Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., pp. 160-162.

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 7

- [1] Schiller, vol. 1., p. 230.
- [2] Sir Robert Anstruther. German Correspondence, May, 1631. Lotichius, vol. 1., p. 876. Chemnitz, vol. 1., p. 132. Chapman, pp. 240-243. Schiller, vol. 1., pp. 240-250.
- [3] Khevenhiller, vol. 11., p. 1875 – apud Chapman, p. 257.
- [4] The king's letter to Oxenstierna, apud Geijer, vol 3., p. 217. Chapman, p. 261.
- [5] Chemnitz, vol. 1., p. 175. Khevenhiller, vol. 11., p. 1874. Chapman, pp. 257-265. Schiller, vol. 1., pp. 266-269.

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 8

- [1] Schiller, vol. 1., p. 269.

- [2] Puffendorf p. 53. Chapman, p. 267.
- [3] Chemnitz, vol. 1., p. 199 – apud Chapman, p. 285.
- [4] Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., p. 168.
- [5] Schiller, vol. 2., p. 30.
- [6] Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., pp. 170, 171.
- [7] Khevenhiller, vol 7., p. 87.
- [8] Richelieu, Memoirs, vol. 7., p. 45.
- [9] Chapman, pp. 296, 297.
- [10] Aldzreitter, vol. 3., p. 265 – apud Chapman, p. 313.
- [11] Khevenhiller, vol. 12., p. 13 – apud Chapman, p. 323.
Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., pp. 175, 176.
- [12] Swed. Intell., vol. 2., pp. 152-158 – apud Chapman, p. 326.
- [13] Schiller, vol. 2., p. 98.
- [14] Schiller, vol 2., p. 122.
- [15] Swed. Intell., vol. 3., p. 128 – apud Chapman, p. 369.

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 9

- [1] Schiller, vol. 2., p. 128.
- [2] We have followed the standard authorities for our description of this celebrated battle; still, it is impossible to give very minute or, it may be, perfectly accurate details of it. It was variously reported at the time. The king's death, for instance, has been set down as the act of an assassin, and the Swedes generally believed that the perpetrator of the base act was Francis, Duke of Lauenburg. The antecedents of this man, and his subsequent history, gave some grounds for the suspicion. But it needs not assassination to account for the death of one who, with incomparable but unjustifiable bravery, was fighting, almost alone and without armor, in the midst of hundreds of enemies.
- [3] The traveler Cox says: "A few years ago, Prince Henry of Prussia, being at Stockholm, descended into the vault, and opened the coffin which contains the remains of Gustavus. A Swedish nobleman who accompanied the prince into the vault assured me that the body was in a state of complete preservation" (about 150 years after burial), "that the

countenance still retained the most perfect resemblance to the pictures and coins, and particularly that the whiskers and short pointed beard, which he wore according to the fashion of the times in which he lived, were distinctly visible.” (Cox, Travels into Poland, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, vol. 3., p. 102; Dublin, 1784.)

[4] Gustav Freytag, p. 180.

[5] Schiller, vol. 2., p. 135.

[6] Alexander, Hannibal, Julius Caesar, Gustavus Adolphus, Turenne, Prince Eugene, Frederick II of Prussia, Napoleon. (Gfrorer, p. 1015.)

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 10

[1] Swed. Intell., vol. 3., p. 200 – apud Chapman, p. 390.

[2] Diet of Heilbronn – Swed. Intell., vol. 3., p. 312.

[3] Schiller, vol. 2., p. 148.

[4] Schiller, vol. 2., p. 170. Khevenhiller, vol. 12., p. 591. Forster, Wallenstein’s Briefe, vol. 3., p. 30 – apud Chapman, p. 391.

[5] Michiels, Secret History of the Austrian Government, pp. 78, 79.

[6] Forster, Wallenstein’s Briefe, vol. 3., p. 199. Chemnitz, vol. 2., p. 332. Khevenhiller, vol. 12., p. 1163. Schiller, vol. 2., pp. 197-201. Michiels, Secret History, pp. 87-91. Chapman, pp. 396-398.

[7] Schiller, vol. 2., p. 221.

VOLUME THIRD- BOOK TWENTY-FIRST- CHAPTER 11

[1] Gustav. Freytag, pp. 221-223.

[2] From the Church-Book of Pastor Trumper of Dolstadt, apud Gustav. Freytag, pp. 223-227.

[3] Freytag, p. 229.

[4] Freytag, pp. 230, 231.

[5] Chapman, p. 400. Freytag, p. 235. Ludwig Hausser, vol. 2., p. 277.