THE
HISTORY OF THE FRANKS
FROM
THEIR ORIGIN TO THE DEATH
OF
CHARLEMAGNE

BY

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FIRST PART

I.

FROM THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE FRANKS TO THE DEATH OF CLOVIS

(AD. 240-511)

It is well known that the name of "Frank" is not to be found in the long list of German tribes preserved to us in the "Germania" of Tacitus. Little or nothing is heard of them before the reign of Gordian III. In AD 240 Aurelian, then a tribune of the sixth legion stationed on the Rhine, encountered a body of marauding Franks near Mayence, and drove them back into their marshes. The word "Francia" is also found at a still earlier date, in the old Roman chart called the *Charta Peutingeria*, and occupies on the map the right bank of the Rhine from opposite Coblentz to the sea. The origin of the Franks has been the subject of frequent debate, to which French patriotism has occasionally lent some asperity. At the time when they first appear in history, the Romans had neither the taste nor the means for historical research, and we are therefore obliged to depend in a great measure upon conjecture and combination. It has been disputed whether the word "Frank" was the original designation of a tribe, which by a change of habitation emerged at the period above mentioned into the light of history, or that of a new league, formed for some common object of aggression or defence, by nations hitherto familiar to us under other names.

We can in this place do little more than refer to a controversy, the value and interest of which has been rendered obsolete by the progress of historical investigation. The darkness and void of history have as usual been filled with spectral theories, which vanish at the challenge of criticism and before the gradually increasing light of knowledge.

We need hardly say that the origin of the Franks has been traced to fugitive colonists from Troy; for what nation under Heaven has not sought to connect itself, in some way or other, with the glorified heroes of the immortal song? Nor is it surprising that French writers, desirous of transferring from the Germans to themselves the honors of the Frankish name, should have made of them a tribe of Gauls, whom some unknown cause had induced to settle in Germany, and who afterwards sought to recover their ancient country from the Roman conquerors. At the present day, however, historians of every nation, including the French, are unanimous in considering the Franks as a powerful confederacy of German tribes, who in the time of Tacitus inhabited the north-western parts of Germany bordering on the Rhine. And this theory is so well supported by many scattered notices, slight in themselves, but powerful when combined, that we can only wonder that it should ever have been called in question. Nor was this aggregation of tribes under the new name of Franks a singular instance; the same took place in the case of the Alemanni and Saxons.

The actuating causes of these new unions are unknown. They may be sought for either in external circumstances, such as the pressure of powerful enemies from without, or in an extension of their own desires and plans, requiring the command of greater means, and inducing a wider co-operation of those, whose similarity of language and character rendered it most easy for them to unite. But perhaps we need look no farther for an efficient cause than the spirit of amalgamation which naturally arises among tribes of kindred race and language, when their growing numbers, and an increased facility of moving from place to place, bring them into more frequent contact. The same phenomenon may be observed at certain periods in the history of almost every nation, and the spirit which gives rise to it has generally been found strong enough to overcome the force of particular interests and petty nationalities.

The etymology of the name adopted by the new confederacy is also uncertain. The conjecture which has most probability in its favor is that adopted long ago by Gibbon, and confirmed in recent times by the authority of Grimm, which connects it with the German word Frank (free). The derivation preferred by Adelung from *frak*, with the inserted nasal, differ of Grimm only in appearance. No small countenance is given to this derivation by the constant recurrence in after times of the epithet "*truces*", "*feroces*", which the Franks were so fond of applying to themselves, and which they certainly did everything to deserve. Tacitus speaks of nearly all the tribes, whose various appellations were afterwards merged in that of Frank, as living in the neighborhood of the Rhine. Of these the principal were the Sicambri (the chief people of the old Iscaevonian tribe), who, as there is reason to believe, were identical with the Salian Franks. The confederation further comprised the Bructeri, the Ghamavi, Ansibarii, Tubantes, Marsi, and Chasuarii, of whom the five last had formerly belonged to the celebrated Cheruscan league, which, under the hero Arminius, destroyed three Roman legions in the

Teutoburgian Forest. The strongest evidence of the identity of these tribes with the Franks, is the fact that, long after their settlement in Gaul, the distinctive names of the original people were still occasionally used as synonymous with that of the confederation. The Sicambri are well known in the Roman history for their active and enterprising spirit, and the determined opposition which they offered to the greatest generals of Rome. It was on their account that Caesar bridged the Rhine in the neighborhood of Bonn, and spent eighteen days, as he informs us with significant minuteness, on the German side of that river. Drusus made a similar attempt against them with little better success. Tiberius was the first who obtained any decided advantage over them; and even he, by his own confession, was obliged to have recourse to treachery. An immense number of them were then transported by the command of Augustus to the left bank of the Rhine, "that", as the Panegyrist expresses it, "they might be compelled to lay aside not only their arms but their ferocity". That they were not, however, even then, so utterly destroyed or expatriated as the flatterers of the Emperor would have us believe, is evident from the fact that they appear again under the same name, in less than three centuries afterwards, as the most powerful tribe in the Frankish confederacy.

The league thus formed was subject to two strong motives, either of which might alone have been sufficient to impel a brave and active people into a career of migration and conquest. The first of these was necessity, the actual want of the necessaries of life for their increasing population, and the second desire, excited to the utmost by the spectacle of the wealth and civilization of the Gallic provinces.

As long as the Romans held firm possession of Gaul, the Germans could do little to gratify their longings; they could only obtain a settlement in that country by the consent of the Emperor and on certain conditions. Examples of such merely tolerated colonization were the Tribocci, the Vangiones, and the Ubii at Cologne. But when the Roman Empire began to feel the numbness of approaching dissolution, and, as is usually the case, first in its extremities, the Franks were amongst the most active and successful assailants of their enfeebled foe: and if they were attracted towards the West by the abundance they beheld of all that could relieve their necessities and gratify their lust of spoil, they were also impelled in the same direction by the Saxons, the rival league, a people as brave and perhaps more barbarous than themselves. A glance at the map of Germany of that period will do much to explain to us the migration of the Franks, and that long and bloody feud between them and the Saxons, which began with the Gatti and Cherusci and needed all the power and energy of a Charlemagne to bring to a successful close. The Saxons formed behind the Franks, and could only reach the provinces of Gaul by sea. It was natural therefore that they should look with the intensest hatred upon a people who barred their progress to a more genial climate and excluded them from their share in the spoils of the Roman world.

The Franks advanced upon Gaul from two different directions, and under the different names of Salians, and Ripuarians, the former of whom we have reason to connect more particularly with the Sicambrian tribe. The origin of the words Salian and Ripuarian, which are first used respectively by Ammianus Marcellinus and Jordanes, is very obscure, and has served to exercise the ingenuity of ethnographers. There are, however, no sufficient grounds for a decided opinion. At the same time it is by no means improbable that the river Yssel, Isala or Sal (for it has borne all these appellations), may have given its name to that portion of the Franks who lived along its course. With still greater probability may the name Ripuarii or Riparii, be derived from Ripa, a term used by the Romans to signify the Rhine. These dwellers on the Bank were those that remained in their ancient settlements while their Salian kinsmen were advancing into the heart of Gaul.

It would extend the introductory portion of this work beyond its proper limits to refer, however briefly, to all the successive efforts of the Franks to gain a permanent footing upon Roman ground. Though often defeated, they perpetually renewed the contest; and when Roman historians and panegyrists inform us that the whole nation was several times "utterly destroyed" the numbers and geographical position in which we find them a short time after every such annihilation, prove to us the vanity of such accounts. Aurelian, as we have seen, defeated them at Mayence, in AD 242, and drove them into the swamps of Holland. They were routed again about twelve years afterwards by Gallienus; but they quickly recovered from this blow, for in AD 276 we find them in possession of sixty Gallic cities, of which Probus is said to have deprived them, and to have destroyed 400,000 of them and their allies on Roman ground. In AD 280, they gave their aid to the usurper Proculus, who claimed to be of Frankish blood, but was nevertheless betrayed by them; and in AD 288, Carausius the Menapian was sent to clear the seas of their roving barks. But the latter found it more agreeable to shut his eyes to their piracies, in return for a share of the booty, and they afterwards aided in protecting him from the chastisement due to his treachery, and in investing him with the imperial purple in Britain.

In the reign of Maximian, we find a Frankish army, probably of Ripuarians, at Treves, where they were defeated by that emperor; and both he and Diocletian adopted the title of "Francicus", which

many succeeding emperors were proud to bear. The first appearance of the Salian Franks, with whom this history is chiefly concerned, is in the occupation of the Batavian Islands, in the Lower Rhine. They were attacked in that territory in AD 292, by Constantius Chlorus, who, as is said, not only drove them out of Batavia, but marched, triumphant and unopposed, through their own country as far as the Danube. The latter part of this story has little foundation either in history or probability.

The more determined and successful resistance to their progress was made by Constantine the Great, in the first part of the fourth century. We must, however, receive the extravagant accounts of the imperial annalists with considerable caution. It is evident, even from their own language, that the great emperor effected more by stratagem than by force. He found the Salians once more in Batavia, and, after defeating them in a great battle, carried off a large number of captives to Treves, the chief residence of the emperor, and a rival of Rome itself in the splendor of its public buildings.

It was in the circus of this city, and in the presence of Constantine, that the notorious "Ludi Francici" were celebrated; at which several thousand Franks, including their kings Regaisus and Ascaricus, were compelled to fight with wild beasts, to the inexpressible delight of the Christian spectators. "Those of the Frankish prisoners", says Eumenius, "whose perfidy unfitted them for military service, and their ferocity for servitude, were given to the wild beasts as a show, and wearied the raging monsters by their multitude". "This magnificent spectacle" Nazarius praises, some twenty years after it had taken place, in the most enthusiastic terms, comparing Constantine to a youthful Hercules who had strangled two serpents in the cradle of his empire. Eumenius calls it a "daily and eternal victory", and says that Constantine had erected terror as a bulwark against his barbarian enemies. This terror did not, however, prevent the Franks from taking up arms to revenge their butchered countrymen, nor the Alemanni from joining in the insurrection. The skill and fortune of Constantine generally prevailed; he destroyed great numbers of the Franks and the "*innumerae gentes*" who fought on their side, and really appears for a time to have checked their progress.

It is impossible to read the brief yet confused account of these incessant encounters between the Romans and Barbarians, without coming to the conclusion that only half the truth is told; that while every advantage gained by the former is greatly exaggerated, the successes of the latter are passed over in silence. The most glorious victory of a Roman general procures him only a few months repose, and the destruction of "hundreds of thousands" of Franks and Alemanni seems but to increase their numbers. We may fairly say of the Franks, what Julian and Eutropius have said respecting the Goths, that they were not so utterly annihilated as the panegyrists pretend, and that many of the victories gained over them cost "more money than blood".

The death of Constantine was the signal for a fresh advance on the part of the Franks. Libanius, the Greek rhetorician, when extolling the deeds of Constans, the youngest son of Constantine the Great, says that the emperor stemmed the impetuous torrent of barbarians "by a love of war even greater than their own". He also says that they received overseers; but this was no doubt on Roman ground, which would account for their submission, as we know that the Franks were more solicitous about real than nominal possession. During the frequent struggles for the Purple which took place at this period, the aid of the Franks was sought for by the different pretenders, and rewarded, in case of success, by large grants of land within the limits of the empire. The barbarians consented, in fact, to receive as a gift what had really been won by their own valor, and could not have been withheld. Even previous to the reign of Constantine, some Frankish generals had risen to high posts in the service of Roman emperors. Magnentius, himself a German, endeavored to support his usurpation by Frankish and Saxon mercenaries; and Silvanus, who was driven into rebellion by the ingratitude of Constantius, whom he had faithfully served, was a Frank.

The state of confusion into which the empire was thrown by the turbulence and insolence of the Roman armies, and the selfish ambition of their leaders, was highly favorable to the progress of the Franks in Gaul. Their next great and general movement took place in ad 355, when, along the whole Roman frontier from Strasburg to the sea, they began to cross the Rhine, and to throw themselves in vast numbers upon the Gallic provinces, with the full determination of forming permanent settlements. But again the relenting fates of Rome raised up a hero in the person of the Emperor Julian, worthy to have lived in the most glorious period of her history. After one or two unsuccessful efforts, Julian succeeded in retaking Cologne and other places, which the Germans, true to their traditionary hatred of walled towns, had laid bare of all defenses.

In the last general advance of the Franks in ad 355, the Salians had not only once more recovered Batavia, but had spread into Toxandria, in which they firmly fixed themselves. It is important to mark the date of this event, because it was at this time that the Salians made their first permanent settlement on the left bank of the Rhine, and by the acquisition of Toxandria laid the foundation of the kingdom of Clovis. Julian indeed attacked them there in ad 358, but he had probably

good reasons for not reducing them to despair, as we find that they were permitted to retain their newly acquired lands, on condition of acknowledging themselves subjects of the empire.

He was better pleased to have them as soldiers than as enemies, and they, having felt the weight of his arm, were by no means averse to serve in his ranks, and to enrich themselves by the plunder of the East. Once in undisputed possession of Toxandria, they gradually spread themselves further and further, until, at the beginning of the fifth century, we find them occupying the left bank of the Rhine; as may safely be inferred from the fact that Tongres, Arras, and Amiens are mentioned as the most northern of the Roman stations. At this time they reached Tournai, which became henceforth the chief town of the Salian Franks. The Ripuarians, meanwhile, were extending themselves from Andernach downwards along the middle Rhine, and gained possession of Cologne about the time of the conquest of Tournai by their Salian brethren. On the left of the river they held all that part of Germania Secunda which was not occupied by the Salians. In Belgica Secunda, they spread themselves as far as the Moselle, but were not yet in possession of Treves, as we gather from the frequent assaults made by them upon that city. The part of Gaul therefore now subject to the Ripuarians was bounded on the north-west by the Silva Carbonaria, or Kolhenwald; on the south-west by the Meuse and the forest of Ardennes; and on the south by the Moselle.

We shall be the less surprised that some of the fairest portions of the Roman Empire should thus fall an almost unresisting prey to barbarian invaders, when we remember that the defence of the empire itself was sometimes committed to the hands of Frankish soldiers. Those of the Franks who were already settled in Gaul, were often engaged in endeavoring to drive back the ever-increasing multitude of fresh barbarians, who hurried across the Rhine to share in the bettered fortunes of their kinsmen, or even to plunder them of their newly-acquired riches. Thus Mallobaudes, who is called king of the Franks, and held the office of *Domesticorum Comes* under Gratian, commanded in the Imperial army which defeated the Alemanni at Argentaria. And, again, in the short reign of Maximus, who assumed the purple in Gaul, Spain, and Britain, near the end of the fourth century, we are told that three Frankish kings, Genobaudes, Marcomeres, and Sunno, crossed the Lower Rhine, and plundered the country along the river as far as Cologne; although the whole of Northern Gaul was already in possession of their countrymen. The generals Nonnius and Quintinus, whom Maximus had left behind him at Treves, the seat of the Imperial government in Gaul, hastened to Cologne, from which the marauding Franks had already retired with their booty. Quintinus crossed the Rhine, in pursuit, at Neus, and, unmindful of the fate of Varus in the Teutoburgian wood, followed the retreating enemy into the morasses. The Franks, once more upon friendly and familiar ground, turned upon their pursuers, and are said to have destroyed nearly the whole Roman army with poisoned arrows.

The war continued, and was only brought to a successful conclusion for the Romans by the courage and conduct of Arbogastes, a Frank in the service of Theodosius. Unable to make peace with his barbarous countrymen, and sometimes defeated by them, this general crossed the Rhine when the woods were leafless, ravaged the country of the Chamavi, Bructeri, and Catti, and having slain two of their chiefs named Priam and Genobaudes, compelled Marcomeres and Sunno to give hostages. The submission of the Franks must have been of short continuance, for we read that in ad 398 these same kings, Marcomeres and Sunno, were again found ravaging the left bank of the Rhine by Stilicho. This famous warrior defeated them in a great battle, and sent the former, or perhaps both of them, in chains to Italy, where Marcomeres died in prison.

The first few years of the fifth century are occupied in the struggle between Alaric the Goth and Stilicho, which ended in the sacking of Rome by the former in the year 410 ad, the same in which he died.

While the Goths were inflicting deadly wounds on the very heart of the empire, the distant provinces of Germany and Gaul presented a scene of indescribable confusion. Innumerable hosts of Astingians, Vandals, Alani, Suevi, and Burgundians, threw themselves like robbers upon the prostrate body of Imperial Rome, and scrambled for the gems which fell from her costly diadem. In such a storm the Franks could no longer sustain the part of champions of the empire, but doubtless had enough to do to defend themselves and hold their own. We can only guess at the fortune which befell the nations in that dark period, from the state in which we find them when the glimmering light of history once more dawns upon the chaos.

Of the internal state of the Frankish league in these times, we learn from ancient authorities absolutely nothing on which we can safely depend. The blank is filled up by popular fable. It is in this period, about 417 ad, that the reign of Pharamond is placed, of whom we may more than doubt whether he ever existed at all. To this hero was afterwards ascribed, not only the permanent conquests made at this juncture by the various tribes of Franks, but the establishment of the monarchy, and the collection and publication of the well-known Salic laws. The sole foundation for this complete and

harmonious fabric is a passage interpolated into an ancient chronicle of the fifth century; and, with this single exception, Pharamond's name is never mentioned before the seventh century. The whole story is perfected and rounded off by the author of the "*Gesta Francorum*", according to whom, Pharamond was the son of Marcomeres, the prince who ended his days in the Italian prison. The fact that nothing is known of him by Gregory of Tours or Fredegarius is sufficient to prevent our regarding him as an historical personage. To this may be added that he is not mentioned in the prologue of the Salic law, with which his name has been so intimately associated by later writers.

Though well authenticated names of persons and places fail us at this time, it is not difficult to conjecture what must have been the main facts of the case. Great changes took place among the Franks, in the first half of the fifth century, which did much to prepare them for their subsequent career. The greater portion of them had been mere marauders, like their German brethren of other nations: they now began to assume the character of settlers; and as the idea of founding an extensive empire was still far from their thoughts, they occupied in preference the lands which lay nearest to their ancient homes. There are many incidental reasons which make this change in their mode of life a natural and inevitable one. The country whose surface had once afforded a rich and easily collected booty, and well repaid the hasty foray of weeks, and even days, had been stripped of its movable wealth by repeated incursions of barbarians still fiercer than themselves. All that was above the surface the Alan and the Vandal had swept away, the treasures which remained had to be sought for with the plough. The Franks were compelled to turn their attention to that agriculture which their indolent and warlike fathers had hated; which required fixed settlements, and all the laws of property and person indissolubly connected therewith. Again, though there is no sufficient reason to connect the Salic laws with the mythical name of Pharamond, or to suppose that they were altogether the work of this age (since we know from Tacitus that the Germans had similar laws in their ancient forests), yet it is very probable was insufficiently defended, he advanced upon that city, and succeeded in taking it. After spending a few days within the walls of his new acquisition, he marched as far as the river Somme. His progress was checked by Aetius and Majorian, who surprised him in the neighborhood of Arras, at a place called Helena (Lens), while celebrating a marriage, and forced him to retire. Yet at the end of the war, the Franks remained in full possession of the country which Clodion had overrun; and the Somme became the boundary of the Salian land upon the south-west, as it continued to be until the time of Clovis.

Clodion died in AD 448, and was thus saved from the equally pernicious alliance or enmity of the ruthless conqueror Attila. This "Scourge of God", as he delighted to be called, appeared in Gaul about the year 450 AD, at the head of an innumerable host of mounted Huns; a race so singular in their aspect and habits as to seem scarcely human, and compared with whom, the wildest Franks and Goths must have appeared rational and civilized beings.

The time of Attila's descent upon the Rhine was well chosen for the prosecution of his scheme of universal dominion. Between the fragment of the Roman Empire, governed by Aetius, and the Franks under the successors of Clodion, there was either open war or a hollow truce. The succession to the chief power in the Salian tribe was the subject of a violent dispute between two Frankish princes, the elder of whom is supposed by some to have been called Merovaeus. We have seen reason to doubt the existence of a prince of this name; and there is no evidence that either of the rival candidates was a son of Clodion. Whatever their parentage or name may have been, the one took part with Attila, and the other with the Roman Aetius, on condition, no doubt, of having their respective claims allowed and supported by their allies. In the bloody and decisive battle of the Catalaunian Fields round Châlons, Franks, under the name of Leti and Ripuarii, served under the so-called Merovaeus in the army of Aetius, together with Theodoric and his Visigoths. Among the forces of Attila another body of Franks was arrayed, either by compulsion, or instigated to this unnatural course by the fierce hatred of party spirit. From the result of the battle of Châlons, we must suppose that the ally of Aetius succeeded to the throne of Clodion.

The effects of the invasion of Gaul by Attila were neither great nor lasting, and his retreat left the German and Roman parties in much the same condition as he found them. The Roman Empire indeed was at an end in that province, yet the valor and wisdom of Egidius enabled him to maintain, as an independent chief, the authority which he had faithfully exercised, as Master-General of Gaul, under the noble and virtuous Magorian. The extent of his territory is not clearly defined, but it must have been, in part at least, identical with that of which his son and successor, Syagrius, was deprived by Clovis. Common opinion limits this to the country between the Oise, the Marne, and the Seine, to which some writers have added Auxerre and Troyes. The respect in which Egidius was held by the Franks, as well as his own countrymen, enabled him to set at defiance the threats and machinations of the barbarian Ricimer, who virtually ruled at Rome, though in another's name. The strongest proof of the high opinion they entertained of the merits of Egidius, is said to have been given by the Salians in

the reign of their next king. The prince, to whom the name Merovaeus has been arbitrarily assigned, was succeeded by his son Childeric, in AD 456. The conduct of this licentious youth was such as to disgust and alienate his subjects, who had not yet ceased to value female honor, nor adopted the loose manners of the Romans and their Gallic imitators. The authority of the Salian kings over the fierce warriors of their tribe was held by a precarious tenure. The loyalty which distinguished the Franks in later times had not yet arisen in their minds, and they did not scruple to send the corrupter of their wives and daughters into ignominious exile. Childeric took refuge with Bissinus (or Bassinus), king of the Thuringians, a people dwelling on the river Unstrut. It was then that the Franks, according to the somewhat improbable account of Gregory, unanimously chose Egidius for their king, and actually submitted to his rule for the space of eight years. At the end of that period, returning affection for their native prince, the mere love of change, or the machinations of a party, induced the Franks to recall Childeric from exile, or, at all events, to allow him to return. Whatever may have been the cause of his restoration, it does not appear to have been the consequence of an improvement in his morals. The period of his exile had been characteristically employed in the seduction of Basina, the wife of his hospitable protector at the Thuringian Court. This royal lady, whose character may perhaps do something to diminish the guilt of Childeric in our eyes, was unwilling to be left behind on the restoration of her lover to his native country. Scarcely had he re-established his authority when he was unexpectedly followed by Basina, whom he immediately married. The offspring of this questionable alliance was Clovis, who was born in the year 466. The remainder of Childeric's reign was chiefly spent in a struggle with the Visigoths, in which Franks and Romans, under their respective leaders, Childeric and Egidius, were amicably united against the common foe.

"THE ELDEST SON OF THE CHURCH" - DIVISIONS OF GAUL.

We hasten to the reign of Clovis, who, during a rule of about thirty years, not only united the various tribes of Franks under one powerful dynasty, and founded a kingdom in Gaul on a broad and enduring basis, but made his throne the center of union to by far the greater portion of the whole German race.

When Clovis succeeded his father as king of the Salians, at the early age of fifteen, the extent of his territory and the number of his subjects were, as we know, extremely small; at his death, he left to his successors a kingdom more extensive than that of modern France.

The influence of the grateful partiality discernible in the works of Catholic historians and chroniclers towards "the Eldest Son of the Church", who secured for them the victory over heathens on the one side, and heretics on the other, prevents us from looking to them for an unbiassed estimate of his character. Many of his crimes appeared to be committed in the cause of Catholicity itself, and these they could hardly see in their proper light. Pagans and Arians would have painted him in different colors; and had any of their works come down to us, we might have sought the truth between the positive of partiality and the negative of hatred. But fortunately, while the chroniclers praise his actions in the highest terms, they tell us what those actions were, and thus compel us to form a very different judgment from their own. It would not be easy to extract from the pages of his greatest admirers the slightest evidence of his possessing any qualities but those which are necessary to a conqueror. In the hands of Providence he was an instrument of the greatest good to the country he subdued, inasmuch as he freed it from the curse of division into petty states, and furthered the spread of Christianity in the very heart of Europe. But of any word or action that could make us admire or love the man, there is not a single trace in history. His undeniable courage is debased by a degree of cruelty unusual even in his times; and the consummate skill and prudence, which did more to raise him to his high position than even his military qualities, are rendered odious by the forms they take of unscrupulous falsehood, meanness, cunning and hypocrisy.

It will add to the perspicuity of our brief narrative of the conquests of Clovis, if we pause for a moment to consider the extent and situation of the different portions into which Gaul was divided at his accession.

There were in all six independent states: 1st, that of the Salians; 2nd, that of the Ripuarians; 3rd, that of the Visigoths; 4th, that of the Burgundians; 5th, the kingdom of Syagrius; and, 6th, Armorica (by which the whole sea-coast between Seine and Loire was then signified). Of the two first we have already spoken. The Visigoths held the whole of Southern Gaul. Their boundary to the north was the river Loire, and to the east the Pagus Vellavus (Auvergne).

The boundary of the Burgundians on the side of Roman Gaul, was the Pagus Lingonicus (Upper Marne); to the west they were bounded by the territory of the Visigoths, as above described.

The territory still held by the Romans was divided into two parts, of which the one was held by Syagrius, who, according to common opinion, only ruled the country between Oise, Marne, and Seine;

to this some writers have added Auxerre, Troyes, and Orleans. The other — viz., that portion of Roman Gaul not subject to Syagrius—is of uncertain extent. Armorica (Bretagne and Maine), was an independent state, inhabited by Britons and Saxons; but what was its form of government is not exactly known. It is important to bear these geographical divisions in mind, because they coincide with the successive Frankish conquests made under Clovis and his sons.

CLOVIS ATTACKS SYAGRIUS.

It would be unphilosophical to ascribe to Clovis a preconceived plan of making himself master of these several independent states, and of not only overthrowing the sole remaining pillar of the Roman Empire in Gaul, but, what was far more difficult, of subduing other German tribes, as fierce and independent, and in some cases more numerous than his own. In what he did, he was merely gratifying a passion for the excitements of war and acquisition, and that desire of expanding itself to its utmost limits, which is natural to every active, powerful, and imperious mind. He must indeed have been more than human to foresee, through all the obstacles that lay in his path, the career he was destined by Providence to run. He was not even master of the whole Salian tribe; and besides the Salians, there were other Franks on the Rhine, the Scheldt, the Meuse, and the Moselle, in no way inferior to his own subjects, and governed by kings of the same family as himself. Nor was Syagrius, to whom the anomalous power of his father Egidius had descended, a despicable foe. His merits, indeed, were rather those of an able lawyer and a righteous judge than of a warrior; but he had acquired by his civil virtues a reputation which made him an object of envy to Clovis, who dreaded perhaps the permanent establishment of a Roman dynasty in Gaul. There were reasons for attacking Syagrius first, which can hardly have escaped the cunning of Clovis, and which doubtless guided him in the choice of his earliest victim. The very integrity of the noble Roman's character was one of these reasons. Had Clovis commenced the work of destruction by attacking his kinsmen Sigebert of Cologne and Ragnachar of Cambrai, he would not only have received no aid from Syagrius in his unrighteous aggression, but might have found him ready to oppose it. But against Syagrius it was easy for Clovis to excite the national spirit of his brother Franks, both in and out of his own territory. In such an expedition, even had the kings declined to take an active part, he might reckon on crowds of volunteers from every Frankish *gau*.

As soon therefore as he had emerged from the forced inactivity of extreme youth (a period in which, fortunately for him, he was left undisturbed by his less grasping and unscrupulous neighbors), he determined to bring the question of pre-eminence between the Franks and Romans to as early an issue as possible. Without waiting for a plausible ground of quarrel, he challenged Syagrius, more Germanico, to the field, that their respective fates might be determined by the God of Battles. Ragnachar of Cambrai was solicited to accompany his treacherous relative on this expedition, and agreed to do so. Ghararich, another Frankish prince, whose alliance had been looked for, preferred waiting until fortune had decided, with the prudent intention of siding with the winner, and coming fresh into the field in time to spoil the vanquished.

Syagrius was at Soissons, which he had inherited from his father, when Clovis, with characteristic decision and rapidity, passed through the wood of Ardennes, and fell upon him with resistless force. The Roman was completely defeated, and the victor, having taken possession of Soissons, Rheims, and other Roman towns in the Belgica Secunda, extended his frontier to the river Loire, the boundary of the Visigoths. This battle took place in AD 486.

We know little or nothing of the materials of which the Roman army was composed. If it consisted entirely of Gauls, accustomed to depend on Roman aid, and destitute of the spirit of freemen, the ease with which Syagrius was defeated will cause us less surprise. Having lost all in a single battle, the unfortunate Roman fled for refuge to Toulouse, the court of Alaric, king of the Visigoths, who basely yielded him to the threats of the youthful conqueror. But one fate awaited those who stood in the way of Clovis: Syagrius was immediately put to death, less in anger, than from the calculating policy which guided all the movements of the Salian's unfeeling heart.

During the next ten years after the death of Syagrius, there is less to relate of Clovis than might be expected from the commencement of his career. We cannot suppose that such a spirit was really at rest: he was probably nursing his strength, and watching his opportunities; for, with all his impetuosity, he was not a man to engage in an undertaking without good assurance of success.

Almost the only expedition of this inactive period of his life, is one recorded in a doubtful passage by Gregory of Tours, as having been made against the Tongrians. This people lived in the ancient country of the Eburones, on the Elbe, and had formerly been subjects of his mother Basina. The Tongrians were defeated, and their territory was, nominally at least, incorporated with the kingdom of Clovis.

ALEMANNI DEFEATED AT ZÜLPICH - CONVERSION OF CLOVIS.

In the year 496 AD the Salians began that career of conquest, which they followed up with scarcely any intermission until the death of their warrior king.

The Alemanni, extending themselves from their original seats on the right bank of the Rhine, between the Main and the Danube, had pushed forward into Germanica Prima, where they came into collision with the Frankish subjects of King Sigebert of Cologne. Clovis flew to the assistance of his kinsman, and defeated the Alemanni in a great battle in the neighborhood of Zülpich. He then established a considerable number of his Franks in the territory of the Alamanni, the traces of whose residence are found in the names of Franconia and Frankfort.

The same year is rendered remarkable in ecclesiastical history by the conversion of Clovis to Christianity. In AD 493, he had married Clothildis, Chilperic the king of Burgundy's daughter, who, being herself a Christian, was naturally anxious to turn away her warlike spouse from the rude faith of his forefathers. The real result of her endeavors it is impossible to estimate, but, at all events, she has not received from history the credit of success. The mere suggestions of an affectionate wife would be considered as too simple and prosaic a means of accounting for a change involving such mighty consequences. The conversion of Clovis was so vitally important to the interests of the Catholic Church, that the chroniclers of that wonder-loving age, profuse in the employment of extraordinary means for the smallest ends, could never be brought to believe that this great event was the result of anything but a miracle of the most public and striking character.

The way in which the convictions of Clovis were changed is unknown to us, but there were natural agencies at work, and his conversion is not, under the circumstances, a thing to excite surprise. According to the common belief, however, in the Roman Church, it was in the battle of Zülpich that the heart of Clovis, callous to the pious solicitude of his wife, and the powerful and alluring influence of the catholic ritual, was touched by a special interposition of Providence in his behalf. When the fortune of the battle seemed turning against him, he thought of the God whom his wife adored, of whose power and majesty he had heard so much, and vowed that if he escaped the present danger, and came off victorious, he would suffer himself to be baptized, and become the champion of the Christian Faith. Like another Constantine, he saw written on the face of Heaven that his prayer was heard; he conquered, and fulfilled his promise at Christmas in the same year, when Remigius at Rheims, with three thousand of his followers.

The sincerity of Clovis's conversion has been called in question for many reasons, such as the unsuit ability of his subsequent life to Christian principles, but chiefly on the ground of the many political advantages to be derived from a public profession of the Catholic Faith. We are too ready with such explanations of the actions of distinguished characters, too apt to forget that politicians are also men, and to overlook the very powerful influences which lie nearer to their hearts than even political calculation. A spirit was abroad in the world, drawing men away from the graves of a dead faith to the life and light of the Gospel, a spirit which not even the coldest and sternest heart could altogether resist. There was something, too, peculiarly imposing in the attitude of the Christian Church at that period. All else in the Roman world seemed dying of mere weakness and old age—the Christian Church was still in the vigor of youth, and its professors were animated by indomitable perseverance and boundless zeal. All else fell down in terror before the Barbarian conqueror—the fabric of the Church seemed indestructible, and its ministers stood erect in his presence, as if depending for strength and aid upon a power, which was the more terrible, because indefinite in its nature and uncertain in its mode of operation.

Nor were there wanting to the Catholic Church, even at that stage of its development, those external means of influence which tell with peculiar force upon the barbarous and untutored mind. The emperors of the Roman world had reared its temples, adorned its shrines, and regulated its services, in a manner which seemed to them best suited to the majesty of Heaven and their own. Its altars were served by men distinguished by their learning, and by that indestructible dignity of deportment, which is derived from conscious superiority. The praises of God were chanted forth in well-chosen words and impressive tones, or sung in lofty strains by tutored voices; while incense rose to the vaulted aisle, as if to bear the prayers of the kneeling multitude to the very gates of Paradise.

And Clovis was as likely to be worked upon by such means as the meanest of his followers. We must not suppose that the discrepancy between his Christian profession and his public and private actions, which we discern so clearly, was equally evident to himself. How should it be so? His own conscience was not specially enlightened beyond the measure of his age. The bravest warriors of his nation hailed him as a patriot and hero, and the ministers of God assured him that his victories were won in the service of Truth and Heaven. It is always dangerous to judge of the sincerity of men's religious—perhaps we should say theological—convictions by the tenor of their moral conduct, and this

even in our own age and nation; but far more so in respect to men of other times and countries, at a different stage of civilization and religious development, at which the scale of morality was not only lower, but differently graduated from our own.

The conscience of a Clovis remained undisturbed in the midst of deeds whose enormity makes us shudder; and, on the other band, how trivial in our eyes are some of those offences which loaded him with the heaviest sense of guilt! The eternal laws of the God of justice and mercy might be broken with impunity; and what we should call the basest treachery and the most odious cruelty, employed to compass the destruction of an heretical or pagan enemy; but woe to him who offended St. Martin, or laid a finger on the property of the meanest of his servants! When Clovis was seeking to gratify his lust of power, he believed, no doubt, that he was at the same time fighting under the banner of Christ, and destroying the enemies of God. And no wonder, for many a priest and bishop thought the same, and told him what they thought.

We are, however, far from affirming that the political advantages to be gained from an open avowal of the Catholic Faith at this juncture escaped the notice of so astute a mind as that of Clovis. No one was more sensible of those advantages than he was. The immediate consequences were indeed apparently disastrous. He was himself fearful of the effect which his change of religion might have upon his Franks, and we are told that many of them left him and joined his kinsman Ragnarich. But the ill effects, though immediate, were slight and transient, while the good results went on accumulating from year to year. In the first place, his baptism into the Catholic Church conciliated for him the zealous affection of his Gallo-Roman subjects, whose number and wealth, and, above all, whose superior knowledge and intelligence, rendered their aid of the utmost value. With respect to his own Franks, we are justified in supposing that, removed as they were from the sacred localities with which their faith was intimately connected, they either viewed the change with indifference, or, wavering between old associations and present influences, needed only the example of the king to decide their choice, and induce them to enlist under the banner of the Cross.

The German neighbors of Clovis had either preserved their ancient faith or adopted the Arian heresy. His conversion therefore was advantageous or disadvantageous to him, as regarded them, according to the objects he had in view. Had he really desired to live with his compatriot kings on terms of equality and friendship, his reception into a hostile Church would certainly not have furthered his views. But nothing was more foreign to his thoughts than friendship and alliance with any of the neighboring tribes. His desire was to reduce them all to a state of subjection to himself. He had the genuine spirit of the conqueror, which cannot brook the sight of independence; and his keen intellect and unflinching boldness enabled him to see his advantages and to turn them to the best account.

Even in those countries in which Heathenism or Arian Christianity prevailed, there was generally a zealous and united community of Catholic Christians (including all the Romance inhabitants), who, being outnumbered and sometimes persecuted, were inclined to look for aid abroad. Clovis became by his conversion the object of hope and attachment to such a party in almost every country on the continent of Europe. He had the powerful support of the whole body of the Catholic clergy, in whose hearts the interests of their Church far outweighed all other considerations. In other times and lands (in our own for instance) the spirit of loyalty and the love of country have often sufficed to counteract the influence of theological opinions, and have made men patriots in the hour of trial, when their spiritual allegiance to an alien head tempted them to be traitors. But what patriotism could Gallo-Romans feel, who for ages had been the slaves of slaves? or what loyalty to barbarian oppressors, whom they despised as well as feared?

The happy effects of Clovis's conversion were not long in showing themselves. In the very next year after that event (AD 497) the Armoricans, inhabiting the country between the Seine and Loire, who had stoutly defended themselves against the heathen Franks, submitted with the utmost readiness to the royal convert whom bishops delighted to honor; and in almost every succeeding struggle the advantages he derived from the strenuous support of the Catholic party become more and more clearly evident.

BATTLE OF VOUGLÉ

In AD 500 Clovis reduced the Burgundians to a state of semi-dependence, after a fierce and bloody battle with Gundobald, their king, at Dijon on the Ousche. In this conflict, as in almost every other, Clovis attained his ends in a great measure by turning to account the dissensions of his enemies. Gundobald had called upon his brother Godegisil, who ruled over one division of their tribe, to aid him in repelling the attack of the Franks. The call was answered, in appearance at least; but in the decisive struggle Godegisil, according to a secret understanding, deserted with all his forces to the enemy. Gundobald was of course defeated, and submitted to conditions which, however galling to his pride and patriotism, could not have been very severe, since we find him immediately afterwards punishing

the treachery of his brother, whom be besieged in the city of Vienne, and put to death in an Arian Church.

The circumstances of the times, rather than the moderation of Clovis, prevented him from calling Gundobald to account. A far more arduous struggle was at hand, which needed all the wily Salian's resources of power and policy to bring to a successful issue—the struggle with the powerful king and people of the Visigoths, whose immediate neighbor he had become after the voluntary submission of the Armoricans in AD 497. The valor and conduct of their renowned king Euric had put the Western Goths in full possession of all that portion of Gaul which lay between the rivers Loire and Rhone, together with nearly the whole of Spain. That distinguished monarch had lately been succeeded by his son Alaric II, who was now in the flower of youth. It was in the war with this ill-starred prince—the most difficult and doubtful in which he had been engaged—that Clovis experienced the full advantages of his recent change of faith. King Euric, who was an Arian, wise and great as he appears to have been in many respects, had alienated the affections of multitudes of his people by persecuting the Catholic minority; and though the same charge does not appear to lie against Alaric, it is evident that the hearts of his orthodox subjects beat with no true allegiance towards their heretical king. The baptism of Clovis had turned their eyes towards him, as one who would not only free them from the persecution of their theological enemies, but procure for them and their Church a speedy victory and a secure predominance. The hopes they had formed, and the aid they were ready to afford him, were not unknown to Clovis, whose eager rapacity was only checked by the consideration of the part which his brother-in-law Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, was likely to take in the matter. This great and enlightened Goth, whose refined magnificence renders the contemptuous sense in which we use the term Gothic more than usually inappropriate, was ever ready to mediate between kindred tribes of Germans, whom on every suitable occasion he exhorted to live in unity, mindful of their common origin. He is said on this occasion to have brought about a meeting between Clovis and Alaric on a small island in the Loire in the neighborhood of Amboise. The story is very doubtful, to say the least. Had he done so much, he would probably have done more, and have shielded his youthful kinsman with his strong right arm. Whatever he did was done in vain. The Frankish conqueror knew his own advantages and determined to use them to the utmost. He received the aid not only of his kinsman Sigebert of Cologne, who sent an army to his support under Ghararich, but of the king of the Burgundians, who was also a Catholic. With an army thus united by a common faith, inspired by religious zeal, and no less so by the Frankish love of booty, Clovis marched to almost certain victory over an inexperienced leader and a kingdom divided against itself.

It is evident from the language of Gregory of Tours, that this conflict between the Franks and Visigoths was regarded by the orthodox party of his own and preceding ages as a religious war, on which, humanly speaking, the prevalence of the Catholic or the Arian creed in Western Europe depended. Clovis did everything in his power to deepen this impression. He could not, he said, endure the thought that "those Arians" held a part of his beautiful Gaul. As he passed through the territory of Tours, which was supposed to be under the peculiar protection of St. Martin, he was careful to preserve the strictest discipline among his soldiers, that he might further conciliate the Church and sanctify his undertaking. On his arrival at the city of Tours, he publicly displayed his reverence for the patron saint, and received the thanks and good wishes of a whole chorus of priests assembled in St. Martin's Church. He was guided (according to one of the legends by which his progress has been so profusely adorned) through the swollen waters of the river Vienne by "a hind of wonderful magnitude"; and, as he approached the city of Poitiers, a pillar of fire (whose origin we may trace, as suits our views, to the favor of heaven or the treachery of man) shone forth from the cathedral, to give him the assurance of success, and to throw light upon his nocturnal march. The Catholic bishops in the kingdom of Alaric were universally favorable to the cause of Clovis, and several of them, who had not the patience to postpone the manifestation of their sympathies, were expelled by Alaric from their sees. The majority indeed made a virtue of necessity, and prayed continually and loudly, if not sincerely, for their lawful monarch. Perhaps they had even in that age learned to appreciate the efficacy of mental reservation.

Conscious of his own weakness, Alaric retired before his terrible and implacable foe, in the vain hope of receiving assistance from the Ostrogoths. He halted at last in the plains of Vouglé, behind Poitiers, but even then rather in compliance with the wishes of his soldiers than from his own deliberate judgment. His soldiers, drawn from a generation as yet unacquainted with war, and full of that overweening confidence which results from inexperience, were eager to meet the enemy. Treachery, also, was at work to prevent him from adopting the only means of safety, which lay in deferring as long as possible the too unequal contest. The Franks came on with their usual impetuosity, and with a well-founded confidence in their own prowess; and the issue of the battle was in accordance with the auspices on either side. Clovis, no less strenuous in actual fight than wise and cunning in council, exposed himself to every danger, and fought hand to hand with Alaric himself. Yet

the latter was not slain in the field, but in the disorderly flight into which the Goths were quickly driven. The victorious Franks pursued them as far as Bordeaux, where Clovis passed the winter, while Theodoric, his son, was overrunning Auvergne, Quincy, and Rovergne. The Goths, whose new king was a minor, made no further resistance; and in the following year the Salian chief took possession of the royal treasure at Toulouse. He also took the town of Angouleme, at the capture of which he was doubly rewarded for his services to the Church, for not only did the inhabitants of that place rise in his favor against the Visigothic garrison, but the very walls, like those of Jericho, fell down at his approach!

A short time after these events, Clovis received the titles and dignity of Roman Patricius and Consul from the Greek Emperor Anastasius; who appears to have been prompted to this act more by motives of jealousy and hatred towards Theodoric the Ostrogoth, than by any love he bore the restless and encroaching Frank. The meaning of these obsolete titles, as applied to those who stood in no direct relation to either division of the Roman Empire, has never been sufficiently explained. We are at first surprised that successful warriors and powerful kings like Clovis, Pepin, and Charlemagne himself, should condescend to accept such empty honors at the hands of the miserable eunuch-ridden monarchs of the East. That the Byzantine Emperors should affect a superiority over contemporary sovereigns is intelligible enough; the weakest idiot among them, who lived at the mercy of his women and his slaves, had never resigned one title of his pretensions to that universal empire which an Augustus and a Trajan once possessed. But whence the acquiescence of Clovis and his great successors in this arrogant assumption? We may best account for it by remarking how long the prestige of power survives the strength that gave it. The sun of Rome was set, but the twilight of her greatness still rested on the world. The German kings and warriors received with pleasure, and wore with pride, a title which brought them into connection with that imperial city, of whose universal dominion, of whose skill in arms and arts, the traces lay everywhere around them.

Nor was it without some solid advantages in the circumstances in which Clovis was placed. He ruled over a vast population, which had not long ceased to be subjects of the Empire, and still rejoiced in the Roman name. He fully appreciated their intellectual superiority, and had already experienced the value of their assistance. Whatever, therefore, tended to increase his personal dignity in their eyes (and no doubt the solemn proclamation of his Roman titles had this tendency) was rightly deemed by him of no small importance.

In the same year that he was invested with the diadem and purple robe in the church of St. Martin at Tours the encroaching Franks had the southern and eastern limits of their kingdom marked out for them by the powerful hand of Theodoric the Great. The brave but peace-loving Goth had trusted too much to his influence with Clovis, and had hoped to the last to save the unhappy Alaric, by warning and mediation. The slaughter of the Visigoths, the death of Alaric himself, the fall of Angouleme and Toulouse, the advance of the Franks upon the Rhone, where they were now besieging Arles, had effectually undeceived him. He now prepared to bring forward the only arguments to which the ear of a Clovis is ever open, the battle-cry of a superior army. His faithful Ostrogoths were summoned to meet in the month of June, AD 508, and he placed a powerful army under the command of Eva (Ibba or Hebba), who led his forces into Gaul over the southern Alps. The Franks and Burgundians, who were investing Arles and Carcassonne, raised the siege and retired, but whether without or in consequence of a battle, is rendered doubtful by the conflicting testimony of the annalists. The subsequent territorial position of the combatants, however, favors the account that a battle did take place, in which Clovis and his allies received a most decided and bloody defeat.

The check thus given to the extension of his kingdom at the expense of other German nations, and the desire perhaps of collecting fresh strength for a more successful struggle hereafter, seem to have induced Clovis to turn his attention to the destruction of his Merovingian kindred. The manner in which he effected his purpose is related with a fullness which naturally excites suspicion. But though it is easy to detect both absurdity and inconsistency in many of the romantic details with which Gregory has furnished us, we see no reason to deny to his statements a foundation of historical truth.

CLOVIS AND HIS KINSMEN.

Clovis was still but one of several Frankish kings; and of these Sigebert of Cologne, king of the Ripuarians, was little inferior to him in the extent of his dominions and the number of his subjects. But in other respects—in mental activity and bodily prowess—"the lame" Sigebert was no match for his Salian brother. The other Frankish rulers were, Chararich, of whom mention has been made in connection with Syagrius, and Ragnachar (or Ragnachas), who held his court at Cambrai. The kingdom of Sigebert extended along both banks of the Rhine, from Mayence down to Cologne; to the west along the Moselle as far as Treves; and on the east to the river Fulda and the borders of Thuringia. The Franks who occupied this country are supposed to have taken possession of it in the reign of Valentinian III, when Mayence, Cologne, and Treves, were conquered by a host of Ripuarians.

Sigebert, as we have seen, had come to the aid of Clovis, in two very important battles with the Alemanni and the Visigoths, and had shown himself a ready and faithful friend whenever his co-operation was required. But gratitude was not included among the graces of the champion of Catholicity, who only waited for a suitable opportunity to deprive his ally of throne and life. The present juncture was favorable to his wishes, and enabled him to rid himself of his benefactor in a manner peculiarly suited to his taste. An attempt to conquer the kingdom of Cologne by force of arms would have been but feebly seconded by his own subjects, and would have met with a stout resistance from the Ripuarians, who were conscious of no inferiority to the Salian tribe. His efforts were therefore directed to the destruction of the royal house, the downfall of which was hastened by internal divisions. Clotaire (or Clotarich), the expectant heir of Sigebert, weary of hope deferred, gave a ready ear to the hellish suggestions of Clovis, who urged him, by the strongest appeals to his ambition and cupidity, to the murder of his father. Sigebert was slain by his own son in the Buchonian Forest near Fulda. The wretched parricide endeavored to secure the further connivance of his tempter, by offering him a share of the blood-stained treasure he had acquired. But Clovis, whose part in the transaction was probably unknown, affected a feeling of horror at the unnatural crime, and procured the immediate assassination of Clotaire; an act which rid him of a rival, silenced an embarrassing accomplice, and tended rather to raise than to lower him in the opinion of the Ripuarians. It is not surprising, therefore, that when Clovis proposed himself as the successor of Sigebert, and promised the full recognition of all existing rights, his offer should be joyfully accepted. In AD 509 he was elected king by the Ripuarians, and raised upon a shield in the city of Cologne, according to the Frankish custom, amid general acclamation.

"And thus", says Gregory of Tours, in the same chapter in which he relates the twofold murder of his kindred, "God daily prostrated his enemies before him and increased his kingdom, because he walked before him with an upright heart, and did what was pleasing in his eyes!"—so completely did his services to the Catholic Church conceal his moral deformities from the eyes of even the best of the ecclesiastical historians.

To the destruction of his next victim, Chararich, whose power was far less formidable than that of Sigebert, he was impelled by vengeance as well as ambition. That cautious prince, instead of joining the other Franks in their attack upon Syagrius, had stood aloof and waited upon fortune. Yet we can hardly attribute the conduct of Clovis towards him chiefly to revenge, for his most faithful ally had been his earliest victim; and friend and foe were alike to him, if they did but cross the path of his ambition. After getting possession of Chararich and his son, by tampering with their followers, Clovis compelled them to cut off their royal locks and become priests; subsequently, however, he caused them to be put to death.

Ragnachar of Cambrai, whose kingdom lay to the north of the Somme, and extended through Flanders and Artois, might have proved a more formidable antagonist, had he not become unpopular among his own subjects by the disgusting licentiousness of his manners. The account which Gregory gives of the manner in which his ruin was effected is more curious than credible, and adds the charge of swindling to the black list of crimes recorded against the man who "walked before God with an upright heart". According to the historian, Clovis bribed the followers of Ragnachar with armor of gilded iron, which they mistook, as he intended they should, for gold. Having thus crippled by treachery the strength of his enemy, Clovis led an army over the Somme, for the purpose of attacking him in his own territory. Ragnachar prepared to meet him, but was betrayed by his own soldiers and delivered into the hands of the invader. Clovis, with facetious cruelty, reproached the fallen monarch for having disgraced their common family by suffering himself to be bound, and then split his skull with an axe. The same absurd charge was brought against Richar, the brother of Ragnachar, and the same punishment inflicted on him. A third brother was put to death at Mans

Gregory refers, though not by name, to other kings of the same family, who were all destroyed by Clovis. "Having killed many other kings", he says, "who were his kinsmen, because he feared they might deprive him of his power, he extended his kingdom through the whole of Gaul". He also tells us that the royal hypocrite, having summoned a general assembly, complained before it, with tears in his eyes, that he was "alone in the world". "Alas, for me!" he said, "I am left as an alien among strangers, and have no relations who can assist me". This he did, according to Gregory, "not from any real love of his kindred, or from remorse at the thought of his crimes, but that he might find out any more relations and put them also to death".

Clovis died at Paris, in AD 511, in the forty-fifth year of his age and the thirtieth of his active, bloodstained, and eventful reign. He lived therefore only five years after the decisive battle of Vouglé.

Did we not know, from the judgment he passes on other characters in his history, that Gregory of Tours was capable of appreciating the nobler and gentler qualities of our nature, we might easily

imagine, as we read what he says of Clovis, that, Christian bishop as he was, he had an altogether different standard of right and wrong from ourselves. Not a single virtuous or generous action has the panegyrist found to record of his favored hero, while all that he does relate of him tends to deepen our conviction that this favorite of Heaven, in whose behalf miracles were freely worked, whom departed saints led on to victory, and living ministers of God delighted to honor, was quite a phenomenon of evil in the moral world, from his combining in himself the opposite and apparently incompatible vices of the meanest treachery, and the most audacious wickedness.

We can only account for this amazing obliquity of moral vision in such a man as Gregory, by ascribing it to the extraordinary value attached in those times (and would that we could say in those times only) to external acts of devotion, and to every service rendered to the Roman Church. If, in far happier ages than those of which we speak, the most polluted consciences have purchased consolation and even hope, by building churches, endowing monasteries, and paying reverential homage to the dispensers of God's mercy, can we wonder that the extraordinary services of a Clovis to Catholic Christianity should cover even his foul sins as with a cloak of snow?

He had, indeed, without the slightest provocation, deprived a noble and peaceable neighbor of his power and life. He had treacherously murdered his royal kindred, and deprived their children of their birthright. He had on all occasions shown himself the heartless ruffian, the greedy conqueror, the bloodthirsty tyrant; but by his conversion he had led the Roman Church from the Scylla and Charybdis of Heresy and Paganism, planted it on a rock in the very center of Europe, and fixed its doctrines and traditions in the hearts of the conquerors of the West.

Other reasons, again, may serve to reconcile the politician to his memory. The importance of the task which he performed (though from the basest motives), and the influence of his reign on the destinies of Europe can hardly be overrated. He founded the monarchy on a firm and enduring basis. He leveled, with a strong though bloody hand, the barriers which separated Franks from Franks, and consolidated a number of isolated and hostile tribes into a powerful and united nation. It is true, indeed, that this unity was soon disturbed by divisions of a different nature; yet the idea of its feasibility and desirableness was deeply fixed in the national mind; a return to it was often aimed at, and sometimes accomplished.

II.

FROM THE DEATH OF CLOVIS TO THE DEATH OF CLOTHAIRE I

AD 511—561.

There can be no stronger evidence of the strength and consistency which the royal authority had attained in the hands of Clovis, than the peaceful and undisputed succession of his sons to the vacant throne. It would derogate from our opinion of the political sagacity of Clovis, were we to attribute to his personal wishes the partition of his kingdom among his four sons. We have no account, moreover, of any testamentary dispositions made by him to this effect, and are justified in concluding that the division took place in accordance with the general laws of inheritance which then prevailed among the Germans. However clearly he may have foreseen the disastrous consequences of destroying the unity which it had been one object of his life to effect, his posthumous influence would hardly have sufficed to reconcile his younger sons to their own exclusion, supported as they would naturally be by the national sympathy in the unusual hardship of their lot.

Of the four sons of Clovis, Theodoric (Dietrich, Thierry), Clodomir, Childebert, and Clotar (Clotaire), the eldest, who was then probably about twenty-four years of age, was the son of an unknown mother, and the rest, the offspring of the Burgundian princess Clothildis. The first use they made of the royal power which had descended to them was to divide the empire into four parts; in which division, though Gregory describes them as sharing 'aequa lance', the eldest son appears to have had the lion's share. We should in vain endeavor to understand the principles on which this partition was made, and it is no easy matter to mark the limits of the several kingdoms. Theodoric, King of Austrasia (or Metz), for example, obtained the whole of the Frankish territories which bordered on the Rhine, and also some provinces in the south of Gaul. His capital cities were Metz and Rheims, from the former of which his kingdom took its name. Clodomir had his residence at Orleans, Childebert at Paris, and Clotaire at Soissons; and these three cities were considered as the capitals of the three divisions of the empire over which they ruled.

The exact position and limits of their respective territories cannot be defined with any certainty, but we may fairly surmise, from the position of the towns above mentioned, that the middle part of Neustria belonged to the kingdom of Paris, the southern part to Orleans, and the north-eastern to Soissons.

The kingdom of Theodoric, as will be seen by a reference to the map, corresponded in a great measure with the region subsequently called Austrasia (Eastern Land) in contradistinction to Neustria, which included the more recently acquired possessions of the Franks. These terms are so frequently used in the subsequent history, and the distinction they denote was so strongly marked and has been so permanent, that an explanation of them cannot but be useful to the reader.

It is conjectured by Luden, with great probability, that the Ripuarians were originally called the Eastern people to distinguish them from the Salian Franks who lived to the west. But when the old home of the conquerors on the right bank of the Rhine was united with their new settlements in Gaul, the latter, as it would seem, were called Neustria or Neustrasia (New Lands); while the term Austrasia came to denote the original seats of the Franks, on what we now call the German bank of the Rhine. The most important difference between them (a difference so great as to lead to their permanent separation into the kingdoms of France and Germany by the treaty of Verdun) was this, that in Neustria the Frankish element was quickly absorbed by the mass of Gallo-Romanism by which it was surrounded; while in Austrasia, which included the ancient seats of the Frankish conquerors, the German element was wholly predominant.

The import of the word Austrasia (Austria, Austrifrancia) is very fluctuating. In its widest sense it was used to denote all the countries incorporated into the Frankish Empire, or even held in subjection to it, in which the German language and population prevailed; in this acceptation it included therefore the territory of the Alemanni, Bavarians, Thuringians, and even that of the Saxons and Frises. In its more common and proper sense it meant that part of the territory of the Franks themselves which was not included in Neustria. It was subdivided into Upper Austrasia on the Moselle, and Lower Austrasia on the Rhine and Meuse.

Neustria (or, in the fullness of the Monkish Latinity, Neustrasia) was bounded on the north by the ocean, on the south by the Loire, and on the southwest towards Burgundy by a line which, beginning below Gien on the Loire, ran through the rivers Loing and Yonne, not far from their sources, and passing north of Auxerre and south of Troyes, joined the river Aube above Arcis. The western boundary line again by which Neustria was separated from Austrasia, commencing at the river Aube,

crossed the Marne to the east of Chateau Thierry, and passing through the rivers Aisne and Oise, and round the sources of the Somme, left Cambrai on the east, and reached the Scheldt, which it followed to its mouth.

The tide of conquest had not reached its height at the death of Clovis. Even in that marauding age the Franks were conspicuous among the German races for their love of warlike adventure; and the union of all their different tribes under one martial leader, who kept them almost perpetually in the field, gave them a strength which none of their neighbors were able to resist. The partition of the kingdom afforded indeed a favorable opportunity to the semi-dependent states of throwing off the yoke which Clovis had imposed; but neither the Burgundians nor the Visigoths were in a condition to make the attempt, and Theodoric, the powerful king of the Ostrogoths, was too much occupied by his quarrel with the Greek Emperor to take advantage of the death of Clovis. Under these circumstances the Franks, so far from losing ground, were enabled to extend the limits of their empire and more firmly to establish their supremacy.

The power of Theodoric the Great prevented Clovis from completing the conquest of Burgundy, and its rulers regained before his death a virtual independence of the Franks. The sons of Clovis only wanted a favorable opportunity for finishing the work which their father had begun, and for changing the merely nominal subjection of Burgundy into absolute dependence. And here again it was internal dissension which prepared the way for the admission of the foreign enemy.

Gundobald, King of Burgundy, died in 517, leaving two sons, Sigismund and Godomar, as joint successors to his throne. The former of these had married Ostrogotha, a daughter of Theodoric the Great, by whom he had one son, Sigeric. On the death of Ostrogotha, Sigismund took as his second wife a person of low and even menial condition, who pursued the son of the former queen with all the hatred popularly ascribed to stepmothers. Gregory relates that the boy increased the bitterness of her feelings against him by reproaching her for appearing on some solemn occasion in the robe and ornaments of his high-born mother. The new queen sought to revenge herself by exciting the jealousy of her husband against his son. She secretly accused Sigeric of engaging in a plot to obtain the crown for himself and represented him as having been moved to this dangerous and unnatural enterprise by the hopes he cherished of receiving aid from his mighty grandfather. This last suggestion found but too ready an entrance into the heart of Sigismund, and so completely poisoned for the time its natural springs, that he ordered Sigeric to be put to death. Inevitable remorse came quickly, yet too late, and the wretched king buried himself in the monastery of St. Maurice, and sought to atone for his fearful crime by saying masses day and night for the soul of his murdered son.

In the meantime Clotilda, the widow of Clovis, herself a Burgundian princess, who had lived in retirement at the church of St. Martin since her husband's death, did all in her power to rouse her sons to take vengeance on her cousin Sigismund. It is difficult to conjecture the source of the feeling which thus disturbed her holy meditations in the cloisters of St. Martin's, and filled her heart with schemes of revenge and bloodshed. We can hardly attribute her excitement on this occasion to a keen sense of the cruelty and injustice which Sigeric had suffered. The wife of Clovis must have been too well inured to treachery and blood to be greatly moved by the murder of her second cousin. Some writers have found sufficient explanation of her conduct in the fact that her own father and mother had been put to death in 492 by Gundobald, the father of Sigismund. But we know that when Gundobald was defeated by Clovis he obtained easy terms, nor was the murder of Clothilda' parents brought against him on that occasion. It is not likely that a thirst for vengeance which such an injury might naturally excite, after remaining unslaked in the heart of Clothilda for nearly thirty years, should have revived with increased intensity on account of a murder committed by one of the hated race upon his own kinsman. A more probable motive is suggested by a passage in Gregory of Tours, in which he informs us that Theodoric of Metz had married Suavegotta a daughter of Sigismund of Burgundy. Theodoric, as we have said, was the eldest son of Clovis, by an unknown mother, and was evidently the most warlike and powerful of the four Frankish kings. A union between her stepson and the Burgundian dynasty might seem to Clotilda to threaten the welfare and safety of her own sons, to whom her summons to arms appears to have been most particularly addressed. Theodoric took no part in the present war; and on a subsequent occasion, when invited by Clodomir to join him in an expedition against the Burgundians, he positively refused.

The sons of Clotilda, happy in being able to obey their mother's wishes in a manner so gratifying to their own inclinations, made a combined attack upon Burgundy in 523. Sigismund and Godomar his brother, were defeated, and the former, having been given up to the conquerors by his own followers, was carried prisoner to Orleans; the latter escaped and assumed the reins of government in Burgundy. The Franks, like all barbarians of that age, found it more easy to conquer a province than to keep it. In the very same year, on the retreat of the Frankish army, Godomar was able to retake all the towns which had been surrendered to the Franks, and to possess himself of his late brother's kingdom.

Clodomir renewed the invasion in the following year. Before his departure he determined to put the captive Sigismund, with his wife and children, to death; nor could the bold intercession of the Abbot Avitus, who threatened him with a like calamity, deter him from his bloody purpose. His answer to the abbot is highly naive. “It seems to me”, he said, “a foolish piece of advice to leave some enemies at home while I am marching against others, so that, with the former in the rear and the latter in front, I may rush between the two wedges of my enemies. Victory will be better and more easily obtained by separating one from the other”. In accordance with this better plan, he caused his captives to be put to death at Columna near Orleans, and thrown into a well. After thus securing “his rear”, he marched against the Burgundians. In the battle which took place on the plain of Veferonce near Vienne, Clodomir was deceived by a feigned retreat of the Burgundian army, and, having been carried in the impetuosity of his pursuit into the midst of the enemy, he was recognized by the royal length of his hair and slain on the field of battle.

The loss of their leader, however, instead of causing a panic among the Franks, inspired them with irresistible fury; they quickly routed the Burgundians, and, after devastating their country with indiscriminate slaughter, compelled them once more to submission. Yet it was not until after a third invasion that Burgundy was finally reduced to the condition of a Frankish province, and even then it retained its own laws and customs; the only marks of subjection consisting in an annual tribute and the liability to serve the Frankish king in his wars.

On the death of Clodomir, his territories were divided among the three remaining kings; and Clotaire, the youngest of them, married the widowed queen Guntheuca. The children of Clodomir, being still young, appear to have been taken no notice of in the partition : they found an asylum with their grandmother Clothilda.

While his half-brothers were enlarging the Frankish frontier towards the south-east, Theodoric, who had declined to join in the attack upon Burgundy, was directing his attention towards Thuringia, which he ultimately added to the kingdom of Austrasia. The accession of the Thuringians to the Frankish Empire was the more important because they inhabited those ancient seats from which the Franks themselves had gone forth to the conquest of Gaul, and because it served to give additional strength to the Austrasian kingdom, in which the German element prevailed.

The fall of Thuringia is traced by the historian to the ungovernable passions of one of the female sex, which plays so prominent a part in the history of these times.

About AD 528, this kingdom was governed by three princes, Baderic, Hermenfried and Berthar, the second of whom had the high honor, as it was naturally considered, of espousing Amalaberg, the niece of Theodoric the Great. The ‘happy Thuringia’, however, derived anything but advantage from the ‘inestimable treasure’ which, according to her uncle's account of her, it acquired in the Ostrogothic princess. This lady was not unconscious of the dignity she derived from her august relative, and fretted within the narrow limits of the fraction of a petty kingdom. Gregory tells us a singular story of the manner in which she marked her contempt of the possessions of her husband, and at the same time betrayed her ambitious desires. On returning home one day to a banquet, Hermenfried observed that a part of the table had no cloth upon it; and when he inquired of the queen the reason of this unusual state of things, she told him that it became a king who was despoiled of the centre of his kingdom to have the middle of his table bare. Excited by the suggestions of his queen, Hermenfried determined to destroy his brothers, and made secret overtures to Theoderic of Austrasia, to whom he promised a portion of his expected acquisitions on condition of receiving aid. Theodoric gladly consented, and, in conjunction with Hermenfried, defeated and slew both Baderic and Berthar (Werther).

A man who, to serve his ambition, had not shrunk from a double fratricide, was not likely to be very scrupulous in observing his engagements to a mere ally. He entirely forgot his promise to Theodoric and kept the whole of Thuringia to himself. He relied for impunity on his connection with the royal house of the Ostrogoths, his alliance with the Heruli and Warni, and the great increase of his strength in Thuringia itself. But with all these advantages he was no match for Theoderic of Austrasia and his warlike subjects. The death of the latter’s great namesake removed the only obstacle which had prevented the Franks from attacking Thuringia.

In 530 the Austrasian king summoned his warlike subjects to march against Hermenfried; and, in order to make the ground of quarrel as general as possible, he expatiated to them on some imaginary cruelties committed by the Thuringians upon their countrymen.

“Revenge”, said he, “I pray you, both the injury done to me, and the death of your own fathers; remembering that the Thuringians formerly fell with violence upon our ancestors, and inflicted many evils upon them, when they had given hostages and were desirous of making peace; but the Thuringians destroyed these hostages in various ways, and having invaded the territory of our

forefathers, robbed them of all their property, hung up young men by the sinews of their legs, and destroyed more than 200 maidens by a most cruel death". The enumeration of all these horrors ends with some degree of bathos: "But now Hermenfried has cheated me of what he promised".

The Franks, who required no very powerful oratory to induce them to undertake an expedition in which there was prospect of plunder, unanimously declared for war; and Theodoric, in company with his son Theudebert and his brother Clotaire of Soissons, marched into Thuringia. The inhabitants endeavored to protect themselves from the superior cavalry of the invaders by a stratagem similar to that employed by Robert Bruce at Bannockburn, by digging small holes in front of their own line. They were, however, compelled to retreat to the river Unstrut in Saxon Prussia, where they made a stand, but were defeated with immense carnage, so that the river "was choked with dead bodies, which served as a bridge for the invaders". The whole country was quickly reduced and permanently incorporated with Austrasia. And thus, after a long interval, the Franks repossessed themselves of the ancient homes of their tribe, and by one great victory established themselves in the very heart of Germany, which the Romans from the same quarter had often, but vainly, endeavored to do.

The growing separation between the German and Romance elements in the Frankish Empire, as represented by Theodoric, King of Metz, on the one side, and his half-brother, on the other, becomes more and more evident as our history proceeds. While the sons of Clothilda were associated in almost every undertaking, Theodoric frequently stood aloof, in a manner which shows that his connection with them was by no means of the same kind as theirs with each other. The conquest of the purely German Thuringia, was undertaken by Theodoric exclusively on his own account and in reliance on his own resources. Clotaire indeed accompanied him in his expedition against that country, but in all probability without any military force, nor does he appear to have put in any claim to a share of the conquered territory. The subjugation of Burgundy, on the other hand, in which the Romance language and manners had acquired the ascendancy, was the work of Clotaire and Childebert alone.

Theodoric was invited to join them, but refused on the ground of his connection with the King of Burgundy. Whatever may have been his reason for declining so tempting an invitation, it was certainly not want of support from his subjects, for we are told that they were highly irritated by his refusal, and mutinously declared that they would march without him. Yet he adhered to his determination not to join his brothers, and pacified the wrath of his soldiers by leading them against the Arverni, in whose country they committed the most frightful ravages, undismayed by several astounding miracles!

An inroad had been previously made upon the Arverni, by Childebert, while Theodoric was still in Thuringia. Childebert had suddenly broken off from the prosecution of this war, and turned his arms against Amalaric, King of the Visigoths, who still retained a portion of Southern Gaul. This monarch had married Clothildis, a daughter of Clovis, from motives of interest and dread of the Frankish power; but appears to have thrown aside his fears, and with them his conciliating policy, on the death of his great father-in-law. We are told that Clothildis suffered the greatest indignities at the hands of Amalaric and his Arian subjects for her faithful adherence to the Catholic Church. Where religious predilections are concerned, it is necessary to receive the accounts of the dealings between the Franks and their Arian neighbors with the utmost caution. Few will believe that the object of Childebert's march was solely to avenge his sister's wrongs; but the mention of them by the historian seems to indicate that the invasion was made in reliance upon Catholic support among the subjects of Amalaric himself. The sudden resolution of Childebert (taken probably on the receipt of important intelligence from the country of the Visigoths), the rapid progress and almost uniform success of the Franks, all point to the same conclusion, that the Catholic party in Southern Gaul was in secret understanding with the invaders. Amalaric was defeated and slain in the first encounter, and the whole of his Gallic possessions, with the exception of Septimania, was incorporated without further resistance with the Frankish Empire. The Visigoths, with their wives and children, retired into Spain under their new king Theudis.

Theoderic, King of Austrasia, died in 534, after having added largely to the Frankish dominions, and was succeeded by his son Theudebert. An attempt on the part of his uncles Childebert and Clotaire to deprive him of his kingdom and his life was frustrated by the fidelity of his Austrasian subjects. How venial and almost natural such a conspiracy appeared in that age, even to him who was to have been the victim of it, may be inferred from the fact that Theudebert and Childebert became soon afterwards close friends and allies. The latter, having no children, adopted his nephew, whose life he had so lately sought, as the heir to his dominions, and loaded him with the richest presents. In 537 these two princes made a combined attack upon Clotaire, who was only saved from destruction by the intercession of his mother. That pious princess passed a whole night in prayer at the sepulcher of St. Martin, and Gregory tells us that the result of her devotions—a miraculous shower of enormous hail-stones—brought his cruel kinsmen to reason!

The Empire of the Franks was soon after extended in a direction in which they had hitherto found an insurmountable barrier to their progress. On the death of Theodoric the Great, or, as he is called in song and legend, "Dietrich of Bern", the scepter which he had borne with such grace and vigor passed into the hands of an infant and a woman. The young and beautiful Amalasuintha, daughter of Theodoric by the sister of Clovis, and widow of Eutharic, exercised the royal authority in the name of her son Athalaric; and when the latter, prematurely exhausted by vicious habits, followed his mighty grandfather to the grave in 532, she made Theodatus, son of Amalafrida, the sister of Theodoric, her associate in the royal power. The benefit was basely repaid. Theodatus procured the murder of the unhappy queen to whom he owed his advancement, and thus drew down upon himself and his country the vengeance of all who were desirous of dismembering the Empire of the Ostrogoths.

Religious animosities, which it had been the policy of the Arian but tolerant Theodoric to sooth by the even-handed justice of his administration, broke forth with destructive fury under his feeble successors. The Roman subjects of Theodoric's empire had not lost the pride, although they had degenerated from the valor, of their ancestors, and had never ceased to think it shame and sin to be ruled by a barbarian monarch, and that monarch, too, a heretic. They would gladly have consented to forget their former jealousies, and to unite themselves with the Eastern Empire, especially when a temporary gleam of life was thrown over its corrupt and dying frame by the vigorous administration of Justinian. But, if it were the will of Heaven that they should yield to a new and more vigorous race, they wished at least to have an orthodox master, who would not merely protect their religious freedom, but agree with their theological opinions. Their choice therefore lay between Justinian and the Franks, who were ever watching their opportunity to turn the errors and divisions of their neighbors to their own account. Justinian was the first to move; and, under the pretext of avenging the death of Amalasuintha, he sent his celebrated general Belisarius to attack Theodatus. The Franks beheld with joy the approaching struggle between their two mightiest rivals, and prepared to take the advantageous position of umpires.

Both Justinian and Theodatus were aware that the Franks could turn the scale in favor of either party, and both made the greatest efforts to conciliate their aid. Justinian appealed to their natural enmity against heretics and Goths, but deemed it necessary to quicken their national and theological antipathies by a large present of money, and still larger promises. The Franks received the money and promised the desired assistance the more readily, as they felt themselves aggrieved by the murder of a niece of Clovis. Theodatus, on the other hand, hearing that Belisarius was already on his way to Sicily, endeavored to ward off the attack of the Franks by offering them the Gothic possessions in Gaul and 2000 pounds' weight of gold. The Franks were dazzled by the splendor of the bribe, but Theodatus died before the bargain was completed. His general Vitisges, who was elected to succeed him, called a council of the chiefs of the Ostrogothic nation, and was strongly urged by them to fulfill the promises of Theodatus, and by sacrificing a portion of the empire to secure the rest. "In all other respects", they said, "we are well prepared; but the Franks, our ancient enemies, are an obstacle in our path".

The imminent peril in which Vitisges stood rendered the sacrifice inevitable, and the whole of the Ostrogothic possessions in Gaul which lay between the Rhone, the Alps, and the Mediterranean, as well as that part of Rhaetia which Theodoric the Great had given to the Alemanni after their defeat by Clovis, were transferred in full sovereignty to the Franks. The Merovingian kings, regardless of their former promises to Justinian, divided the land and money among themselves and promised their venal but efficient support to the king of Italy. They stipulated, however, out of delicacy to the Greek Emperor, that they should not march in person against Belisarius, but should be allowed to send the subject Burgundians, or at all events to permit them to go. This seasonable reinforcement enabled the Ostrogoths to sack and plunder Milan, in which exploit they received the willing assistance of the Burgundians.

In the following year, 539, Theudebert himself, excited perhaps by the alluring accounts he had heard of the booty taken by his subjects in Italy, marched across the Alps at the head of 100,000 men. Vitisges and his Goths had every reason to suppose that Theudebert came to succor them, but Belisarius on his part hoped much from the long feud between Goth and Frank. Theudebert determined in his own way to be impartial. He had promised to aid both parties, and he had promised to make war on both; and he kept his word by attacking both, driving them from the field of battle, and plundering their camps with the greatest impartiality. A letter of remonstrance from Belisarius would probably have had little weight in inducing Theudebert to return, as he did soon afterwards, had it not been backed by the murmurs of the Franks themselves, who were suffering from an insufficient supply of food, and had lost nearly one third of their numbers by dysentery.

Though our principal attention will be directed to the actions of the Austrasian king, we may briefly refer in this place to a hostile incursion into Spain, made by Childebert and Clotaire, in 542. On this occasion the town of Saragossa is represented by Gregory as having been taken, not by the sword

and battle-axe of the Franks, but by the holy tunic of St. Vincentius, borne by an army of women, clothed in black mantles, with their hair disheveled and sprinkled with penitential ashes. The heretical Goths no sooner caught sight of the tunic, and heard the first notes of the holy hymns which were sung by the female besiegers, than they fled in terror from their city, and left it to be plundered by the advancing Franks.

As the object of this invasion was simply predatory, the Franks soon after retired into Gaul with immense booty, and the Goths resumed possession of their devastated country.

While Italy was distracted by war, and with difficulty defending itself from the attacks of Belisarius, Theudebert took possession of several towns which bordered upon Burgundy and Rhaetia. Bucelinus, the Duke of Alemannia, who fought in the army of Theudebert, is said by Gregory to have conquered Lesser Italy, by which he no doubt meant Liguria and Venetia. These provinces were added to the Frankish dominions, the Ostrogoths only retaining Brescia and Verona.

The cession of territory made to the Franks by Vitisges as described above, was ratified by the Emperor Justinian; and, as a further proof of the growing influence of the Merovingian kings, we may state, that in 540 they presided at the games which were celebrated in the circus of Aries, and caused coins of gold to be struck, bearing their own image instead of that of the Roman emperor.

THE BAVARIANS.

It is about this period that the Bavarians first become known in history as tributaries of the Franks; but at what time they became so is matter of dispute. From the previous silence of the annalists respecting this people, we may perhaps infer that both they and the Swabians remained independent until the fall of the Ostrogothic Empire in Italy. The Gothic dominions were bounded on the north by Rhaetia and Noricum; and between these countries and the Thuringians, who lived still further to the north, was the country of the Bavarians and Swabians. Thuringia had long been possessed by the Franks, Rhaetia was ceded by Vitisges, King of Italy, and Venetia was conquered by Theudebert. The Bavarians ere therefore, at this period, almost entirely surrounded by the Frankish territories, in which position, considering the relative strength of either party, and the aggressive and unscrupulous spirit of the stronger, it was not possible that the weaker should preserve its independence. Whenever they may have first submitted to the yoke, it is certain that at the time of Theudebert's death, or shortly after that event, both Bavarians and Swabians (or Alemannians), had become subjects of the Merovingian kings. And thus, in the middle of the sixth century, and only sixty years from the time when Clovis sallied forth from his petty principality to attack Syagrius, the Frankish kingdom attained to its utmost territorial greatness, and was bounded by the Pyrenees and the Alps on the south, and on the north by the Saxons, more impassable than either.

Theudebert died in AD 547 and was succeeded by his son Theodebald, a sickly and weak-spirited boy, of whose brief and inglorious reign there is little to relate. He died in AD 553, of some disease inherent in his constitution, leaving no children behind him. His kingdom therefore reverted to his great uncles Childebert and Clotaire, the former of whom was a feeble and childless old man, while the latter, to use the language of Agathias, "had only contracted his first wrinkles", and was blessed with four high-spirited and warlike sons. Under these circumstances, Clotaire considered it safe to claim the whole of his deceased nephew's kingdom; and declared that it was useless to divide it with Childebert, whose own possessions must shortly fall to himself and his sons. To strengthen his claims still further, he married Vultetrada, the widow of Theodebald and daughter of Wacho, king of the Longobards. For some reason or other (but hardly from their objection to polygamy, since Clotaire had actually had at least five wives, not all of whom could be dead), the Christian bishops strongly opposed this marriage. It is not improbable that the fear of false doctrine may have influenced them more than the dread of immorality, and that their opposition in this case, as in many subsequent ones, was founded upon the fact that the new queen belonged to an Arian family.

In the same year in which Theodebald died, Clotaire, King of Soissons, was involved in serious hostilities with the Saxons, the only German tribe whom the Franks could neither conquer nor overawe. In AD 555, when forced into a battle with the Saxons at Deutz, by the overweening confidence of his followers, who even threatened him with death in case of noncompliance, he received a decisive and bloody defeat, and the Saxons freed themselves from a small tribute, which they had hitherto paid to the Austrasians. The kindred Merovingians never lost an opportunity of injuring one another, and Childebert, taking advantage of his brother's distress, not only urged on the Saxons to repeat their incursions, but harbored and made common cause with Chramnus, the rebellious and exiled son of Clotaire. The war which was thus begun, continued till the death of Childebert in AD 558, when Clotaire took immediate possession of the kingdom of Paris.

Chramnus, having lost his powerful ally, was obliged to submit, and appears to have been in some sort forgiven. In a short time, however, he revolted again, and fled for refuge to Chonober, Count of the Britons, who, since their voluntary submission to Clovis, had remained in a state of semidependence on the Franks. Chonober received him with open arms, and raised an army to support his cause, forgetful, or regardless, of the obedience which he nominally owed to the Frankish king. Conscious of his inability to meet Clotaire in the open field, he proposed to Chramnus that they should attack his father in the night. To this, however, the rebellious son, half repentant perhaps, "virtute Dei proeventus" would by no means consent. Chonober had gone too far to recede, even had he wished to do so, and on the following morning the two armies engaged.

CHRAMNUS BURNT ALIVE BY CLOTAIRE.

Clotaire, though cruel and licentious, even for a Merovingian, was evidently a favorite of Gregory of Tours, who represents him as marching to meet his son like another David against another Absalom. "Look down", he prayed, "o Lord, from heaven, and judge my cause, for I am undeservedly suffering wrong at the hands of my son; pass the same judgment as of old between Absalom and his father David". "Therefore", continues the historian, "when the armies met, the Count of the Britons turned and fled, and was killed upon the field of battle". Chramnus had prepared vessels to escape by sea; but in the delay occasioned by his desire to save his family he was overtaken by the troops of Clotaire, and, by his father's orders, was burned alive with wife and children.

The perusal of that part of Gregory's great work, from which we are now quoting, affords us another curious insight into the condition of the Christian Church in an age which some are found to look back to as one of peculiar purity and zeal. The historian has related to us in full and precise terms the several enormities of which Clotaire was guilty; how he slew with his own hand the children of his brother, in the presence of the weeping Clothildis, and under circumstances of peculiar atrocity; how he forced the wives of murdered kings into a hateful alliance with himself; how he not only put his own son to a cruel death, but extended his infernal malice to the latter unoffending wife and children. And yet the learned, and, as we have reason to believe, exemplary bishop of the Christian Church, in the very same chapter in which he relates the death of Chramnus, represents the monster as having gained a victory by the special aid of God! In the following chapter, he also relates to us the manner in which Clotaire made his peace with heaven before his death.

In the fifty-first year of his reign, he sought the threshold of the blessed Martin of Tours, bringing with him many gifts. Having approached the sepulcher of a certain priest, he made a full confession of "the acts of negligence" of which he had, perhaps, been guilty, and prayed with many groans that the blessed confessor would procure him the mercy of the Lord, and by his intercession obliterate the memory of all that he had done irrationally. He died of a fever at Compiegne in AD 561.

At the death of Childebert, in AD 558, Clotaire had become sole monarch of the Franks and Lord paramount of the several affiliated and dependent states, which, though subject to his military ban, maintained themselves in a great degree of independence of action, and required the constant application of force to keep them to their allegiance. This union of so vast an empire under a single head, the result of accidental circumstances conspiring to favor the efforts of personal ambition, was of no long continuance. Its importance to the nation at large was little understood, and the equal claim of all the sons in a family to succeed to the dignity, and share the possessions of the father was, as we have said, founded on the general customs of the nation.

III.

FROM THE DEATH OF CLOTAIRE TO THE DEATH OF BRUNHILDA.

AD 561—613.

At the death of Clotaire, his vast empire was divided among his four sons in such a manner that two of them inherited kingdoms in which the population was chiefly German, and the other two received the states in which the Romance element very greatly predominated. Charibert succeeded to the kingdom of Paris, formerly held by Childebert; Guntram to that of Orleans with Burgundy, the former portion of Chlodomir; Chilperic, who at his father's death had seized the royal treasures and endeavored to take possession of the whole empire, was compelled to rest satisfied with Soissons; and Sigebert received Austrasia, the least attractive and civilized, but certainly the soundest and most powerful division of the empire. His capital was Rheims or Metz.

The first-mentioned of these princes (Charibert), who is personally remarkable for little else than the number of his wives, is interesting to us as the father of Bertha or Adalberga, who married and converted Ethelbert, the King of Kent. Charibert died in AD 567; and when his dominions were partitioned among his three brothers, Sigebert received that portion which was most purely German in its population, and thus united all the German provinces under one head. It was agreed on this occasion that Paris, which was rising into great importance, should be held in common by all, but visited by none of the three kings without the consent of the others. Almost immediately after his accession to the throne of Rheims (or Metz), Sigebert, the most warlike of the three brothers, was obliged to lead his Franks into action with the Avars or Huns, who in AD 562 endeavored to force their way into Gaul. They appear to have ascended by the Danube; but leaving that river, they marched towards the Elbe, and fell with great fury upon Thuringia. It was on the latter river that Sigebert engaged and defeated them. In AD 566, they renewed their attacks, and, according to Gregory, deceived the Franks with magic arts and delusive appearances, by which we may be permitted to understand some kind of military stratagem. Whether by fair means or by foul, the Franks were defeated, and their brave leader fell into the hands of the enemy. He succeeded, however, in purchasing his own freedom and a lasting peace.

Sigebert seems also to have come into conflict with those universal troublers of the peace of Europe, the marauding Danes and Saxons. Reference is made by the poet Fortunatus to a victory gained over this people by Sigebert's general Lupus, who is said to have driven them from the Wupper to the Lahn. The few records we possess of these encounters are, however, far too meager to afford us the means of watching the struggle with these new and terrible enemies.

Though Sigebert was an active and warlike prince, his name is far less prominent in the succeeding history than that of his queen Brunhilda,—a woman renowned for her beauty, talents, birth, and commanding influence, for the long and successful struggle carried on with her perfidious rival Fredegunda, and no less so for her intrigues, her extraordinary adventures, the cruel insults to which she was subjected at the hands of her enemies, and lastly for her most horrible death. Sigebert sought her hand from an honorable motive, and there was nothing in the auspices which attended her union with him which could have prepared her for a long life of unceasing conflict and suffering, and a painful and ignominious end.

The rude and violent character displayed by so many successive generations of the Merovingian race, the bloody feuds and unbridled licentiousness which disgraced their courts, had caused their alliance to be shunned by the more civilized rulers of the other leading German tribes. The practice of polygamy, common among the Frankish kings, also tended to diminish both the honor and advantage of an alliance with them. Charibert, as we have seen, chose several wives during his brief reign, from among the lowest of his people. The Franks themselves at last became impatient of the disgrace which was brought upon their nation by the low amours of their monarchs and the vulgar brawls of their plebeian consorts. It was from a desire to gratify his people, as well as his own better taste, that Sigebert looked abroad among the families of contemporary sovereigns for a partner worthy of his throne. Having made his choice, he sent ambassadors to the court of Athanagild, King of the Visigoths in Spain, and demanded his daughter Bruna in marriage.

Athanagild, fearing perhaps the consequences of a refusal, agreed to the proposed alliance, and sent back his daughter to Sigebert, with the ambassadors, whom he loaded with presents for his future son-in-law. The name of the bride was changed to Brunhilda on the occasion of her marriage. The graces of her person, the great and highly cultivated powers of her mind, are celebrated by all who have

occasion to mention her in her earlier years. Gregory of Tours, in particular, speaks of her in glowing terms, describing her as a maiden of elegant accomplishments, of charming aspect, honorable and decorous in her character and manners, wise in counsel, and bland in speech. She belonged indeed to an Arian house, but quickly yielded to the preaching of the Catholic clergy, and the exhortations of her royal spouse. This noble and beautiful woman became one of the leading spirits in an age of intrigue and blood, and is charged by her enemies with having instigated so many murders as to have fulfilled the prophecy of Sibylla: “Bruna shall come from the parts of Spain, before whose face many nations shall perish”.

Her equally celebrated rival Fredegunda, the wife of Chilperic, rose to her lofty station from a very different sphere. The great éclat which attended the nuptials of Sigebert excited the emulation of Chilperic, the King of Soissons, who knew his own vile character so little as to suppose that he could live happily with one virtuous and high-born queen. He also sent ambassadors to the Visigothic court, and claimed the hand of Galsuintha, the sister of Brunhilda, solemnly engaging to dismiss his other wives and concubines, and to treat her as became her origin and character. To the great grief of the Royal maiden and her mother (for the worthlessness of Chilperic was known), his suit was successful; and the unwilling bride departed, with terrible forebodings and amid the lamentations of her family, to the court of her barbarous husband.

The principal among the concubines of Chilperic, was Fredegunda, a woman of the meanest birth, but fair, ingenious, and skilled in meretricious arts. For a short time she was thrown into the shade by the arrival of the royal bride; but having already supplanted a former queen of Chilperic’s, named Andovera, whose servant she had been, she did not despair of making the lascivious king forget his good intentions and his solemn vows.

Galsuintha, who had none of the terrible energy which distinguished her sister, was rendered so unhappy by the persecution of her victorious rival and the open infidelity of her husband, that she begged to be allowed to return to her old home and affectionate parents, offering at the same time to leave behind her the treasures she had brought. The king, who was not prepared for so open an exposure of his perfidy, temporized, and endeavored to soothe her. Whatever feeble emotions of repentance he may have felt were soon effaced by the suggestion of the fiendish spirit in whose power he was; and after a few days Galsuintha was strangled in her bed, by the command, or at least with the permission, of her husband. That no circumstance of atrocity might be wanting to this transaction, Chilperic publicly married Fredegunda a few days after the murder, to the great scandal of his subjects. This event, which took place about AD 567, confirmed and deepened the enmity which already existed between Sigebert and his brother, and kindled in the bosom of Brunhilda that feverish longing for revenge which poisoned her naturally noble nature, and spread its deadly influence over the whole of her subsequent career.

WAR BETWEEN SIGEBERT AND CHILPERIC.

At the time when Austrasia was hard pressed by the invading Huns, Chilperic had embraced the opportunity of seizing Rheims and other towns in the kingdom of Sigebert. The latter, however, no sooner found his hands at liberty, than he attacked and defeated the army of his brother, regained the captured towns, and made Chilperic’s own son a prisoner. A hollow truce was then concluded, and the captive prince was restored to his father, enriched with gifts by his placable and generous uncle, who only stipulated that he should not bear arms against his liberator. But Chilperic was one of those natures which know no ties but the bonds of appetite and lust, and was as incapable of acknowledging an obligation as of keeping an oath.

We are told that in consequence of the foul murder of the Visigothic princess and the disgraceful union with the suspected murderess, Chilperic was driven from the throne of Soissons. We may infer from this that the war which began between the brothers, on his restoration, was the result, in part at least, of the enmity of the rival queens. The immediate cause of the renewal of the conflict was an attack made by Chilperic upon Poitou and Touraine, which had fallen to Sigebert on the death of Charibert. It was a great object with the contending parties to secure the cooperation of Guntram, King of Burgundy, who, though inferior to the others in power, could throw a decisive weight into either scale. The great superiority of the Austrasian army lay in its exclusively German character. Sigebert drew together large forces on the right bank of the Rhine from Suabia, Bavaria, Saxony, and Thuringia, and, evidently mistrusting Guntram, marched to the Seine, and threatened the Burgundians with the whole weight of his resentment should they refuse him a passage through their country. Chilperic on his part pointed out to the King of Burgundy the danger of allowing a “rude and heathen people” to enter the civilized and Christian Gaul. So marked had the distinctions between the population of Austrasia and that of the rest of the Frankish Empire become, that they regarded each other as aliens.

But if external civilization was on the side of Neustria and Burgundy, the strength and marrow of the Franks was represented by Sigebert and his Austrasians; and when the latter, more Germanorum, asked his perfidious enemy to fix a time and place for the battle, Chilperic sued for peace, and obtained it on condition of surrendering Poitou, Touraine, Limoges, and Quercy. He was also compelled to recall his son Theudebert, whom, in utter disregard of the promise made to Sigebert, he had sent with an army into Aquitaine.

In AD 575 Chilperic, incited as is supposed by the unsleeping malice of Fredegunda, and smarting under his recent loss of territory, determined once more to try the fortune of war against his generous conqueror. On this occasion he succeeded in persuading Guntram into an alliance against Sigebert, whom he called "our enemy". Theudebert was sent with an army across the Loire, while Chilperic himself fell upon Champagne. The King of Burgundy appears to have given little more than his sympathy to the Romano-Gallic cause, and soon saw cogent reasons for concluding a separate peace with the Austrasians. The campaign ended as usual in the entire discomfiture of Chilperic, whose Frankish subjects, tired of following a treacherous and, still worse, an unsuccessful leader, offered the kingdom of Soissons to Sigebert, and actually raised him on the shield, and proclaimed him king at Vitry. The result of this election would appear to show that it was only the work of a party, perhaps the Austrasian or German party, against the wishes of the great mass of the nation. Chilperic in the meantime was closely besieged by Sigebert's troops at Tournai, and everything seemed to threaten his utter downfall, when he was saved by the same bloody hand which had often led him into crime and danger. Fredegunda, maddened at the spectacle of her most hated foes sitting on the throne of her husband, and receiving the homage of those whom she herself had virtually ruled, sent two hired assassins to Vitry. Under the pretence of holding a secret conference with Sigebert, they gained access to his person, and stabbed him in the side with their knives. Thus died the warlike and high-minded King of Austrasia in AD 575. It is evident that the Neustrians were not sincere when they offered the crown to Sigebert, and that Fredegunda reckoned on the support at all events of the Gallo-Romans. The daggers of her myrmidons did the work of many victories. No inquiry appears to have been instituted to discover the originators of the crime; and Chilperic and his queen, instead of suffering in public opinion or incurring the vengeance of Sigebert's former friends, appear to have been released by this foul deed from the most imminent peril, and at once to have regained their power.

No sooner had Sigebert fallen under the knives of Fredegunda's assassins than Chilperic despatched messengers to his friends at Paris to secure the persons of Brunhilda and her son and daughter, who were residing at that city. In the consternation and confusion consequent on Sigebert's sudden and unexpected death, no open resistance was offered by Brunhilda's partisans, and she and her whole family were thrown into close confinement. Childebert, however, the heir to Sigebert's crown, at this time about five years old, was saved by the fidelity and vigor of Gundobald, Duke of Campania, who caused him to be let down from the window of his prison in a sack, and escaped with him to Metz, where he was immediately proclaimed king by the Austrasian seigniors. Chilperic himself appeared in Paris soon afterwards, and sent Brunhilda to Rouen and her daughter to Meaux, and kept them both under strict surveillance.

In order still further to improve the opportunity afforded by the removal of Sigebert, Chilperic sent part of his army under Roccolenus against Tours, which was speedily taken; and another division under his son Meroveus against Poitou. The latter expedition terminated in a very unexpected manner. Meroveus was little inclined to carry out any designs of his stepmother, Fredegunda, whom he hated, and least of all to the injury of Brunhilda, to whose extraordinary personal charms and varied accomplishments, to which even bishops were not insensible, his heart had fallen a captive. Instead of executing his father's orders at Poitou, he hastened to Rouen, and offered his hand in marriage to Brunhilda, whose forlorn condition inclined her to accept the homage and assistance thus proffered from the camp of her enemies. This strange turn of affairs appears greatly to have alarmed Fredegunda and Chilperic, who followed so quickly on the steps of his rebellious son, that the latter had barely time to escape into asylum in the church of St. Martin at Rouen; from which he could not be persuaded to come out until security was granted for his own life and that of Brunhilda. Chilperic, it is said, received them kindly, and invited them to his table. Meroveus was then transferred to Soissons, and carefully guarded; while Brunhilda, whether from a passing emotion of generosity in Chilperic's mind or the fear of Guntram, who had espoused his nephew's cause, was set at liberty and returned to Metz.

Whatever motives led to her liberation, it was not likely to be accepted by Brunhilda as a compensation for the murder of one husband and the imprisonment of another. Her first act after joining her son at Metz was to dispatch an army to Soissons, which in the first instance had nearly taken Fredegunda prisoner, but was afterwards defeated by the Neustrians; the latter, in their turn, received a check from the forces of Guntram, and retreated with a loss of 20,000 men.

DEATH OF MEROVEUS.

Meroveus, in the meantime, was shorn of his royal locks and compelled to become a monk. In AD 577, he succeeded in escaping to the court of Brunhilda at Metz; but, though the queen received him gladly, he was compelled by a powerful faction of the Australian nobility, who were in close correspondence with Fredegunda, to quit the dominions of Childebert. After various adventures, he is said to have sought death at the hands of a faithful servant, to avoid falling into the power of his own father. Gregory of Tours, though he does not speak decidedly, evidently believes that he was treacherously ensnared by Egidius, Bishop of Rheims, Guntram-Boso, and other bitter enemies of Brunhilda, and murdered at the instigation of Fredegunda.

Nothing in the history of the joint reigns of Sigebert, Chilperic, and Guntram is more astonishing and perplexing to the reader, than the suddenness with which they form and dissolve alliances with one another,—the fickleness of their mutual friendships, and the placability of their enmities. Within the space often years we find Guntram and Childebert in league against Chilperic, Chilperic and Childebert against Guntram, and Guntram and Chilperic against Childebert; and the parts were changed more than once in this short period. After a bloody war with his nephew Childebert, the Burgundian king adopts him as heir to all his dominions. After protecting the same nephew and his mother Brunhilda against Fredegunda, the same Guntram defends Fredegunda against Childebert, and stands godfather to her son Clotaire, in utter defiance of the entreaties and threats of his adopted successor. At the death of Chilperic, too, no one wept more bitterly for his loss than his brother Guntram, though the greater part of their active manhood had been spent in plundering and laying waste each other's towns and fields. "I am weary", says Gregory of Tours, when speaking of the events which followed the death of Sigebert, "of relating the changeful events of the civil wars that wasted the Frankish nation and kingdoms, and in which, we behold the time predicted by our Lord as the 'beginning of sorrows', when 'the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child'," &c.

Yet it would be wrong to ascribe the internecine wars by which the Frankish Empire was harassed and wasted, solely or even chiefly to the covetousness, ambition, or malice of the brother kings; they were owing in a still greater degree to the intrigues of the rival queens, whose hatred never changed and never slept,—to the endless feuds of the factious seigniors against each other, and their constant endeavors, as individuals and as a class, to make themselves independent of the crown. Similar causes produced similar results in our own history during the wars of the Roses, to which, in their general characteristics, the struggles of which we have now to speak bear no small analogy.

One of the principal objects of Fredegunda in the persecution and murder of Meroveus—though his love for Brunhilda was alone sufficient to rouse her rival's deadliest hatred—was to bring her own children nearer to the throne. This cherished purpose was signally and terribly frustrated. A fatal epidemic which raged in AD 580 through nearly the whole of Gaul, after attacking Chilperic himself, carried off both the sons whom Fredegunda had borne to him. The only symptoms of the better feelings of our nature recorded of Fredegunda were called forth, as might be expected, by this event. The death of her children touched the heart and stirred the conscience of this perjured, bloody-minded adulteress, who through life had been steeped in crime to the very lips. She called upon her husband to recognize with her the chastening hand of an offended God. She even sought, by burning the lists of those whom she had marked out as objects for an arbitrary and grinding taxation, to appease the wrath of Heaven. "Often", she said to Chilperic, "has God afflicted us with fevers, and other misfortunes, but no amendment on our part has followed. Lo! now we have lost our children! The tears of the poor, the lamentations of the widow, have destroyed them". Her repentance, however, soon gave way before her more habitual feelings. Clovis, the son of Chilperic's first queen or concubine, Andovera, alone remained as heir to the Neustrian throne. Unable to endure the thought that others might cherish hopes which she herself had lost, Fredegunda accused this prince of having poisoned her children; and having induced the weak and wicked Chilperic to imprison him, she soon afterwards caused him to be murdered, together with Andovera herself.

Guntram of Burgundy, as we have seen, aided in establishing Childebert on his father's throne; and in AD 576 checked the victorious advance of Chilperic's troops. But in AD 581 the party of Austrasian seigniors which was favorable to the Neustrian alliance,—chiefly in consequence of their enmity to Brunhilda—obtained the upper hand, and induced or forced their young king to ally himself with Chilperic against Burgundy. As the price of this alliance—and he did nothing without being richly paid for it—Chilperic was allowed to take possession of Senlis, Poitou, and Meaux, while Childebert was amused with the shadowy prospect of succeeding to the kingdom of Paris. At the head of the faction above referred to, were Bishop Egidius, and the Dukes Ursio and Bertefried, the political and personal enemies of Brunhilda. The queen was ably though unsuccessfully supported by Duke Lupus,

whose steady attachment to his royal mistress's cause, even to his own destruction, inclines us to give more than usual credit to the eulogies of Fortunatus.

The anarchy into which the state had fallen after the death of Sigebert, the pride and insolence of the seigniors, and the rancorous feelings with which they regarded Brunhilda are portrayed in vivid colors in the pages of Gregory. "Lupus, Duke of Campania", he says, "had for a long time been persecuted and plundered by his adversaries, especially by the two powerful dukes Ursio and Bertefried, who, determined to take his life, marched against him with an armed band of followers. Brunhilda, being informed of their intentions, and moved with pity by the persecutions to which her faithful adherent was subjected, rushed forth in male attire between the ranks of the enemy, crying out, 'Refrain, refrain, from this evil deed, and do not persecute the innocent. Do not, on account of one man, commence a conflict by which the welfare of the country may be destroyed". Ursio insolently answered the temperate words of the mother of his king : "Depart from us, o woman! Be content to have possessed the royal power under your husband. Your son now reigns, and his kingdom is preserved, not by your guardianship, but by ours. Retire from us, lest the hoofs of our horses should trample you under foot".

In AD 583 Guntram found it necessary to sue for peace, and was obliged, in order to gain it, to leave his brother Chilperic in possession of all the territory he had conquered in the course of the war. In the same year, however, an attempt of the Burgundians to recover that part of Marseilles of which the Austrasians were in possession afforded Egidius an opportunity of forming a fresh alliance between Childebert and Chilperic; and he himself headed an embassy to the Neustrian court with this object. Chilperic gladly accepted his nephew's overtures, and prepared to attack Guntram. The fortune of war, however, which had hitherto enabled him to make large additions to his own territory at the expense of his kinsmen, now deserted him. He besieged Bourges without success. His general Desiderius was beaten by the Burgundians; and when Chilperic hastened in person to meet his brother in the field, he suffered a reverse which greatly cooled his warlike and predatory ardor. Nor were his allies at all inclined to help him out of his difficulties. The great body of the Austrasians, and a party even among the seigniors, were averse to an alliance with Chilperic and Fredegunda, the real object of which they believed to be the increase of Neustrian—in other words Roman—influence in their own government. On the news of Chilperic's discomfiture a violent mutiny broke out in the army of Childebert against the authors of the war, and especially against Egidius, who narrowly escaped the fury of the soldiers by the fleetness of his horse, leaving one of his slippers on the road in the hurry of his flight.

MURDER OF CHILPERIC AT CHELLES.

Brunhilda for the time regained her ascendancy; and Chilperic expecting, as a matter of course, to see his late enemy and his late ally unite for his destruction, made great preparations to meet them. The looked for attack was not made, but in the same year Chilperic himself died, or, as Gregory has it, "poured forth his wicked spirit" beneath the hand of an assassin, named Falca, as he was riding through a forest in the neighborhood of Paris.

Gregory of Tours appears to be ignorant of the instigators and perpetrators of this crime; but, according to a romantic story, the minuteness of which is very suspicious, Chilperic fell a victim to the treachery of her for whose sake he had dared and sinned so much. Among the numerous lovers of Fredegunda was the Majordomos Laudericus, whose intimate relation to his queen was accidentally discovered by Chilperic while on a hunting expedition at Chelles. Fredegunda quieted the fears of her lover by promising to send murderers to attack her husband as he was dismounting from his horse; which was done accordingly.

Brunhilda, very naturally, wished to take the opportunity afforded by Chilperic's death of making reprisals in the enemy's country, and of avenging herself on her implacable and now widowed rival Fredegunda. But Guntram, who had good reasons for desiring that neither Austrasia nor Neustria should become too powerful, came forward on this occasion to protect one, whom at another time he had called "the enemy of God and man". Shortly before Chilperic's death (in AD 584) Fredegunda had borne a son, whom, though the popular voice assigned him another father, Chilperic appears to have acknowledged as his heir. Her first endeavor therefore was to induce her brother-in-law to act as sponsor to this child, by which she thought that both his legitimacy would be established and his succession to the throne secured. Guntram did actually proceed, in the Christmas of AD 585, from Orleans to Paris, to fulfill her wishes in this respect. But, according to Gregory's account, when Guntram was prepared to take part in the ceremony, the child was not forthcoming. Three times was the Burgundian king summoned to be present at the baptism of Clotaire, and three times was he obliged to leave Paris, without seeing his intended godchild; and under these circumstances he thought himself justified in suspecting the infant king's legitimacy. As he uttered in the most public manner his

complaints of Fredegunda's conduct, and his unfavorable impressions concerning the child, the queen, in the presence of three bishops, three hundred of the chief men in her kingdom, and probably of the King of Burgundy himself, solemnly swore that Clotaire was the son of Chilperic. Yet Guntram's suspicions were not altogether laid to rest, nor was the child baptized before AD 591. He immediately, however, assumed the office of the young king's guardian and administrator of the kingdom, and occupied Paris with his troops. Childebert, who hastened too late in the same direction, though grievously disappoint at the turn which things had taken, still hoped to induce his uncle to share the spoil that fortune had thrown in their way, and sent an embassy to Paris, which had become the Neustrian capital. He reminded Guntram through these envoys how much they had both suffered from the rapacity of Chilperic, and urged him at least to lend his aid in demanding back all that had been unjustly and violently taken from them. But Fredegunda in the meantime had not been idle. She had disclosed to Guntram the terms of a treaty which had no long time before been made between the seigniors of Childebert and the seigniors of Chilperic for the partition of Burgundy. He knew therefore the degree of confidence which could be placed in his nephew's ambassadors. He was able to display before their astonished eyes the very document which proved them to be traitors to their own master, to himself, and in fact to the whole Merovingian Dynasty. They were dismissed with a decided refusal. Childebert sent the same persons back again to Paris to demand that "the murderess of his father, uncle, aunt", and others, should be delivered up to him for punishment. To this message Guntram replied with more respect, but still refused compliance; declaring his intention of referring the matter to a grand council to be held at Paris. In the meantime Clotaire was proclaimed king, probably at Vitry.

The relations between Childebert and his uncle now became unfriendly, and actual hostilities were commenced, which appear to have resulted unfavorably for the former. The council which Guntram had summoned for AD 585 was eagerly looked forward to; and when it met, Egidius, Guntram-Boso, Sigewald and others,—who were now well known to be plotting the downfall of their own sovereign and of the King of Burgundy, and whose real object was to separate them as widely as possible,—appeared as the representatives of Childebert. They demanded, as before, the restoration of the territories which had belonged to Charibert, and the punishment of Fredegunda for her numerous crimes. As both parties had determined on their course beforehand, the discussion between Guntram and the Australian envoys soon degenerated into altercation and abuse; and when the latter left the court with threats of vengeance, the enraged king ordered them to be pelted with horse-dung, musty hay, and mud.

Fredegunda underwent a mock trial on this occasion, and was of coarse acquitted. Though the suspicions of the whole assembly rested on herself, she was asked to name the person whom she believed to be the murderer of her husband. She fixed on Chilperic's chamberlain Eberulf, out of revenge, as Gregory tells us, because he had refused to live with her. The unhappy man escaped into sanctuary for a time, but was subsequently seized and put to death by order of Guntram.

It became evident at this time to the astute Burgundian, for reasons which we shall proceed to explain, that nothing but a real, hearty, and lasting alliance between himself and Childebert could save them from falling a prey to the machinations of the turbulent and aspiring seigniors.

The period at which we have now arrived is remarkable in Frankish history as that in which the rising Aristocracy began to try its strength against the Monarchy. The royal power of the Merovingians, forced, as will be seen hereafter, into rapid growth by peculiarly favorable circumstances, culminated in the joint reigns of Chilperic, Guntram, and Sigebert. The accumulation of property in the hands of a few, as described in a subsequent chapter, and the consequent loss of independence by the great mass of the poorer freemen, were fatal to the stability of the Merovingian throne. A privileged and powerful order of nobility was in process of formation, and was at this time strong enough to wage a doubtful war against both king and people. The latter were on the side of the monarchy; and, had the reins of government remained in able and energetic hands, the loyalty of the commons might have sustained the throne against all the attacks to which it was subjected. The murder of Sigebert had an extraordinary effect on the position of the contending parties, and did much to accelerate the downfall of the successors of Clovis.

The enemies of Sigebert's infant successor were those of his own household, the great landowners, the dignified clergy, the high officials of the kingdom, who seized the opportunity—afforded by the minority of the crown—of taking the entire administration into their own hands. The chief opponent of their wishes, by whose extraordinary vigor the downfall of the throne was retarded, though not prevented, was the widow of the murdered king, Brunhilda. The misfortunes and sufferings of her checquered life, and the horrible death by which it was closed, were mainly owing to the intense hatred she excited by her opposition to the ambitious designs of the seigniors.

GUNDOBALD THE PRETENDER.

The deeply rooted attachment of the people to the long-haired Salian kings rendered it dangerous for any party, however powerful, to pursue openly their designs against the monarchy; and we find that in all the rebellions which broke out at this period, the malcontents were headed by some real or pretended scion of the Merovingian stock. The plan so frequently adopted by aristocracies in their struggle with royalty, of setting up a pretender to the crown, was resorted to during the minority of Sigebert's son, Childebert II, and not without effect. The person fixed on this occasion was generally known by the name of Gundobald, though King Guntram asserted that his real name was Ballomer, and that he was the son of a miller or a woolcomber. The account which Gregory of Tours gives of him is interesting, and inspires a doubt, to say the least, whether he was not really, as he assumed to be, the son of Clotaire I by one of his numerous mistresses. The historian relates that Gundobald was born in Gaul, and carefully brought up according to the customs of the Merovingian family. His hair was allowed to grow long, as a mark of his royal descent; and, after he had received a literal education, he was presented by his mother to king Childebert I, with these words: "Behold, here is your nephew, the son of King Clotaire. Since he is hated by his father, do you receive him, for he is your flesh and blood". Childebert, who was childless, received him kindly; but when Clotaire heard of it, he sent for the youth, and declaring that he had "never begotten him", ordered him to be shorn.

After the death of Clotaire I, Gundobald was patronized by King Charibert. Sigebert, however, once more cut off his hair, and sent him into custody at Cologne. Escaping from that place, and allowing his hair to grow long again, Gundobald took refuge with the imperial general Narses, who then commanded in Italy. There he married and had children, and went subsequently to Constantinople, where, as it would appear, he was received by the Greek Emperor with every mark of respect and friendship. He was then, according to his own account, invited by Guntram-Boso to come to Gaul, and, having landed at Marseilles, was received by Bishop Theodore and the Patrician Mummolus.

Such was the person fixed on by the mutinous grandees of Austrasia as a tool for the furtherance of their designs against the monarchy. Nor could they have found one better suited to their purpose. It is evident in the first place that he was himself fully persuaded of the justice of his own claims; a conviction which gave him a greater power of inspiring faith in others than the most consummate art. He was entirely dependent on the aid of the rebellious nobles for his chance of success, and would therefore, had he succeeded in effecting his purpose, have been bound by gratitude, as well as forced by circumstances, to consult the interests of those who had raised him to the throne. The fact of his residence at Constantinople, and the sanction of his claims by the Greek Emperor, were not without their weight. The prestige of the Roman Empire, as we observed above, had not yet entirely perished, nor had the Franks altogether ceased to look on Rome and Constantinople as the great fountains of power and honor. The nobles indeed intended that no one should really rule but themselves; but as they could not do so in their own names, nothing would better have suited their views than to have a puppet king in nominal allegiance to a weak and distant emperor. Under such circumstances they alone, in the utter decay of the old German freedom and the popular institutions in which it lived, would have become possessors of the substantial power of the empire.

The cause of Gundobald was much aided by the miserable jealousies existing between the different Frankish kings, who, instead of uniting their forces against their common enemy—the rising aristocracy—were eager to employ the pretender as a weapon of annoyance against each other.

Among the chief actors in this conspiracy—though a secret one—was Guntram-Boso, a man whom Gregory quaintly describes as too much addicted to perjury; so that he never took an oath to any of his friends which he did not afterwards break. "In other respects", adds the historian, he was "sane bonus!" Gundobald relates, with every appearance of probability, that he met with Guntram-Boso while at Constantinople,—that the wily plotter informed him that the race of the Merovingians consisted of only three persons, Guntram of Burgundy, and his two Nephews (Childebert II, and the little son of Chilperic), and invited him to Gaul with the assurance that he was eagerly expected by all the Australian magnates. "I gave him", says Gundobald, "magnificent presents, and he swore at twelve holy places that I might safely go to Gaul".

On his arrival at Marseilles in AD 582, Gundobald was received by Bishop Theodore, who furnished him with horses, and by the Patrician Mummolus, whose conduct in withdrawing from the Burgundian court, and throwing himself with all his followers and treasures into the fortress of Avignon, had excited the suspicions of King Guntram.

Gundobald joined him in that place, and was there besieged by the very man who had first invited him to Gaul, viz. Guntram-Boso. This double traitor had endeavored to keep his treachery out of sight, and to stand well with both parties, until fortune should point out the stronger. His namesake

Guntram of Burgundy, however, was not deceived, and took an opportunity of seizing Boso on his return from a journey to the court of Childebert. The Burgundian king openly charged him with having invited Gundobald to Gaul, and having gone to Constantinople for that very purpose. It now became necessary for Boso to take a decided part; and, as the king would listen to no mere protestations, he offered to leave his son as a hostage, and himself to lead an army to attack Mummolus and Gundobald in Avignon. The Pretender and the Patrician, however, defended themselves with so much skill and courage, that Guntram-Boso, with all his now sincere endeavors to storm the town, could make no progress; and the siege was, singularly enough, raised by the troops of king Childebert II.

This extraordinary interference of the youthful King of Austrasia in behalf of a pretender to his own crown, can hardly receive a satisfactory explanation; and the historian Gregory himself throws no light upon the mystery. It is not impossible that the Austrasian magnates, who were almost all more or less interested in the success of the conspiracy, may have blinded both the king and his mother Brunhilda to the real objects of Gundobald; and we see that any one of the royal kinsmen would have gladly aided Gundobald, if they could have been sure that his claims were confined to the throne of his neighbors. The want of common action between the courts became still more evident in the sequel, and, but for the wisdom and vigor of Guntram, would have proved the ruin of the whole royal house.

The murder of Chilperic in AD 584 renewed the hopes of Gundobald and his friends, by inflicting upon Neustria the same evils of a minority from which Austrasia had already suffered so severely.

A numerous party, including many of the ablest and boldest of the Austrasian seigniors, were openly or secretly attached to the Pretender's cause. He had gained possession of Angouleme, Perigord, Toulouse, and Bordeaux; and at Christmas AD 584 he was even raised on the shield at Brives (in Correze), and saluted with the royal title. The Burgundian king now plainly saw that not only the throne of Childebert, but the whole Merovingian Dynasty, and even Monarchy itself, were at stake, and that, if the suicidal feud between himself and his nephew continued much longer, the success of the Pretender was by no means an improbable result. His first object, therefore, was to conciliate Childebert, and to lessen the influence which Brunhilda, on the one hand, and the great party of Austrasian nobles, who secretly favored Gundobald, on the other, had hitherto exercised over his young and inexperienced mind. Fortune threw in Guntram's way the means of accomplishing his purpose. Since the death of Chilperic, and the acquittal of Fredegunda which had so greatly offended Brunhilda and her son, the cause of the Pretender was evidently prospering, and the greater part of the Austrasian seigniors were only waiting for a fair assurance of success to declare themselves openly in his favor.

In AD 535 Gundobald was in a position to send to Guntram regular ambassadors, furnished, after the Frankish custom, with consecrated rods in token of inviolability, to demand of him a portion of the kingdom of their common father Clotaire. "Should this be refused", they said, "Gundobald will invade these territories with a large army; for all the bravest men in Gaul beyond the Dordogne are in league with him". "And then", added Gundobald, by the mouth of his messengers, "when we meet on the field of battle, will God decide whether I am Clotaire's son or not".

Guntram, who was no less bold than cunning, and by no means scrupulous, put the envoys of Gundobald to the torture, and made them confess in their agony that all the grandees of Childebert's kingdom were in secret understanding with the Pretender, and that Guntram-Boso had gone to Constantinople to invite him into Gaul. Nothing could be more opportune for Guntram's purposes than this confession. He immediately reported it to his nephew, and begged him to come and hear it repeated by the unhappy envoys themselves. Childebert agreed to the proposed meeting, and heard, to his astonishment, the confirmation of his subjects' treachery. With a well-timed generosity, Guntram not only gave up all the points on which he and Childebert had been divided, and restored important possessions to the Austrasian crown, but presented his nephew to the Burgundian people and army, as the future heir of his throne. Placing his spear, one of the ensigns of Frankish royalty, in the hand of the young king, "This", said he, "is a sign that I have delivered my whole kingdom into your hands. Depart hence, and bring all my dominions under your sway, as if they were your own".

In a private conference he gave his nephew sound advice with respect to the choice of counselors, warning him more particularly against Egidius, the traitorous bishop of Rheims, and against Brunhilda, his own mother. He also begged him to hold no communication of any kind with Gundobald.

This alliance was felt by the conspirators to be fatal to their cause. Many immediately deserted Gundobald, and those who still remained about his person, the chief of whom were Bishop Sagittarius, Dukes Mummolus and Bladastes, and Waddo the Majordomus, fled with him to a town called Convene, strongly situated on an isolated hill in the Pyrenees. The army of Guntram under Leudegisil,

soon attacked the place with newly-constructed military engines, but with so little success, that, after a siege of some weeks, they found it necessary to offer terms to Mummolus and the other leaders, on condition of their betraying Gundobald. To this proposal no objection was raised by the conspirators, who thought only of their own safety.

They went to the unhappy Pretender, and advised him to throw himself on his brother's mercy, by whom they assured him he would be well received. Gundobald was not deceived by their specious representations: bursting into tears, he said, "By your invitation I came into Gaul; but of my treasures, in which there is an immense weight of silver and gold and various costly rings, part is kept at Avignon and part has been stolen by Guntram-Boso. Next to God, I have based all my hopes upon you, and have always expected to reign by your means. If ye have spoken falsely to me now, make up your account with God, for He himself shall judge my cause". Mummolus assured him with an oath that he should take no harm, and persuaded him to leave the city, at the gate of which, he told him, brave men were waiting to receive him. He was then handed over to Olio, Count of Bourges, and Guntram-Boso, who murdered him in cold blood as he descended the precipitous hill on which the city stood. The besieging army was soon after admitted into the town, the inhabitants were put to the sword, and even the priests were slain at the altars.

Nor did the traitors, who sought their own safety by sacrificing the victim of their arts, escape the punishment they deserved. Guntram paid no attention to the terms of their surrender, or the promise of pardon held out to them, but ordered them all to be put to death. Bishop Sagittarius and Mummolus suffered at once; the others met their fate at a later period.

We have thought it worthwhile to give a more detailed account of this conspiracy, because it was one of the most remarkable attempts of the nascent aristocracy to bring the crown into subserviency to themselves—an object in which, at a subsequent period, they fully succeeded. The account, too, of these transactions, as it stands in the pages of Gregory, gives us an insight into the state of society in that turbulent and chaotic period, when the bands of society were loosed, and treachery and violence were resorted to even by those who were engaged to a certain degree on the side of justice and legal authority. The degradation of the Church and its ministers is also brought painfully before us in the history of these times. Priests and bishops are among the conspirators, the perjurors, and the murderers; and so completely lose their sacerdotal character in the eyes both of king and people, that they are condemned to death by the one, and slaughtered at their altars by the other.

For the moment the cause of royalty was triumphant, and Brunhilda was enabled openly to take upon herself the guardianship of her still youthful son, and the administration of his kingdom. The spectacle of a woman reigning—and that woman Brunhilda, the energetic champion of royalty— soon gave rise to a renewal of the struggle in which she was engaged until her death.

Not more than two years after the death of Gundobald, the Austrasian and Neustrian nobles united in a new conspiracy, the object of which was to put Childebert to death, to deprive Guntram of his kingdom, and to place the infant sons of the former on the vacant thrones of Australia and Burgundy. The seigniors sought in fact to hasten that minority of the crown which afterwards occurred, and proved so advantageous to their cause. This fresh attempt was headed by Rauching, Ursio, and Bertefried (of whom we have spoken above), who intended to share the chief authority among themselves, under the pretence of administering the kingdom for the sons of Childebert. The increasing power of Brunhilda, and her well-known desire of revenging the insults she had received at their hands, served to quicken their movements, and drove them prematurely into rebellion. In this case, too, a pretence of hereditary claims was set up, Rauching having given out that he also was a son of Clotaire. But the watchfulness of Guntram, who employed their own treacherous arts against themselves, completely frustrated their designs.

As soon as he had received secret intelligence of the plans of the conspirators, he sent a letter of warning to his nephew, who ordered Rauching to be summoned to the court, and had him killed as he left the royal chamber, where he had been received with treacherous kindness. The rebels appointed a new leader, but were unable to make head against Childebert's army. Ursio and Bertefried were defeated and slain; Guntram-Boso also, who groveled at the feet of Brunhilda with the most abject entreaties for his life, received at last the reward of his crimes. The house in which he had taken refuge with Magneric, Bishop of Treves, as set on fire by the order of King Guntram, and as he sought to escape, he was pierced by such a shower of javelins that his body stood erect, supported by the bristling shafts. Egidius alone contrived to buy impunity for his treason with costly presents.

It was the fear of this new conspiracy of the seigniors that induced Guntram to draw still closer the bonds of amity and common interest which had of late united him to his nephew Childebert. In AD 587 they met again at Anlau (Andely, near Chaumont), to which place the young king, who was then seventeen years old, brought his mother Brunhilda, his sister Chlodosuinth, his wife Faileuba, and two

sons. After settling the long-pending disputes respecting the territory of Charibert, and other debatable points, the two monarchs and Brunhilda entered into a solemn compact of alliance and friendship.

The rebellious seigniors were for the time completely tamed by these numerous defeats and losses; and both Guntram and Childebert ruled their dominions, and disposed of the great offices of the State, with absolute authority. Summary punishment was inflicted on several of the rebellious seigniors, and especially on Ursio and Bertefried, who had made themselves conspicuous by their rancorous opposition to Brunhilda.

We return from the foregoing digression to the death of Chilperic, who fell, as we have seen, by the hand of an assassin in the forest of Chelles, in AD 584.

CHILPERIC'S ERUDITION.

The Prince who thus miserably ended his life, though enslaved by his passions and unbridled lusts to a faithless and cruel woman, was not altogether wanting in qualities which, if well directed, might have procured for him a more honorable memory. From the ecclesiastical historians, indeed, he meets with little quarter; yet even their strongly biassed account of him shows that he possessed a more original and cultivated intellect than was common among the princes of his time. The bitter denunciations of Gregory of Tours are evidently prompted by personal feelings, which it will not be difficult in some degree to account for. Mild and forgiving as we have found the historian to be in his judgment of monsters like Clovis and Clotaire, we cannot but read with astonishment the unmeasured terms of invective with which he speaks of Chilperic; especially as it was open to him, had he been charitably inclined, to have ascribed the majority of his evil deeds to the influence of Fredegunda. He calls him "the Nero and Herod of our times", and says that he devastated whole regions with fire and sword, and derived the same pleasure from the misery he caused as Nero from the flames of Rome. "He was given up to gluttony", continues Gregory, "and his god was his belly; yet he maintained that no one was wiser than himself, and composed two books, in which he took the poet Sedulius as his model. His feeble verses accorded with no measure, since, from want of understanding, he put shorts for longs, and longs for shorts. He also wrote other works, as hymns and masses".

The unpopularity of Chilperic among the ecclesiastical historians proceeded not entirely from the cruelty and lasciviousness of his character, but in a greater degree, perhaps, from the fact that he failed in the respect which the clergy exacted from the laity, and that he meddled with theological questions. Gregory himself came several times into direct collision with Chilperic, and certainly did not conceal his displeasure at the conduct and opinions of the king. "Against no one", says Gregory, "did he direct so much ridicule and so many jokes, in his private hours, as the bishops; one of them he called proud, another frivolous, another luxurious—hating nothing so much as the churches. For he frequently said, 'Lo! our treasury remains empty. Lo! Our wealth is transferred to the churches. None really reign but the bishops".

Contemptuously as the historian speaks of his royal master's prosody, and his other literary labors, it is evident from Gregory's own pages that Chilperic was possessed of considerable erudition for the age in which he lived. Amongst other things, he added four new letters to the alphabet, and gave orders that they should be taught to the children throughout the kingdom, and that all ancient manuscripts should be rewritten in accordance with the new system. When Gregory himself was charged with treason, and of having accused the queen of committing adultery with the Archbishop of Bordeaux, the king addressed the council in such a manner, "that all admired his wisdom and patience".

Chilperic has been compared to Henry VIII of England, to whom, in many points of his character and life, he certainly bore a very remarkable resemblance. Like Henry, Chilperic, notwithstanding his cruelty, was evidently not unpopular with the great mass of his subjects. The Frankish king had indeed only three wives, and was directly concerned in the death of only one; but, like his English brother, he was eminently lascivious; and no one inferior in personal and mental gifts to Fredegunda, or less deeply versed in meretricious arts, could have retained so long a hold upon his affections. Both kings were sensible to mental as well as sensual pleasures, and desirous of literary fame. Though they lived in the daily violation of God's law and every principle of our Redeemer's religion, they were both extremely concerned about the purity of Christian doctrines, and wrote works in support of their opinions. The theological career of our own king is well known to have been a most successful one. He made himself for the time the fountain of pure doctrine as well as honor, and those who differed from him had the fear of Smithfield before their eyes. It was far otherwise with the Frankish king, who lived in a very different age. Chilperic wrote a work upon the Trinity, from Gregory's description of which it would seem that the king was inclined to the Sabellian heresy. He denied the distinction of persons in the Godhead, and declared that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were the same person. He was naturally desirous of having his doctrines preached throughout his dominions; and after causing his

dissertations to be read to Gregory of Tours, he said, “Thus I wish that you and the other teachers of the Church should believe”. The bishop, however, on this as on many other occasions, steadily resisted the king, and endeavored to confute him by argument. The king angrily declared that he would explain the matter to wiser men, who would, no doubt, agree with him. On which the bishop, with a freedom which is hardly consistent with his description of Chilperic as the Nero and Herod of his age, replied, “It will never be a wise man, but a fool, who is willing to assent to your proposition”. A few days afterwards, the king explained his opinions to Salvius, Bishop of Alby, who, so for from giving them a more favorable reception, declared that if he could but lay hands on the paper in which those writings were contained, he would tear them in pieces. “And so”, adds the historian, “the king desisted from his intentions”.

FRANKS SUBSIDISED BY MAURICE.

So powerful, brave, and turbulent a nation as the Franks could not remain long without making their influence felt beyond the limits of their own country; and the state of Italy and the Eastern Empire was eminently favorable to their aggressive tendencies. About three years before the Treaty of Anlau, the Greek emperor, Maurice, being hard pressed in Italy by the Arian Longobards, applied for aid to the Franks, as the most orthodox and powerful of all the German tribes. He knew them too well, however, to rely solely on their theological predilections, and offered them 50,000 solidi if they would cross the Alps and come to his assistance, which they readily promised to do.

There is something very exciting to the imagination in the account of the relation and intercourse between the pompous, formal, verbose, and over-civilized Byzantine emperors—with their high-sounding but unmeaning titles,—and the “rough and ready” kings of the Franks, whose actual power was far greater than its external insignia announced. Childebert addressed the gorgeous but feeble monarch whom he is called upon to save from a kindred tribe of Germans, as “Dominus gloriosus ac semper Augustus”. In still loftier style does the Greek emperor speak of himself, in the commencement of his letters, as “Imperator Caesar Flavius Mauritius Tiberius, Fidelis in Christo, Mansuetus, Maximus, Beneficus, Pacificus, Allemanicus, Gothicus, Anticus, Vandalicus, Erulicus, Gepidicus, Africanus, Felix, Inclitus, Victor ac Triumphator semper Augustus”, while Childebert is simply addressed “Childeberto viro glorioso regi Francorum”. Yet the position of these sublime Greek potentates was such that they were compelled to lean for support on a prop they affected to despise. The policy they were pursuing, in thus calling a warlike, ambitious, and unscrupulous people into Italy, was a critical one; but they had sufficient grounds for preferring the alliance of the Franks to that of the Lombards, both in the common Catholicity of the former, and in their distance from the imperial dominions, which made both their friendship and their enmity less dangerous.

In AD 584, when he was not above fourteen years of age, Childebert proceeded to perform his part in the contract with the Emperor Maurice, and led an army across the Alps with the intention of attacking the Longobards. The latter were no match for the Franks; nor did they imagine themselves to be so. They saw at once that they could only avoid destruction by bending to the storm, and disarming hostility by complete submission. Childebert and his followers were plied with magnificent gifts, to which the Franks, like all half-civilized nations, were peculiarly susceptible; and not only refrained from doing any injury to the Longobards, but contracted a friendly alliance with them. The Emperor Maurice heard, to his astonishment, that the Franks had retired into Gaul without striking a blow, enriched by presents from both parties. Incensed at their treachery, he applied for restitution of the 50,000 solidi paid in advance for the expulsion of the Longobards. To this application Childebert returned no answer at all,—a course which, under the circumstances, was perhaps not the worst he could have taken. In the following year, however, the Austrasian king, who was quite impartial in his bad faith, sent word to the emperor, that he was now ready to perform his promise. Accordingly, after a vain attempt to induce his uncle Guntram to take part in the expedition, he advanced alone against his newly-made friends, the Longobards, from whom he had so lately parted in perfect amity. The latter, however, far from giving themselves up to fancied security, had spent the interval in preparing for the attack of their venal and fickle friends. The Franks, on the other hand, had fallen into the error of despising an enemy who had so unresistingly yielded to them in the former year. They advanced with confidence into Italy, hoping, perhaps, to return as before laden with the price of their forbearance—but they were miserably deceived.

On their approach, King Autharis and his Longobards advanced to meet them in good order and with great alacrity, and gave the overconfident Austrasians a bloody and decisive defeat.

A fresh invasion of Italy by the Franks took place in AD 590, when Childebert is said to have sent twenty generals at the head of as many divisions of his army. Yet even this great effort, though at first apparently successful, was without any lasting results. After the greater part of the invading force had perished by famine and dysentery, a peace was made through the good offices of King Guntram, who

had wisely kept himself aloof. In the same year in which this peace was concluded, Autharis, King of the Longobards, died, and was succeeded by Agilulf, whom the nation placed upon the throne on his marriage with the widowed Queen Theudelinda. The new king lost no time in confirming the treaty which his predecessor had made; and sent ambassadors for that purpose to the Austrasian court; directing them also to restore some captives whom Brunhilda had ransomed with her own money. .

A considerable time elapsed before the Franks were again in a condition to carry on a distant war; but their attention was never afterwards wholly withdrawn from Italy—a land whose beauty has in all times roused the lust of conquest. They instinctively felt that it would not be safe to allow that country to fall under the dominion of the Greek emperors, whose traditions prompted them to constant efforts to change their empty titles into the realities of universal empire.

At the death of his uncle Guntram, in April AD 593, Childebert succeeded to the kingdom of Burgundy, according to the above-mentioned Treaty of Anlau. This new accession of territory appears to have awakened in him the desire and hope of obtaining the sole sovereignty of the Frankish empire; for we find him almost immediately afterwards attacking his cousin Clotaire II. His attempt to seize the city of Soissons was foiled by the skill and conduct of Fredegunda. A bloody engagement soon afterwards ensued between the two youthful kings, at the head of their respective forces, in which 30,000 men are said to have fallen without any decisive result.

The last great military event of the reign of Childebert was the defeat and almost complete destruction of the Varni; who, according to some accounts, lived among the Thuringians, but whom Procopius represents as inhabiting the country lying between the Elbe and the Rhine. In AD 595 they rebelled against the Franks, and received so terrible a chastisement, that from this time forward they altogether disappear from history.

In the following year Childebert died, at the age of twenty-six, by poison, together with his wife Faileuba. His elder son, Theudebert, though of illegitimate birth, succeeded peaceably to the kingdom of Austrasia; while Theoderic, the younger, who was but nine years old, received Burgundy and some territories hitherto attached to Austrasia, viz., Alsace, the Sundgau (about the sources of the Meuse), the Tulgau (about Toul and Bar le Duc), and part of Champagne, with Orleans as his capital. And thus, by a singular dispensation of Providence, Brunhilda, the guardian of the infant kings, became once more virtual ruler of the greater part of the Frankish Empire, while Neustria was still under the influence of her implacable enemy and hated rival Fredegunda. Brunhilda took up her residence at Metz, intrusting the administration of Burgundy to her friends.

DEATH OF FREDEGUNDA.

Under such auspices, it was not likely that the two kingdoms should remain long at peace. Both sides prepared for war, and a great battle is said to have been fought at Latofaus (Liffou), which has been variously placed on the Seine in the diocese of Sens, and on the Meuse at Neufchateau, in the province of Lorraine. The battle was fierce and bloody, and, though not very decisive, appears to have been favorable to the Neustrians. But the hopes of triumph and long-desired vengeance which may have been kindled thereby in the bosom of Fredegunda were now chilled forever by the hand of death. In AD 597, her envious and restless spirit, which through life had been excited and tortured by every violent and wicked passion, was for the first time laid to rest.

Of the beauty, talent, and extraordinary energy of this remarkable woman, there can be no doubt; but if we are to believe one half the stories which her contemporary, Gregory of Tours, relates of her—as it were incidentally, and without any appearance of antipathy or passion—we must ascribe to Fredegunda a character unsurpassed by either sex in the annals of the world for cruelty and baseness.

In such a character, the sins which would consign the generality of women to infamy—incontinence before marriage and tenfold adultery after it—appear but trifling: we are astonished to find a touch even of guilty tenderness in a heart so black and stony. By the sacrifice of her honor to the irregular passions of Chilperic, she rose, if we may call it so, from the obscure position in which she was born, and gained an entrance into the palace. Through the blood of the ill-fated Galsuintha, Brunhilda's sister, she waded to the throne. Having induced Chilperic—who, whatever he was to others, was certainly a gracious king and loving husband to her—to murder his royal bride, and publicly marry herself, she was continually at his ear suggesting and urging the commission of the crimes which have branded his name with infamy.

Her whole life, after her elevation to the throne, appears to have been passed in planning and executing murder. We have seen the means by which she succeeded in removing Sigebert from her path; and both Brunhilda and her children were the constant object of her secret machinations. In AD 584, when she was at the village of Rueil, grieved at the growing power of Brunhilda, "to whom she considered herself superior", she sent a confidential priest to her with instructions to represent himself

as a fugitive from the Neustrian court, and, after ingratiating himself with his intended victim, to take an opportunity of killing her. This artful scheme was nearly successful; but the intended assassin was accidentally detected, and dismissed to his patroness with no other punishment than a richly-deserved flagellation. Fredegunda, however, when she heard that his mission had failed, fully made up for the clemency of Brunhilda by ordering his hands and feet to be cut off.

In the following year she renewed her attempts, and prepared two knives, which she dipped in deadly poison and gave to two priests, with these instructions: "Take these weapons, and go with all possible speed to King Childebert, pretending that you are mendicants: and when you have thrown yourselves at his feet, as if demanding alms, stab him in both his sides, that Brunhilda, whose pride is founded upon him, may at length fall with him and be subordinate to me; but if there is so strong a guard about the boy that you cannot approach him, then kill my enemy herself". Notwithstanding the great promises she made to themselves, should they escape, and to their families if they died in the attempt, the priests "began to tremble, thinking it very difficult to fulfill her commands". Fredegunda then primed them with an intoxicating potion, under the influence of which they promised ail that she desired. She also gave them some of the liquor to take with them, directing them to use it just before the commission of the murder.

But it was not merely against what we may call her natural enemies that her murderous arts were directed. We have seen that she was charged with being the murderess of her husband; and though this may be doubtful, yet she certainly compassed the murder of Clovis, her stepson, by inventing the most horrible calumnies against him; and she endeavored to kill her own daughter Rigunthis, by forcing down the lid of an iron chest upon her neck. Her mode of settling a dispute, according to Gregory's account, has in it something almost comically cruel. A feud having arisen between two families in Tournai, in consequence of an unfortunate matrimonial alliance, the contending parties were frequently admonished by Fredegunda to desist from their contention and live in concord. When her exhortations proved fruitless, she adopted a more effectual means of pacifying them. "Having invited a great number of persons to a banquet, she caused the three who were principally concerned in the feud to occupy the same couch at the table. When the feast had been prolonged till nightfall, the table was removed, according to the Frankish custom, and the three guests reclined on the seat on which they had been placed. Their servants as well as themselves had drunk to excess, and were sleeping wherever they happened to fall. Three men armed with axes were then placed behind the couch, and the three occupants struck dead by simultaneous blows".

Her last crime appears to have been the murder of Pretextatus, Bishop of Rouen, who, on one occasion, sharply rebuked her for her evil life, and exhorted her to repentance and amendment. The Queen withdrew *felle fervens* and procured his murder on Easter Sunday, AD 590, when he was struck down by an assassin while engaged in the duties of his office. No sooner had he been removed, mortally wounded, to his bed, than Fredegunda came to visit him with hypocritical promises to avenge his death, if she could discover the murderer. But the bishop was not deceived, and when the treacherous queen begged permission to send a skillful physician to his aid, he replied, "God hath already ordered me to be summoned from the world; but thou who art found out to be the principal actor in these evil deeds wilt be accused forever, and God will visit my blood upon your head".

This daring as well as dreadful deed excited great indignation among the Frankish seigniors; and one of them, who was bold enough to denounce Fredegunda to her face and to threaten her with the consequences, was soon afterwards taken off by poison.

To say that she committed many other murders, which want of opportunity and power alone prevented her from doubling; that she brought false accusations against all who displeased her; that she ground the poor with intolerable taxes; that she attempted the life of her benefactor Guntram, who foolishly and wickedly maintained her cause when she was most in need of his assistance—will scarcely add one shade to the blackness of the character we have attempted to portray. A moiety of her crimes would be sufficient to stamp her as the Messalina and the Borgia of her age.

THEUDEBEBT AND THEODERIC

The traitorous faction of Austrasian seigniors, though for the time kept down by the vigor of Brunhilda and the prudence of Guntram, had never ceased from their intrigues, and succeeded at last, in AD 599, in persuading the youthful Theudebert to banish his grandmother from his court. The persecuted queen, like another Lear, took refuge with her other grandchild, Theoderic of Burgundy, and was courteously received by him. It is a remarkable fact, and speaks well for the young kings, and still better for the aged Brunhilda, that no breach of friendly intercourse between the two courts took place in consequence of this event.

The unity of the Frankish kings generally showed itself in joint undertakings against their neighbors. Theudebert and Theoderic manifested their mutual affection by attacking their cousin Clotaire, in AD 600, with their united forces; and they deprived him of all his dominions with the exception of the country which lies between the Seine, the Isere, and the ocean. They also directed their arms against the Wascones (or Gascons), a Spanish people living in the Pyrenees, whom the nature of their country and their own love of freedom had enabled to remain independent of the Gothic conquerors. We mention them here because we shall meet with them again in the time of Charlemagne himself, in whose history they play no unimportant part. These expeditions seem to prove that the warlike spirit of Clovis had not yet died out of his descendants, though the physical deterioration of the race had already proceeded to a great length.

Theudebert, who had banished his grandmother, and put his wife Bilichildis to death, that he might marry another woman, is described as being naturally a cruel prince; while the faults of Theoderic are ascribed to the evil counsels and influence of Brunhilda. She is accused of having prevented the young king from marrying, and of encouraging him in a course of vicious indulgences, in order to retain her influence at his court. Whether in consequence of the machinations of Brunhilda, or his own preference for promiscuous concubinage, it is certain that an attempt which the king made to live in lawful wedlock signally failed. In AD 607 he formed an alliance with Hermenberga, daughter of Viteric, king of the Spanish Visigoths, but sent her back into Spain within the year of their marriage despoiled of the treasures she had brought into Gaul. The young king's conduct on this occasion, though quite in accordance with his character and habits, is ascribed to the influence of Brunhilda, who is represented as having purposely rendered Hermenberga odious in the eyes of her husband, that she might retain the position of which a lawful and beloved wife must inevitably deprive her. Without at all intending to exculpate Brunhilda from the sin of ambition and the lust of power (and without power, be it observed, her life would not have been safe for a moment), we confess that we receive with great suspicion all that the works of Fredegar and other histories respecting her. No one can read these writers without observing the hostile spirit in which they speak of her, and the satisfaction they derived from minutely detailing all that can redound to her disadvantage. This malevolent spirit is the more remarkable when we compare the passages in which the rival queens are spoken of; for notwithstanding the extraordinary baseness of Fredegunda, she appears to be viewed by the historians with almost an indulgent feeling.

The expulsion of Brunhilda by the King of Austrasia and her favorable reception by his brother was followed, as we have seen, by no immediate breach of their good understanding.

Yet directly differences arose between them, they were ascribed to their unfortunate grandmother! Whatever part she may have played in the ensuing tragedy, it is plain that the main cause of their hostility was, as usual, mutual jealousy and covetousness. The ceded territory in Alsace and Lorraine, which Theudebert now wished to reunite to Austrasia, became an apple of discord between the brothers. Theoderic was compelled by a sudden inroad of the Austrasians to yield to their demands in AD 610; in revenge for which he spread a report that Theudebert was not the real son of Childebert, but a changeling. He also bought the neutrality of Clotaire, who was not ill-pleased to see his rivals exhausting themselves in their efforts to destroy one another. He then boldly marched into Austrasia, and was met by Theudebert at the head of all his forces in the neighborhood of Tull (or Toul), not far from Langres in Champagne. Theudebert was defeated in a great battle which ensued, and fled through the Vosges mountains to Cologne. He was quickly followed by his brother, who resolving, in accordance with the advice of Leonisius, Bishop of Mayence, "beatus et Apostolicus" to destroy him utterly, led his forces through the forest of Ardenne and took post at Zülpich. Theudebert, meanwhile, well aware that he could hope nothing even from entire submission, collected his scattered powers, and, having received reinforcements from the Saxon Thuringians, determined to hazard another battle. The conflict was long and doubtful, and bloody beyond the measure even of Frankish contests. Yet we can hardly receive literally the turgid expressions of Fredegar, who relates that the slaughter was so great, that the dying could not fall to the ground, but were propped up in an erect position between the heaps of slain. Theoderic, "Domino proecedente" was again victorious; and having taken his brother captive, and stripped him of all the insignia of royalty, sent him to Châlons, where he was shortly afterwards put to death by the order, as some say, of Brunhilda. Meroveus, the infant son of the defeated king, was at the same time dashed to pieces against a rock.

Theoderic now took full possession of Austrasia, and was meditating an attack, with the united forces of his two kingdoms, upon Clotaire, when his further progress was stayed and the aspect of affairs entirely changed, by his sudden decease at Metz, in AD 613, in the twenty-sixth year of his age.

BRUNHILDA'S REGENCY.

Nothing could be more unpromising for the future peace and strength of the united kingdoms of Austrasia and Burgundy than the circumstances in which they were placed at the death of Theoderic. He left behind him four sons; Sigebert, Childebert, Corvus, and Meroveus, the eldest of whom was born when his father was only fourteen years of age. The power of the seigniors had greatly increased during the late reign, and they now felt themselves strong enough to come boldly forward in resistance to the royal power.

The extraordinary prolongation of the regency of Brunhilda, who now began to act as guardian of her great-grandchildren, was above all things hateful to the powerful and unscrupulous party, who knew her constancy and energy, and were ever on the watch for an opportunity to feed their vengeance on her ruin. They feared, or pretended to fear, that the young princes were but tools in the hands of the queen for the accomplishment of her own will, and the gratification of her cruelty and pride. They again accused her of purposely undermining the bodily and mental vigor of her youthful charges by making them early acquainted with every enervating vice. The state of anarchy into which the kingdom had gradually been falling was the more complete at this period, because, while the power of the Merovingians had been greatly weakened, that of the mayors of the palace was not sufficiently established to ensure the blessing of a strong government, and to make the personal character of the king a matter of small importance. The people at large, indeed, still clung with singular devotion to the Merovingian dynasty; and a long succession of royal weaklings and idiots, designedly paraded before them in all their imbecility, was needed to make them untrue to the house under whose earlier members their vast empire had been acquired, and their military glory spread throughout the world.

The wish of Brunhilda was to place the eldest of Theoderic's sons upon the throne, but the party opposed to her was too strong, and too thoroughly roused into action by the prospect of a continuance of her regency, to allow her a chance of success. She had the mortification too, while she herself was declining in years and strength, of seeing her enemies united under the leadership of the ablest and most influential men in the empire, Bishop Arnulph and Pepin; both of whom held subsequently the office of majordomus. The fear and hatred which Brunhilda inspired among the seigniors were strong enough to overcome the antipathy existing between the Austrasians and Neustrians; and when the Austrasian seigniors found themselves unable to meet Brunhilda in the field with their own dependents alone, they did not scruple to call upon Clotaire II for aid, with the promise of making him monarch of the whole Frankish empire. Their objects in these traitorous measures are evident: they hoped, on the one hand, to weaken the monarchy by arraying the different branches of the royal family against each other; and, on the other, to acquire for themselves, under a ruler whose residence was in Neustria, the virtual possession of the government of Austrasia. The strong assurances of support which were made to Clotaire by Arnulph and Pepin, in the name of their party, were sufficient to induce him to lead his army to Andernach on the Rhine; Brunhilda and her great-grandchildren being then at Worms. The aged queen was not deceived as to the real state of things, and knew too well the strength which the invading army derived from the treachery of her own subjects. At first, therefore, she made an appeal to the enemy's forbearance, and sending an embassy to the king at Andernach she besought him to retire from the territory which Theoderic had bequeathed to his children. But Clotaire was equally well informed with herself of the state of the Austrasian army, and was not likely to feel much compunction for the children of one who had threatened to dethrone him. His answer to Brunhilda's message was a significant hint at her want of power to withstand him. "Whatever", he sent word back, "the Franks themselves, by the guidance of God, shall determine upon, I am ready to abide by".

The answer was understood, and Brunhilda wasted no more time in negotiations useful only to her enemies. She felt that all was lost but her own indomitable spirit, which neither age, nor the enmity of foes, nor the treachery of friends, were able to subdue. She dispatched Werner, the Australian Majordomus, with the young prince Sigebert, across the Rhine, to bring up the Thuringian Germans, in whose courage and fidelity she had reason to confide. But Werner himself had been tampered with, and purposely neglected to fulfill his mission. As a last resource, Brunhilda fled into Burgundy; but there, too, the chief men both of the Church and the laity, were banded together against her; and readily entered into a conspiracy with the traitor Werner for the destruction of the whole royal house of Austrasia. Sigebert, meantime, unconscious perhaps of the falsehood of those in whom he trusted for the protection of his helpless boyhood, advanced with his army against Clotaire, and encountered him between Chalons-sur-Marne and the river Aisne. Many of the Austrasian seigniors were at this time actually in the camp of the enemy, and of those who followed Sigebert multitudes were eager to desert. At the decisive moment, when an attempt was made to lead them into action, the Australians turned their backs without striking a blow, and, marching off the field, retreated to the Saône, closely followed by Clotaire, who had good reasons for not attacking them. On the river Saône the mutiny in

the camp of Sigebert became open and declared. The boy-king and his brothers were delivered up by their own soldiers into the hands of their enemies. Sigebert and Corvus were immediately put to death; Childebert escaped, and disappears from the page of history; while Meroveus, on account of some religious scruples in the mind of Clotaire, who was his godfather, was spared, and educated in a manner befitting his rank.

Nothing, however, was effected in the eyes of the rebellious and now triumphant seigniors, while their hated enemy Brunhilda remained alive. Though she could not at this time have been much less than seventy years old, she was an object of fear as well as hatred to thousands of mail-clad warriors in the full flush of victory. While the tragic fate of the young king was being decided on the banks of the Saône, Brunhilda was at Urba in Burgundy, with her grand-daughter Theodelinda. The defection of Werner and the mutiny of Sigebert's troops had left her without resources, and she was delivered up by the Constable Herpo into the hands of Clotaire and her numerous enemies; who, not content with simply putting her to death, glutted their eyes upon her agonies during three days of cruel torture. She was led round the camp upon a camel, and exposed to the derision of the multitude; and at last being bound hand and foot to a vicious horse, she was left to perish miserably.

We have already remarked upon the extreme difficulty of forming a fair judgment of the character of Brunhilda, arising from the unfavorable bias against her in the minds of the ecclesiastical writers of her day. We must remember that she had incurred the bitter hostility of the great dignitaries of the Church, no less than of the lay seigniors, by her endeavors to check the growth of their inordinate wealth, and to curb their rising spirit of insubordination. The account given by Fredegar of her conflict with Saint Columban, the Irish missionary, conveys to us a very clear idea of the feelings of the clergy towards her; and to offend the clergy, the only chroniclers of that age, was to ensure historical damnation and an infamous immortality. But in Brunhilda's case, the zeal of her enemies outruns their discretion, and the very extravagance of their charges both excites suspicion and furnishes materials for their refutation.

Fredegar, in his chronicle, calls her "another Jezebel", and says that Clotaire's inordinate hatred of her arose from her having killed ten Frankish kings and princes. Fortunately for the reputation of the accused, Fredegar has mentioned the names of these ten royal victims; but of these there is not one whose murder has not been ascribed to some other and far more probable agent, by better authorities than Fredegar. "Clotaire", says Montesquieu, "reproached her with the death of ten kings, two of whom he had put to death himself; the death of some others must be charged upon the fate or wickedness of another queen; and the nation which had allowed Fredegunda to die in her bed, and opposed the punishment of her flagrant crimes, should have beheld with the greatest calmness the sins of a Brunhilda".

Amidst such palpable misrepresentations, it is difficult to know what to believe, and hazardous to fix upon her any of the specific crimes with which she has been charged. To say that she was guilty of intrigue and violence is to say that she lived and struggled in an age and in a court where these were the only means of self-preservation. We see that she was ambitious, and crime was at that period more peculiarly the companion and assessor of power.

Her desire of vengeance was roused at the very commencement of her career by injuries which only a saint could have forgiven. She had to struggle through her whole life with antagonists who beset her path with the dagger and the poison cup, and against whom she could not possibly have held her ground without sometimes turning their own detestable weapons against themselves. That she committed many crimes, therefore, which nothing can justify, though the circumstances of her life may in some degree palliate them, we cannot reasonably doubt. Yet even through the dark veil which hostile chroniclers have thrown over the character of Brunhilda, many traces may be discerned of what is noble, generous, and even tender, in her disposition. Nor can we, while we read her history, suppress the thought, that she who died a death of torture amidst exulting foes, had that within her which in better times would have made her the ornament and the blessing of the country over which she ruled, and ensured her a niche in the vast catacombs of history among the wise, the great, and good.

It is evident from the fact that the greatest possible publicity was given to the horrid spectacle of Brunhilda's execution, that the hatred against her was not only intense but general; for otherwise her enemies would not have run the risk of exciting the sympathy of the multitude in her nameless sufferings. And yet she would seem to have had all the qualities calculated to excite the enthusiastic partiality of subjects towards their rulers. She was the daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother of kings; and had, moreover, beauty and intellect enough to raise a peasant to a throne.

Her indomitable courage, her ceaseless activity, and extraordinary skill in the conduct of affairs, enabled her to carry on with wonderful success a conflict with the powerful seigniors, and to postpone

for many years the downfall of the monarchy. Her mental and personal graces attracted the attention and admiration of Pope Gregory the Great, who praises her for her Christian devotion, uprightness of heart, skill in government, and the careful education she bestowed upon her children. That the unhappy circumstances in which her life was passed had not excluded the feeling of mercy from her heart she proved by ransoming at her own expense some Longobardian prisoners, and still more by dismissing unhurt the wretched priest who was sent to betray and murder her. At a time when intrigue and plunder occupied the thoughts of all around her, she turned her attention to the erection of public works, which have been pronounced worthy of a Roman edile or proconsul; and yet thousands of her own countrymen rejoiced to see her torn limb from limb, and could not satisfy their rage until they had burned her lacerated body, and scattered her ashes to the dust!

IV

FROM THE DEATH OF BRUNHILDA TO THE DEATH OF CARL MARTEL.

AD 613—741.

And thus, after a long series of rebellions, the rising aristocracy gained their first great victory over the monarchy; we say the monarchy, for in the battle which made him king of the whole Frankish empire no one was more truly defeated than the nominal victor, Clotaire II himself. He was, in fact, an instrument in the hands of the seigniors for the humiliation of the royal power. It was not because Neustria was stronger than Austrasia and Burgundy, that the Neustrian king obtained a triple crown; but because the power of the seigniors was greater than that of the infant kings and their female guardian.

The chief advantage of every victory naturally falls to the leaders of the victorious party; and we find that on this occasion the mayors of the palace were the principal gainers by the change which had taken place. Clotaire II soon learned that the support he had received was sold, not given; and that, though he was the ruler of the united Frankish empire his position differed from, and was far less commanding than, that of Clovis or the first Clotaire. No sooner was the kingdom of Burgundy transferred to him, than Werner, the majordomus of that country, demanded, as the price of his treachery, that he should be confirmed in his mayoralty, and that Clotaire should bind himself by oath never to degrade him from that office. Arnulph and Pepin, the leaders of the revolution in Austrasia, were rewarded in a similar manner, and exercised all the substantial power of kings under the humble names of mayors of the palace. It was fortunate for the latter country, and indeed for the whole empire, that at such a crisis the reins of government had fallen into such able hands. The singular concord which existed between Arnulph and Pepin, who are peculiarly interesting to us as the progenitors of the Carolingian race, affords us evidence that they were actuated by patriotism as well as ambition. Yet they felt their power, and both used and endeavored to increase it. Anxious for the substance rather than the external trappings of authority, they wisely sought a nominal head, under the shadow of whose name they might be less exposed to the shafts of envy. It was with this view that they advised Clotaire to grant the greater portion of Austrasia during his own lifetime to Dagobert, his son by Queen Bertrudis, with the understanding that they should administer the kingdom for him.

If we could feel any doubts as to the nature and objects of the revolution effected at this period, the edicts published by Clotaire would be sufficient to dispel them. In many respects the provisions contained in these documents resemble those of our own Magna Charta. Their principal object is to protect the rich and powerful seigniors, both lay and clerical, from the arbitrary power of the king, and to establish them in the full possession of all the rights they had usurped, during the dark and troubled period of which we have been speaking. It is in such periods that a few grow great by the depression of the many, and it was from the union of the few, for mutual protection, that those formidable aristocracies of Europe arose which often proved strong enough to control in turn both king and people.

The Frankish empire, though at this time nominally reunited under one head, was in reality governed by four virtually independent rulers of whom Clotaire himself was not the most important.

Werner, as we have seen, was made Majordomus of Burgundy for life; and as such was both administrator of the royal fiscus and generalissimo of the army. Austrasia was governed by Arnulph and Pepin in the name of Dagobert; and even in Neustria, the original portion of Clotaire, and that in which he had the greatest personal influence, there was a majordomus, on whom the weight of government principally rested.

During the minority of Dagobert, Austrasia flourished under the wise administration of his two guardians, who pursued the same object—the welfare of the country—with a wonderful unanimity. “Even the nations”, says Fredegar, “on the borders of the Avars (Huns) and the Slaves” sought the aid of the Austrasian mayors against their savage neighbors. It is not wonderful, therefore, that Dagobert, or rather his advisers, should wish to extend their rule, and to recover that portion of Austrasia which Clotaire had retained, when, by the advice of the great seigniors, he had set apart a kingdom for his son. Dagobert, when summoned by his father to Clichy to marry Gomatrudis, the sister of Clotaire’s second queen Sichildis, took the opportunity of claiming those provinces which had belonged to the Austrasian kingdom. On his father’s refusal, a violent dispute arose between them, and the manner in which it was decided is another proof of the extraordinary power to which the new aristocracy had attained. The question was referred to twelve of the Frankish seigniors, among whom was Arnulph himself, the Bishop of Metz.

The decision, as might have been foreseen, was in favor of Dagobert, who regained the Vosges and Ardennes in the Netherlands; nor did Clotaire consider it prudent to oppose the change. The additional strength thus given to the German portion of the empire was in some degree counterbalanced by the stricter union of Burgundy and Neustria, (in both of which the Romance element predominated) consequent upon the death of Werner. By some temporary change in favor of the monarchy, the exact nature of which it is difficult to ascertain, but which may have been the result of Werner's government, the Burgundian people, or rather the seigniors, consented to forego the right they had usurped, of choosing another mayor, and remained for a time more immediately under the government of the king.

DAGOBERT AND CHARIBERT.

In AD 628, about two years after the re-arrangement of territory by the twelve umpires, as above described, Clotaire II died, having reigned for nearly half a century. He left behind him another son, Charibert, by an unknown mother; but Dagobert aspired to reign alone, and summoned his warlike Austrasians to the field. The Burgundians, without a head, had little motive to resistance; nor do the Neustrians seem to have interested themselves in favor of Charibert, for they quickly paid their homage to King Dagobert at Soissons. The unfortunate Charibert, however, found a friend in his uncle Brodulf, who endeavored to influence the king in favor of his brother; and Dagobert, having obtained all that he aimed at without resistance, was induced to resign a portion of his vast dominions. "Moved with pity", says the chronicler, "and following the counsel of the wise, he gave up to Charibert the territory which lies between the boundaries of the Visigoths and the river Loire (or Garonne ?)". Nor had Dagobert any occasion to repent his generosity; Charibert, after extending his boundaries to the south at the expense of the Gascons, died in AD 631, leaving his brother in undisputed possession of the whole empire.

The influences to which Dagobert had hitherto been subjected were favorable both to virtue and good government. He had lived chiefly among the German Franks, whose habits and manners, though rough and even coarse, were far less corrupt than those of the Gallo-Romans of Neustria and Burgundy. He had enjoyed the society and counsel of the two wisest, most energetic, and honorable men of the day, Arnulph and Pepin; by whose skillful measures, and commanding influence in Church and State, he was firmly supported on the throne. If we may trust to the panegyrics of the chroniclers, respecting one who was *dilator supra modum largissimus* of the churches, the clergy, and the poor, Dagobert was not unworthy of the care bestowed upon him. He is represented as unwearied in his efforts for the happiness of his subjects, who were prosperous and grateful. Unfortunately, however, he was one of those whose character is at the mercy of immediately surrounding influences. From the wise and good he readily imbibed sentiments of honor and wisdom, but he was no less sensibly alive to the attractions of evil example and the allurements of vicious pleasure. On the death of Clotaire he removed the seat of his government to Paris, a city which, in a greater degree than any other, bore the distinguishing marks of a bastard Roman civilization.

The Neustrians, jealous of the Austrasians, whom they regarded as barbarians with mingled contempt and fear, exerted all their arts to captivate the affections of the young monarch, and to eradicate his German nationality. The first sign of their success was the dismissal, or rather abandonment, by the king of his queen Gomatrudis, whom he left at Reuilly in the neighborhood of Paris, and raised her servant Nanthildis to the throne. And now the artificial calmness of the royal mind, which had but reflected the purity and wisdom of noble associates, was quickly ruffled by a storm of ungovernable desires and passions. Nanthildis did not long maintain herself in the elevation from which she had thrust another. "Abandoned", says Fredegar, "to immoderate luxury, like Solomon, Dagobert had three wives at one time, and a very great number of concubines". The names of the contemporary queens were Nanthildis, Wulfegandis, and Berchildis; the concubines were so numerous that the chronicler declines to name them. The extravagant expenditure, rendered necessary by his new mode of life, was supplied by arbitrary exactions and imposts, which alienated the affections both of those who suffered, and those who feared to suffer.

Pepin, a man "prudent in all things, full of good counsel and honor, and esteemed by all for the love of justice which he had instilled into the mind of Dagobert", saw and deplored, but could not prevent, the change. His very virtues, for which his royal pupil had once valued and loved him, were now regarded with dislike, as a tacit reproof on the immoderate self-indulgence of the king. Dagobert sought and found in Aega a minister better suited to his altered heart and life; and Pepin, who had first placed Dagobert on the throne, was for a time in personal danger from those who hated his virtues, and feared his ability and influence. "But the love of justice, and the fear of God, to whom he cleaved with steadfast heart, delivered him from all his troubles".

It was in this adverse position of affairs, when the king was sunk in sensual luxury, and the people were murmuring at the ever increasing burdens which his folly and extravagance laid upon them, that the Franks became involved in a war with the Slavonic tribes on the eastern boundaries of the empire. The exact limits which divided the rude nations of antiquity (whose treaties, where they existed, were expressed in the most vague and general terms) can never be defined with any great degree of certainty. After the fall of the Thuringian kingdom, which had formed a barrier to their progress westward, the Slaves, formerly known by the name of Sarmatians, commenced a migration across the Elbe, and gradually spread themselves as far as the river Saale in Thuringia. In the beginning of the sixth century Bohemia was in possession of a tribe of Slaves called Czechs, who by the middle of the seventh century had occupied the country between the Culpa and the Mur, and extended themselves westward beyond the river Salza. A portion of these, under the name of Wends, who lived on the Baltic, retained their independence until a later period; those who occupied central Germany, between the Elbe and Saale, and were called Sorbs, were tributary to the Franks; while the Slaves (in the narrower sense of the word) of Bohemia, and on the north-west boundary of the Frankish empire, groaned beneath the intolerable tyranny of the Avars or Huns. This latter people lived among their more industrious and civilized subjects like freebooters; never fixing their residence in any one place, but roving to and fro, and compelling those among whom they happened to be to support them in idleness, and even to place their wives and daughters at their absolute disposal.

In war the Slavs are said to have been placed in the van of the battle, while their masters abstained from fighting until they saw their subjects defeated. Such intolerable oppression would have roused resistance even from the most timid; the subject Slaves continually rebelled, and their independent kinsmen, the Baltic Wends, were obliged to wage incessant wars for the maintenance of their freedom. The efforts of the former had been hitherto entirely unavailing, and had had no other result than that of fixing the yoke more firmly on their necks. But the time of their deliverance came at last. During the reigns of Clotaire and Dagobert a revolution took place among the Slavonian tribes, the exact nature of which cannot be ascertained from the confused and meager accounts of the chroniclers. All that we can gather with any degree of certainty is, that the Slaves and Wends succeeded in freeing themselves from their rapacious and insolent lords, and in establishing an independent kingdom; and that they came at this period into collision with the Franks on their respective borders. According to Fredegar, the Slavonic peoples owed their deliverance chiefly to a Frank of obscure origin, named Samo, who, when travelling (about AD 624) among the Slavs or Wends for the sake of commerce, found this people, and more especially the sons of the Huns by the Wendish women, in a state of open rebellion. Like our own glorious Clive in later times, he abandoned his commercial career for the more congenial pursuits of war and conquest; and having joined the Slaves, he soon enabled them by his skill and valor to defeat the Avars or Huns in a bloody and decisive battle. So sensible were the liberated Slaves of what they owed to Samo, and so grateful for his timely and voluntary service, that they unanimously elected him as their king, and remained faithful in their allegiance to him for a space of six and thirty years.

In AD 631, as Fredegar and others relate, some Frankish merchants were plundered and killed in the territory of Samo by some of his subjects. Dagobert immediately sent an ambassador, named Sicharius, to demand reparation; but Samo appears never to have admitted him to an audience. At last, however, Sicharius managed to get into the royal presence, by disguising himself and his attendants in the Slavonic dress, and he then delivered the message entrusted to him. Samo replied, and no doubt with truth, that injuries had been inflicted by both parties, and that many cases of the same kind must be inquired into, that mutual satisfaction might be given. This answer, though dignified and fair, was not what Sicharius expected to hear, and, losing the command of his temper, he began, “like a foolish ambassador, to utter words which were not contained in his instructions”. Amongst other things he said that both Samo and his subjects owed allegiance and service to the Frankish monarch; to which the King of the Slaves replied with calmness, “And the territory which we possess shall be Dagobert’s, and we will be his people, if he is disposed to be at peace with us”. This soft answer did not turn away the wrath of the emissary, who was very probably directed to promote the misunderstanding; and he insultingly replied that it was not possible for Christians, the servants of God, to contract an alliance with dogs. “If”, said Samo, with dignified sarcasm, “ye are the servants of God, and we his dogs, so long as ye act against Him we have received permission to tear you”.

On the return of his ambassadors, who had suffered so palpable a defeat in the preliminary war of words, Dagobert summoned his Austrasian troops and sent them against the Slaves in full assurance of success. Ariwald, King of the Longobards, sent an auxiliary force from Italy to serve with the Franks, who were also joined by the Alemannian or Swabian contingent, and were at first successful. But when the Austrasians were led up to attack a strong place called Wogatisburc, where a large army of Wends had been drawn together, they were miserably defeated and put to flight. This unexpected issue of the contest, is attributed by the chroniclers to the ill-will of the Austrasians, who went into the fight

without any hearty zeal, on account of their dislike of Dagobert, and their jealousy of the Neustrians, with whom the king had so much identified himself. That the victory, however gained, was real and substantial, is evident from the fact that Derwan, Prince of the Sorbs, who had been in some degree subject to the Franks, transferred his homage to King Samo.

In the following year, AD 632, Dagobert again led an army from Metz to Mayence on the Rhine, with the intention of attacking the Wendish Slaves, but this expedition was abandoned without any apparent cause; unless we can believe that Dagobert, at the head of a formidable army, retired from the country without striking a blow, because ambassadors from the Saxons came to offer their assistance on condition of being excused from paying their yearly tribute of Five hundred cows.

The true reason of these repeated failures is to be sought in the disaffection of the Austrasian seigniors, who were not inclined to shed their blood in company with Neustrians, for one whom they now regarded exclusively in the light of a Neustrian King. The change from the dignified and advantageous position which they had occupied under the able administration of the chiefs of their own order, Pepin and Arnulph, to that of distant and little regarded subjects of a monarch who spent his life at Paris, was more than their proud and ambitious spirits could endure. They obeyed the royal ban unwillingly, when summoned to the field; they defended even their own territory in Thuringia with sullen feebleness; and the Slaves made continual accessions to their territory at the expense of the Frankish empire. The eyes of Dagobert or his advisers were at last forced open to the real condition of affairs, and to the danger which threatened them from the east. They saw that the Austrasian seigniors were determined to be ruled by their own order, though they still preferred to do so in the name of a Merovingian king. To disregard their wishes was to risk, not only the loss of Thuringia, but the dismemberment of the empire. In AD 632 therefore, just after the lesson he had received in the abortive expedition above described, Dagobert summoned the grandees of his empire both temporal and spiritual to Metz; and there, with the general consent of his council, appointed the infant Sigebert III his son by Ragnetruda—King of Austrasia. By this act, the royal authority was once more transferred to the hands of the seigniors, and the Merovingian dynasty tottered to its fall.

The natural and proper arrangement would have ken to make Pepin the guardian of the infant king and administrator of the kingdom; but the jealousy of the Parisian court was too strong to allow of this concession. While therefore Cunibert, Bishop of Cologne, was sent with Sigebert into Austrasia, Pepin was detained at the court of Dagobert, as a sort of hostage. From this time the Austrasians appear to have defended their borders against the Wends with energy and success.

This arrangement was unwillingly made by the Neustrian court, under a sense of the necessity of conciliating the German subjects of the empire. It had become evident that, of the Frankish kingdoms, Austrasia was by far the strongest; while the Neustrians therefore yielded on this occasion from necessity and fear, they were anxious to provide a counterpoise to the Germanism of Austrasia, by more closely and permanently uniting the countries in which Gallo-Romanism was predominant. The birth of Clovis (the second son of Dagobert by Nanthildis) appeared to afford the means of carrying out their views; in which Dagobert himself, from his predilection for Neustrian luxury and refinement, was inclined to sympathize. “By the counsel and advice of the Neustrians”, as the chronicler expressly relates, and the consent of the Austrasians (who had so lately carried their own point), Clovis II was declared heir of the united kingdoms of Neustria and Burgundy, while Sigebert III was confirmed in the possession of all that the former Kings of Austrasia had held, with one small exception. “This arrangement”, we are told, “the Austrasians were compelled by their fear of Dagobert to sanction, whether they would or no”. Nevertheless, it was strictly observed on the death of Dagobert, which took place in AD 638.

THE MAYORS OF THE PALACE

We may almost consider Dagobert as the last of the Merovingian monarchs, since he is the last who really exercised anything like independent royal authority. The name of king, indeed, was retained by his longhaired descendants for several generations, but the bearers of it were either children in years, or so weak in intellect from early debauchery and a neglected education, as to be the mere tools and puppets of their own servants. These shadowy forms, which excite in our minds both pity and contempt, are known in history as the *Rois fainéans*, a title which well expresses their inactivity and insignificance, and the merely nominal nature of their rule. While the storms of action rage around them, they are hidden from our gaze in the recesses of a court, half nursery, half harem.

The iron scepter of the first Clovis, which his degenerate successors had dropped from their listless hands to raise the wine-cup or caress the harlot, was seized with a vigorous grasp by men who exercised the loftiest functions under an almost menial name. At this period the real direction of affairs was left to the Majores-Domus, or Mayors of the Palace, whose power is seen continually to increase,

till, in the hands of the Carolingians, it becomes imperial; while that of the Salian monarchs, already greatly weakened, declines from year to year, till they become the mere puppets of an annual show.

We shall therefore take this opportunity of giving a short account of the origin and nature of the office of Major-Domus—the parasitical growth which sapped the strength of the Merovingian throne. And in the subsequent portion of this preliminary history we shall transfer our chief attention from the nominal to the actual rulers, and endeavor to relate, with all possible conciseness, the civil and military transactions of the mayors; and more particularly of those among them who, great in themselves, enjoy additional fame as progenitors of Charlemagne.

That the successful Imperator of an army should grow into an Emperor, or ruler of the nation,—that a Caesar should become a Kaiser,—seems natural enough: but the humble and peaceful office originally designated by the words Major-Domus seems capable of no such development. The ideas connected with it are little suited to the proud and powerful Frankish warriors, who, under that simple title, performed the highest functions of government, achieved great conquests at the head of powerful armies, dethroned an ancient dynasty of kings, and in their posterity gave successors to the Emperors of the West. This discrepancy between the name and the thing it denotes has excited general remark, and given rise to many learned and ingenious theories.

In a former part of this work we have endeavored to trace the gradual progress of the royal power among the Franks, and the simultaneous decline of those popular institutions by which liberty is sustained; and which, at an earlier period, existed among the Franks in common with other German peoples. It is important to keep this development in view during the present inquiry, because, as we shall see, the power of the mayors first rose with that of the kings, and then upon it.

The domestic condition of the Franks was greatly changed by their conquests in Gaul during the sixth century. As the result of a few fortunate battles, they found themselves in possession of well-stocked houses and fertile lands; and though they were too warlike themselves to settle down as cultivators of the soil, they contrived, by means of others, to derive considerable wealth from their estates. The same conquests which brought rich booty to all the Franks, secured, as we have seen, to the kings an enormous increase both of wealth and power. They still, indeed, in times of peace, continued to lead the life of great landed proprietors, passing in their rude carriages drawn by oxen from one of their estates to another, and consuming in turn the fruits of each; but the sudden and enormous addition to their means naturally led to an increase in the number of their dependents and a greater degree of external splendor in their mode of life. Even in their simplest state, as described by Tacitus, they must, like other wealthy men, have had not only numerous menials and slaves, domestic and agricultural, but overseers of the various departments of their household to provide them with all things necessary for their dignity, convenience, and pleasure.

At the head of these, occupying the exact position of a house-steward in a nobleman's family, was the majordomus, whose purely domestic character is proved by the fact that he is ranked after the Counts and the Domestici. The nature of the count's office will be explained elsewhere; and the domestici, according to Loebell, were the more distinguished of the Comitatus, who fought about the person of the king. Besides the majordomus we find mentioned as members of the royal household, the Referendarius (Chancellor), the Comes Palatii (Judge at the Royal Tribunal), Cubicularius and Camerarii (Chamberlain and Overseers of the Treasury), and the Comes Stabuli (Master of the Horse). These officials, some of whom appear to have been appointed in imitation of the practice of the Byzantine court, were originally mere personal attendants on the king, who could dismiss them at pleasure. He was not even bound to select them from the freemen, but could raise at will a freedman or a slave. It is an important consideration in this place that there was no class of hereditary nobility to limit the royal choice of servants. All history teaches us that the most sudden changes of fortune take place, not under a republic, or constitutional monarchy, but under arbitrary rulers, where the royal favor is the only recognized distinction—where a single word can shorten the long and toilsome path by which, under freer governments, merit seeks its appropriate reward.

The fact that the mayors of the palace are mentioned only three times by Gregory of Tours is a proof that in his age they had not acquired political importance. Yet when we come to inquire more particularly into their position and functions, we shall find in their lowly office a germ of power, which favorable circumstances might easily foster into luxuriant growth. As stewards of the king's estates, and overseers of his personal attendants and servants, the dignity of their office would be in proportion to the extent of the former and the number of the latter.

The conquest of Gaul, which did so much for royalty, must have raised the majordomus from a rich man's house-steward to a kind of chancellor of the exchequer; whose actual power was considerable, and whose indirect influence, as the immediate agent in the distribution of royal favors, was only limited by his ability to take advantage of his position. It was through him that money, lands,

and offices were distributed among the numerous warriors, who in those unsettled times assembled round a rich and warlike king. To the provincials, more particularly, who had been accustomed to the low intrigues of a Roman court, and had learned to seek the favor of those who in any relation stood near the throne, the majordomus would appear a man of great importance. His means of influence would be further increased by the selfish liberality of those who sought his aid, or received advantages through his hands.

FORMATION OF THE ROYAL COUNCIL.

And thus, as the royal power increased, the position of the mayors continued to improve. As the popular assemblies on the Campus Martius declined in importance, no small share of the power they had once possessed was transferred to the attendants of the king. Energetic rulers needed not, and greatly disliked, the free discussions of the assembled people; and weak and bad ones naturally feared them. Yet all men shrink from the sole responsibility of important decisions; even a Xerxes summons his noble slaves and asks their counsel, though he lets them know that he is free to act against it. And the Frankish king was glad at times to consult the more dignified of his servants, his greatest captains, and his most holy and learned priests. From such elements a royal council was gradually formed, which soon obtained a kind of prescriptive right to be heard on great occasions, and played an important part in Frankish history. In this assembly the majordomus, as being nearest to the king's person, and always on the spot, naturally took a leading part, when his character and abilities enabled him to do so. The importance of this royal council may be better estimated when we consider of whom it was composed.

There were, in the first place, the Courtiers, i.e., the holders of offices about the king, of whom the majordomus was the first. Secondly, the Antrustiones, whose character and position we have elsewhere defined. Thirdly, a great number of dependent rulers, as the hereditary Dukes of Bavaria and Alemannia, who were allowed to retain their power under the protection of the Frankish monarchs. Fourthly, the Patricii of Burgundy, Massilia, and Ripuaria. Fifthly, the Dukes, Counts, Thungini, of whom the last mentioned were appointed by the king as governors of provinces and gaus. And, in the last place, the great dignitaries of the Church; who, in proportion as they became more and more secularized by their wealth, went more frequently to court, and made themselves welcome and influential there, by their superior learning, splendor, and refinement.

In this great assembly of dependent governors, antrustiones, and bishops, which soon became a regularly constituted council, the majordomus presided as the representative, though a humble one, of the king. As such, a portion of the executive power fell at all times into his hands; and during a minority of the crown his influence was in exact proportion to his tact in making use of his favorable position, and his ability to maintain his ground amid the intrigues and struggles of opposing factions.

We need not be surprised to find that, to the civil duties of the majordomus, was added the command of the royal retinue. In the times of which we speak there were no civilians except ecclesiastics (and even these, as we know, were not entirely destitute of that military spirit which was a necessity and a characteristic of the age); and the mayors of the palace would have had but little chance of improving or even maintaining their position, of satisfying their royal master, or controlling his household, had they not been both able and willing to play a prominent part upon the battlefield.

The military duties of the mayoralty naturally became more arduous and important when the monarchs themselves were deficient in warlike qualities; and hence the office was generally bestowed upon some distinguished warrior. This was the case even while the mayors continued to be the nominees and servants of the king; for it was to their majordomus, and the more immediate dependents of the crown whom he commanded, that the monarch looked for support in his contests with the rising aristocracy. While the monarchy was strong, we find the mayors the steady upholders of the royal power. But in the anarchic period which followed the death of Sigebert I, the office of mayor, like every other honorable post, became the subject of a scramble, and fell into the hands of those great proprietors, whose encroachments on the royal prerogative it was designed to repel.

The importance of the position occupied by the mayor, and the great advantages he was able to bring to whatever side he espoused, were too evident to be overlooked by the enemies of the monarchy; and accordingly we find that one of the first uses made by the Austrasian seigniors of their victory over Brunhilda, was to make the mayoralty elective, and independent of the crown. This important change took place in both the great divisions of the Frankish empire, but many circumstances tended to render the development of the power of the mayors far more rapid and complete in Australia than in Neustria.

In the latter, kingdom the resistance which the seigniors could offer to the crown, was weaker, both because they were themselves in a less degree homogeneous than in the German portion of the

empire, and because they could not reckon upon the sympathy and aid of the Romano-Gallic population. In Austrasia the case was different. Even there indeed, though the nation was mainly German, the tendencies of the court were decidedly Romance; and not unnaturally so, for among the Roman provincials was found the external civilization—the grace of manner, the decorative arts of life, the skill in the refined indulgence of the passions, which throw a brilliant light around a throne, and are calculated to engage the affections of its occupants. But the Romanizing leanings of the court were not shared in by the Austrasian seigniors, or the people at large; and the struggle between the monarchy and the nascent aristocracy in Austrasia was embittered by national antipathies.

We have already seen the issue of the contest in favor of the seigniors, and their victory must be regarded as another triumph of the Germans over the Gallo-Romans. The mayors of the palace, whose consequence had been greatly increased during frequent and long minorities, understood the crisis; and, placing themselves at the head of the great landed proprietors of Austrasia, succeeded in depriving the Merovingian kings of the realities of power, while they left them its external shows.

Yet, favorable as had hitherto been the circumstances of the times to the rising power of the mayors, it needed another remarkable coincidence to raise them to royal and imperial thrones. Notwithstanding the influence they had acquired at the end of the sixth century, and the powerful support they received from the great proprietors, banded together in resistance to the crown, the struggle was a long and doubtful one; though the champion of monarchy was a woman. Fear is the mother of cruelty; and bloody as were the dreadful times in which Brunhilda lived, her enemies would never have taken such a fiendish delight in her sufferings, had not their hatred been rendered more intense by previous doubts and fears—had they not been rendered delirious with the joy of an unlooked-for success. Had the Merovingian stock continued to produce a succession of able men—had it even sent forth one in whom the fire of Clovis burned—the steady though slumbering loyalty of the people might have been roused, the factious seigniors destroyed in detail, and the career of the king-making mayors brought to a bloody termination at another Barnet.

THE MAYORS ABSOLUTE RULERS.

The actual state of things was, as we have seen, the very reverse of all this. Instead of a vigorous young warrior like our own Edward IV, the Frankish nobles had boys and women to contend with. For a long period the scepter was in the hands of a succession of minors, who met with the foulest play from those who should have been their guardians. Precocious by nature, and exposed to the allurements of every enfeebling indulgence and hurtful vice, they gladly yielded up the all too heavy scepter to the rude hands of their warlike keepers, and received in exchange the cap and bells of the jester and the fool. And while the Merovingian race in its decline is notorious in history as having produced an unexampled number of imbecile monarchs, the family which was destined to supplant them was no less wonderfully prolific in warriors and statesmen of the highest class. It is not often that great endowments are transmitted even from father to son, but the line from which Charlemagne sprang presents to our admiring gaze an almost uninterrupted succession of five remarkable men, within little more than a single century. Of these the first three held the mayoralty of Austrasia; and it was they who prevented the permanent establishment of absolute power on the Roman model, and secured to the German population of Austrasia an abiding victory over that amalgam of degraded Romans and corrupted Gauls, which threatened to leaven the European world. To them, under Providence, we owe it that the center of Europe is at this day German, and not Gallo-Latin.

From this brief sketch of the origin and progress of the mayors of the palace, who play so important a part in the succeeding age, we return to the point in the general history from which the digression was made.

On the death of Dagobert, AD 638, his son, Clovis II, a child of six years old, succeeded him. During his minority the government of Neustria and Burgundy was carried on by his mother Nanthildis, and the Major-Domus Aega, while Pepin and others shared the supreme power in Austrasia. Pepin died AD 639 or 640, and a long and ferocious contest ensued for the vacant mayoralty, which was finally taken possession of by Pepin's own son Grimoald.

So low had the power of the nominal monarchs already sunk, that, on the death of Sigebert III, in AD 656, Grimoald ventured to shear the locks of the rightful heir, Dagobert II, and, giving out that he was dead, sent him to Ireland; he then proposed his own son for the vacant throne, under the pretence that Sigebert had adopted him. But the time was not yet ripe for so daring an usurpation, nor does Grimoald appear to have been the man to take the lead in a revolution. Both the attempt itself, and its miserable issue, go to prove that the son of Pepin did not inherit the wisdom and energy of the illustrious stock to which he belonged. The King of Burgundy and Neustria, pretending to acquiesce in the accession of Grimoald's son, summoned the father to Paris, and caused him to be seized during his

journey by some Franks—who are represented as being highly indignant at his presumption—and put to death.

The whole Frankish empire was thus once more united, at least in name, under Clovis II (who also died in AD 656), and under his son and successor, Clotaire III, whose mother, Balthildis, an Anglo-Saxon by birth, administered the kingdom with great ability and success. But the interests and feelings of the German provinces were too distinct from those of Burgundy and Neustria to allow of their long remaining even nominally under one head. The Austrasians were eager to have a king of their own, and accordingly another son of Clovis was raised to the throne of Austrasia under the title of Childeric II, with Wulfoald as his majordomus.

At the death of Clotaire III in Neustria (in AD 670), the whole empire was thrown into confusion by the ambitious projects of Ebroin, his majordomus, who sought to place Theoderic III, Clotaire's youngest brother, who was still a mere child, on the throne, that he might continue to reign in his name. Ebroin appears to have proceeded towards his object with too little regard for the opinions and feelings of the other seigniors, who rose against him and his puppet king, and drove them from the seat of power. The successful conspirators then offered the crown of Neustria to Childeric II, King of Austrasia, who immediately proceeded to take possession, while Ebroin sought refuge in a monastery.

Childeric ascended the Neustrian throne without opposition; but his attempts to control the seigniors, one of whom, named Badilo, he is said to have scourged, gave rise to a formidable conspiracy; and he was soon afterwards assassinated, together with his queen and son at Chelles. Wulfoald escaped with difficulty, and returned to Austrasia. Another son of Childeric, Childebert III, was then raised upon the shield by the seigniors, while the royal party brought forward Theoderic III from the monastery to which he had retired, and succeeded in making good his claim. The turbulent and unscrupulous but able Ebroin ventured once more to leave his place of refuge, and by a long series of the most treacherous murders, and by setting up a pretender—as Clovis, a son of Clotaire III—he succeeded (in AD 673 or 674) in forcing himself upon Theoderic as Major-Domus of Neustria.

EBROIN'S REBELLIONS.

In the meantime Dagobert II, whom Grimoald had sent as a child to Ireland, and who had subsequently found a faithful friend in the well-known St. Wilfrid, Bishop of York, was recalled and placed on the Austrasian throne. But the restored prince soon (in AD 678) fell a victim to the intrigues of Ebroin, and the Neustrian faction among the seigniors, who aimed at bringing the whole empire under their own arbitrary power. Nor does it seem at all improbable that the ability and audacity of Ebroin might have enabled them to carry out their designs, had not Austrasia possessed a leader fully equal to the emergency. Pepin, surnamed of Heristal from a castle belonging to his family in the neighborhood of Liege, was the son of Ansegisus by Begga, the illustrious daughter of Pepin of Landen. This great man, who proved himself worthy of his grandsire and his mother, was at this time associated with Duke Martin in the government of Austrasia, which up to AD 630 had been administered by Wulfoald. Martin and Pepin summoned their followers to arms to meet the expected attack of the Neustrians. In the first instance, however, the Austrasians were surprised by the activity of Ebroin, who fell upon them before they had completed their preparations, and totally defeated them in the neighborhood of Lucofaus. Martin fled to the town of Laon; and the artifices by which his enemies lured him from this retreat to his destruction are worthy of notice, as giving us a remarkable picture of the manners of the period in general, and of the sad state of the Church in particular. Ebroin, hearing that his intended victim had reached a place of safety, despatched Agilbert, Bishop of Paris, and Probus, Bishop of Rheims, to persuade Martin to repair to the Neustrian camp. In order to dispel the apprehensions with which he listened to them, these holy men went through the not unusual ceremony of swearing upon a receptacle containing sacred relics, that he should suffer no injury by following their advice. The bishops, however, to save themselves from the guilt of perjury, had taken care that the vessels, which were covered, should be left empty. Martin, whom they omitted to inform of this important fact, was satisfied with their oaths, and accompanied them to Ecri, where he and his followers were immediately assassinated, without, as was thought, any detriment to the faith of the envoys! Pepin, however, was neither to be cajoled nor frightened into submission, and soon found himself at the head of a powerful force, consisting in part of Neustrian exiles, whom the tyranny of Ebroin had ruined or offended.

A collision seemed inevitable, when the position of affairs was suddenly changed by the death of Ebroin, who was assassinated in AD 681 by Hermenfried, a distinguished Neustrian Frank. Waratto followed him in the mayoralty of Neustria, and seemed inclined to live on friendly terms with Pepin; but Gislemar, his son, who headed the party most hostile to Pepin, succeeded in getting possession of the government for a time, and renewed the war against the Austrasians.

Gislemar's death (in AD 684), which the annalists attribute to the Divine anger, restored Waratto to his former power; and hostilities ceased for a time. When Waratto also died, about two years after his undutiful son, he was succeeded by Berchar, his son-in-law, whom the annalist pithily describes as "statura parvus, intellect modicus". The insolent disregard which this man showed to the feelings and wishes of the most powerful Neustrians, induced many of them to make common cause with Pepin, to whom they are said to have bound themselves by hostages. In AD 687 Pepin was strong enough to assume the offensive; and, yielding to the entreaties of the Neustrian refugees, he sent an embassy to Theoderic III to demand the restoration of the exiles to their confiscated lands. The King of Neustria, prompted by Berchar, his majordomus, haughtily replied that he would come himself and fetch his runaway slaves. Pepin then prepared for war, with the unanimous consent of the Austrasian seigniors, whose wishes he scrupulously consulted. Marching through the Silva Carbonaria (in Belgium), he entered the Neustrian territory, and took post at Testri on the river Somme Theoderic and Berchar also collected a large army and marched to meet the invaders. The two armies encamped in sight of each other near the village of Testri, on opposite sides of the little river Daumignon, the Neustrians on the southern and the Austrasians on the northern bank. Whether from policy or a higher motive, Pepin displayed great unwillingness, even then, to bring the matter to extremities; and, sending emissaries into the camp of Theoderic, he once more endeavored to negotiate; demanding, amongst other things, that the property of which the churches had been "despoiled by wicked tyrants" should be restored to them. He promised that, if his conditions of peace were accepted and the effusion of kindred blood prevented, he would give the king a large amount of silver and gold.

BATTLE OF TESTRI.

The wise and humane reluctance of Pepin was naturally construed by Theoderic and his little-minded mayor into fear, and distrust of his army, which was inferior to their own in numbers: a haughty answer was returned, and all negotiations broken off. Both sides then prepared for the morrow's battle. Pepin, having passed the night in forming his plans, crossed the river before daybreak and drew up his army to the east of Theoderic's position, that the rising sun might blind the enemy. The spies of Theoderic reported that the Austrasian camp was deserted, on which the Neustrians were led out to pursue the flying foe. The mistake of the scouts was soon made clear by the vigorous onset of Pepin; and after a fierce but brief combat the Neustrians were totally defeated, and Theoderic and Berchar fled from the field. The latter was slain by his own followers: the king was taken prisoner, but his life was mercifully spared.

The battle of Testri is notable in Frankish history as that in which the death-stroke was given to the Merovingian dynasty, by an ancestor of a far more glorious race of monarchs. "From this time forward", says the chronicler Erchambertus, "the kings began to have only the royal name, and not the royal dignity". A very striking picture of the Rois Fainéans has been handed down to us by Einhard, the friend and secretary of Charlemagne, in his famous life of his royal master. "The race of the Merovingians", he says, "from which the Franks were formerly accustomed to choose their kings, is generally considered to have ended with Chilperic; who, at the command of the Roman Pontiff Stephen, was deposed, shorn of his locks, and sent into a monastery. But although the stock died out with him, it had long been entirely without life and vigor, and had no distinction beyond the empty title of king; for the authority and government were in the hands of the highest officers of the palace, who were called majores-domus, and had the entire administration of affairs. Nothing was left to the king, except that, contenting himself with the mere royal name, he was allowed to sit on the throne with long hair and unshorn beard, to play the part of a ruler, to hear the ambassadors from whatever part they might come, and at their departure to communicate to them the answers which he had been taught or even commanded to make, as if by his own authority. Besides the worthless title of king, and a scanty maintenance, which the majordomus meted out according to his pleasure, the king possessed only one farm, and that by no lucrative one, on which he had a dwelling-house and a few servants, just sufficient to supply his most urgent necessities.

Wherever he had to go, he traveled in a carriage drawn by a yoke of oxen and driven by a cowherd in rustic fashion. It was thus that he went to the palace, to the public assembly of the people, which met every year for the good of the kingdom; after which he returned home. But the whole administration of the state, and everything which had to be regulated or executed, either at home or abroad, was carried on by the mayors".

PEPIN OF HERISTAL SOLE MAYOR.

The whole power of the three kingdoms was thus suddenly thrown into the hands of Pepin, who showed in his subsequent career that he was equal to the far more difficult task of keeping, by his wisdom and moderation, what he had gained by the vigour of his intellect and his undaunted valor. He, too, was happily free from the little vanity which takes more delight in the pomp than in the

realities of power, and, provided he possessed the substantial authority, was contented to leave the royal name to others. He must have felt himself strong enough to do what his uncle Grimoald had vainly attempted, and his grandson happily accomplished; but he saw that by grasping at the shadow he might lose the substance. He was surrounded by proud and suspicious seigniors, whose jealousy would have been more excited by his taking the title, than by his exercising the powers of a king; and, strange though it may seem, the reverence for the ancient race, and the notion of their exclusive and inalienable rights, were far from being extinguished in the breasts of the common people.

By keeping Theoderic upon the throne and ruling in his name, he united both reason and prejudice in support of his government. Yet some approach was made—though probably not by his own desire—towards acknowledged sovereignty in the case of Pepin. He was called Dux et Princeps Francorum, and the years of his office were reckoned, as well as those of the king, in all public documents. Having fixed the seat of his government in Austrasia, as the more German and warlike portion of his dominions, he named dependents of his own, and subsequently his two sons, Drogo and Grimoald, to rule as mayors in the two other divisions of the empire.

He gave the greatest proof of his power and popularity by restoring the assemblies of the Campus Martius, a purely German institution, which under the Romanising Merovingian monarchs had gradually declined. At these annual meetings, which were held on the 1st of March, the whole nation assembled for the purpose of discussing measures for the ensuing year. None but a ruler who was conscious of his own strength, and of an honest desire for the welfare of his people, would have voluntarily submitted himself and his actions to the chances of such an ordeal. As soon as he had firmly fixed himself in his seat, and secured the submission of the envious seigniors, and the love of the people, who looked to him as the only man who could save them from the evils of anarchy, he turned his attention to the re-establishment of the Frankish empire in its full extent.

The neighboring tribes, which had with difficulty, and for the most part imperfectly, been subdued by Clovis and his successors, were ready to seize upon every favorable occasion of ridding themselves of the hated yoke. Nor were the poor imbecile boys who bore the name of kings, or the turbulent mayors and seigniors, who were wholly occupied with plotting and counterplotting, railing and fighting, against one another, at all in a position to call the subject states to account, or to excite in them the desire of being incorporated with an empire harassed and torn by intestine dissensions. The Frankish empire was in process of dissolution, and all the more distant tribes, as the Bavarians, the Alemannians, Frisians, Bretons, and Gascons, had virtually recovered their independence. But this partial decline of the Frankish power was simply the result of misgovernment, and the domestic feuds which absorbed the martial vigor of the nation; and by no means indicated the decline of a military spirit in the Frankish people. They only needed a center of union and a leader worthy of them, both of which they found in Pepin, to give them once more the hegemony over all the German tribes, and prepare them for the conquest of Europe. The Frisians were subdued, or rather repressed for a time, in AD 697, after a gallant resistance under their king Ratbod; and about twelve years afterwards we find the son of Pepin, Grimoald, forming a matrimonial alliance with Theudelinda, daughter of the Frisian monarch; a fact which plainly implies that Pepin desired to cultivate the friendship of his warlike neighbors. The Swabians, or Alemanni, were also attacked and defeated by Pepin in their own territories; but their final subjection was completed by his son Carl Martel.

The wars carried on by Pepin with the above-mentioned nations, to which in this place we can only briefly allude, occupied him nearly twenty years; and were greatly instrumental in preserving peace at home, and consolidating the foundations of the Carolingian throne. The stubborn resistance he met with from the still heathen Germans, was animated with something of that zeal, against which his great descendant Charlemagne had to contend in his interminable Saxon wars; for the adoption of Christianity, which was hated, not only as being hostile to the superstitions of their forefathers, but on account of the heavy taxes by which it was accompanied, was always made by Pepin the indispensable condition of mercy and peace. But, happily for the cause of Gospel truth, other means were used for the spread of Christianity than the sword and the scourge; and the labors of many a zealous and self-sacrificing missionary from Ireland and England, served to convince the rude German tribes, that the warrior-priests whom they had met on the battlefield, and the greedy tax-gatherers who infested their homes, were not the true ambassadors of the Prince of Peace. And Pepin, who was by no means a mere warrior, was well aware of the value of these peaceful efforts; and afforded zealous aid to all who ventured their lives in the holy cause of human improvement and salvation. The civil governors whom he established in the conquered provinces were directed to do all in their power to promote the spread of Christianity by peaceful means; and, to give effect to his instructions, Pepin warned them that he should hold them responsible for the lives of his pious missionaries.

During these same twenty years, in which Pepin was playing the important and brilliant part assigned to him by Providence, the pale and bloodless shadows of four Merovingian kings flit gloomily

across the scene. We know little or nothing of them except their names, and the order in which they followed each other. Theoderic III died AD 691, and was succeeded by Clovis III, who reigned till AD 695 and was followed by Childebert III. On the death of Childebert in AD 711, Pepin raised Dagobert III to the nominal throne, where he left him when he himself departed from the scene of his labors and triumphs; and this is really all that we feel called upon to say of the descendants of the conquerors of Gaul and founders of the Western Empire; "inclitum et notum olim, nunc tantum auditur!".

PEPIN MAKES HIS SONS MAYORS. HIS DEATH.

The extraordinary power which Pepin exercised at a period when law was weak, and authority extended no further than the sword could reach; when the struggles of the rising feudal aristocracy for independence had convulsed the empire and brought it to the verge of anarchy, sufficiently attests the ability and courage, the wisdom and moderation, with which he ruled. His triumphs over the ancient dynasty, and the Neustrian faction, were far from being the most difficult of his achievements. He had to control the very class to which he himself belonged; to curb the turbulent spirits of the very men who had raised him to his proud pre-eminence; and to establish regal authority over those by whose aid he had humbled the ancient kings: and all this he succeeded in doing by the extraordinary influence of his personal character.

So firmly indeed had he established his government, and subdued the wills of the envious seigniors by whom he was surrounded, that even when he showed his intention of making his power hereditary in his family, they dared not, at the time, oppose his will. On the death of Norbert, majordomus at the court of Childebert III, Pepin—in all probability without even consulting the seigniors, in whom the right of election rested—appointed his second son Grimoald to the vacant office. To his eldest son Drogo he had already given the Mayoralty of Burgundy, with the title of Duke of Campania. But though they dared not make any opposition at the time, it is evident from what followed that the fear of Pepin alone restrained the rage they felt at this open usurpation.

In AD 714, when Pepin's life was drawing to a close, and he lay at Jopil near Liege upon a bed of sickness, awaiting patiently his approaching end, the great vassals took heart, and conspired to deprive his descendants of the mayoralty. They employed the usual means for effecting their purpose, treachery and murder. Grimoald was assassinated, while praying in the Church of St. Lambert at Jopil, by a Frisian of the name of Rantgar, who relied, no doubt, on the complicity of the seigniors and the weakness of Pepin for impunity. But the conspirators had miscalculated the waning sands of the old warrior's life, and little knew the effect which the sight of his son's blood would have upon him. He suddenly recovered from the sickness to which he seemed to be succumbing. Like another Priam, he once more seized his unaccustomed arms, though, unlike the royal Trojan, he used them with terrible effect. After taking an ample revenge upon the murderers of his son, and quenching the spirit of resistance in the blood of the conspirators, he was so far from giving up his purpose, or manifesting any consciousness of weakness, that he nominated the infant and illegitimate son of Grimoald, as if by hereditary right, to the joint mayoralty of Burgundy and Neustria—an office which the highest persons in the land would have been proud to exercise. By his very last act, therefore, he showed the absolute mastery he had obtained, not only over the "do-nothing" kings, but over the factious seigniors, who shrank in terror before the wrath of one who had, as it were, repassed the gates of death, to hurl destruction on their heads. His actual demise took place in the same year, on the 16th of December, AD 714.

Pepin had two wives, the first of whom, Plectrude, bore him two sons, Drogo and Grimoald, neither of whom survived their father. In AD 688 he married a second wife, the "noble and elegant" Alpais, though Plectrudis was still alive. From this second marriage sprang the real successor of the Pepins, whom his father named in his own language Carl, and who is renowned in history as Carl Martel, the bulwark of Christendom, the father of kings and emperors.

Our estimate of the personal greatness of the Carolingian mayors is greatly raised when we observe that each of them in turn, instead of taking quiet possession of what his predecessors had won, has to reconquer his position in the face of numerous, powerful and exasperated enemies. It was so with Pepin of Landen, with Pepin of Heristal, and most of all in the case of Carl Martel.

At the death of Pepin the storm which had long been gathering, and of which many forebodings had appeared in his lifetime, broke forth with tremendous fury. The bands of government were suddenly loosened, and the powers which Pepin had wielded with such strength and dexterity became the objects of a ferocious struggle. Plectrudis, his first wife, an ambitious and daring woman, had resolved to reign as the guardian of her grandchild, Theudoald, with whom she was at that time residing at Cologne. Theudoald had at least the advantage of being the only candidate for power installed by Pepin himself, and it was no doubt upon his quasi-hereditary claims that Plectrudis based her hopes. She manifested her foresight, discrimination, and energy, at the commencement of the

contest which ensued by seizing the person of Carl, her stepson, and most formidable rival. But Carl and his party were not her only opponents. The Neustrians and Burgundians, whom their recollections of Brunhilda and Fredegunda by no means inclined to acquiesce in another female regency, refused obedience to her commands; and endeavored to excite the puppet-monarch Dagobert to an independent exercise of his authority. Their zeal as Neustrians too was quickened by the desire of throwing off the Australian or German yoke, which they considered to have been fixed upon them by the victories and energetic rule of Pepin. It was

NEUSTRIANS DEVASTATE AUSTRASIA.

owing to this hostile feeling between the Roman and the German portions of the empire that many even of Pepin's partisans took side with Theudoald and Plectrudis, although the latter held their chief incarcerated. The revolted Neustrians and the army of Plectrudis encountered each other in the forest of Guise, near Compiegne; and, as far as one can conjecture from the confused and contradictory accounts of the annalists, Plectrudis and Theudoald suffered a defeat. The Neustrians having obtained the mastery over the hated Germans in their own country, prepared to extend their authority to Austrasia itself. Having chosen Raginfried as their majordomus, they suddenly marched into the Austrasian territory, and laid it waste with fire and sword as far as the river Meuse. In spite of their Christian profession they sought further to strengthen themselves by an alliance with Ratbod, the heathen King of the Frisians, who at the death of Pepin had recovered his independence, and the greater portion of his territory. In the meantime, the whole aspect of affairs was suddenly changed by the escape of Carl from custody. The defeated army of Plectrudis, and many of the Australian seigniors, who were unwilling to support her cause even against the Neustrians, now rallied with the greatest alacrity round the youthful hero, and proclaimed him *Dux Francorum* by the title of his glorious father. In a very short time after the recovery of his freedom, Carl found himself at the head of a very efficient, though not numerous army. He was still, however, surrounded by dangers and difficulties, under which a man of less extraordinary powers must inevitably have sunk.

Dagobert III died soon after the battle of Compiegne; and the Neustrians, who had felt the disadvantage of his imbecility, neglected the claims of his son, and raised a priest called Daniel, a reputed son of Childeric, to the throne, with the title of Chilperic II. This monarch, who appears to have had a greater degree of energy than his immediate predecessors, formed a plan with the Frisian king for a combined attack upon Cologne, by which he hoped at once to bring the war to a successful issue. Ratbod, true to his engagements, advanced with a numerous fleet of vessels up the Rhine, while Chilperic and Raginfried were marching towards Cologne through the forest of Ardennes. To prevent this well-planned junction, Carl determined to fall upon the Frisians before they reached Cologne. His position must have been rendered still more critical by the failure of this attack. We read that after both parties had suffered considerable loss in a hard-fought battle, they retreated on equal terms.

The short time which elapsed before the arrival of the Neustrians was spent by Carl in summoning his friends from every quarter, to assist him in the desperate struggle in which he was engaged. In the meantime Chilperic came up, and, encamping in the neighborhood of Cologne, effected a junction with the Frisians. Contrary to expectation, however, no attack was made upon Plectrudis, who is said to have bribed the Frisians to retire. A better reason for the precipitate retreat of the Neustrians and Frisians (which now took place) was the danger which the former ran of having their retreat cut off by Carl, who had taken up a strong position in their rear, with continually increasing forces; as it was, they were not permitted to retire in safety. Carl attacked them at Ambleve, near Stablo, in the Ardennes, and gave them a total defeat. This victory put him in possession of Cologne, and the person of Plectrudis, who restored to him his father's treasures.

In the following year, AD 717, Carl assumed the offensive, and, marching through the Silva Carbonaria, began to lay waste the Neustrian territory. Chilperic and Raginfried advanced to meet him, doubtless with far less confidence than before; and both armies encamped at Vinci, in the territory of Cambrai. Carl, with an hereditary moderation peculiarly admirable in a man of his warlike spirit, sent envoys to the Neustrian camp to offer conditions of peace; and to induce Chilperic to acknowledge his claim to the office of majordomus in Austrasia, "that the blood of so many noble Franks might not be shed". Carl himself can have expected no other fruit from these overtures than the convincing of his own followers of the unreasonableness of their enemies. The Neustrian king and his evil adviser rejected the proffered terms with indignation, and declared their intention of taking from Carl even that portion of his inheritance which had already fallen into his hands. Both sides then prepared for battle; Carl, as we are expressly told, having first communicated to the chief men in his camp the haughty and threatening answer of the king. Chilperic relied on his great superiority in numbers, though his army was drawn, for the most part, from the dregs of the people: Carl prepared to meet him with a small but highly-disciplined force of well-armed and skillful warriors. In the battle which ensued on the 21st of March, the Neustrians were routed with tremendous loss, and pursued by

the victors to the very gates of Paris. But Carl was not yet in a condition to keep possession of Neustria, and he therefore led his army back to Cologne, and ascended the "throne of his kingdom", as the annalist already calls it, the *dignissimus hoeres* of his mighty father.

The unfortunate Chilperic, unequal as he must have felt himself to cope with a warrior like Carl, was once more induced by evil counselors to renew the war. With this view he sought the alliance of the imperfectly subjected neighboring states, whom the death of Pepin had awakened to dreams of independence. Of these the foremost was Aquitaine, which had completely emancipated itself from Frankish rule. The Aquitania of the Roman empire extended, as is well known, from the Pyrenees to the river Loire. This country, at the dissolution of the Western Empire, had fallen into the hands of the Visigoths, and was subsequently conquered, and to a certain extent subjugated, by the earlier Merovingians.

But, though nominally part of the Frankish empire, it continued to enjoy a semi-independence under its native dukes, and remained for many ages a stone of offence to the Frankish rulers. Its population, notwithstanding the admixture of German blood consequent on the Gothic conquest, had remained pre-eminently Roman in its character, and had attained in the seventh century to an unusual degree of wealth and civilization. The southern part of Aquitaine had been occupied by a people called Vascones or Gascons, who extended themselves as far as the Garonne, and had also submitted to the Frankish rule during the better days of the elder dynasty.

The temporary collapse of the Frankish power consequent upon the bloody feuds of the royal house, and the struggle between the seigniors and the crown, enabled Eudo, the Duke of Aquitaine, to establish himself as a perfectly independent Prince; and he and his sons ruled in full sovereignty over both Aquitaine and Gascony, and were called indifferently *Aquitaniae* or *Vasconiae duces*.

SUCCESSES AND CLEMENCY OF CARL.

Under these circumstances, it is not to be wondered at that Eudo should gladly receive the presents and overtures made to him by Chilperic; who agreed to leave him in quiet possession of the independence he had contumaciously asserted, on condition of his making cause against the Austrasian mayor. He lost no time in leading an army of Gascons to Paris, where he joined his forces to those of Chilperic, and prepared to meet the terrible foe. Carl advanced with his usual rapidity, and having laid waste a portion of Neustria, came upon the enemy in the neighborhood of Soissons. The new allies, who had scarcely had time to consolidate their union and mature their plans, appear to have made but a feeble resistance; and Chilperic, not considering himself safe even in Paris, fled with his treasures, in company with Eudo, into Aquitaine. Raginfried, the Neustrian majordomus, who with a division of the combined army had also made an attempt to check Carl's progress, was likewise defeated and compelled to resign his mayoralty; as a compensation for which he received from the placable conqueror the countship of Anjou.

The victorious Austrasians pursued the fugitives as far as the river Loire and Orleans, from which place Carl sent an embassy to Eudo, and offered him terms of peace, on condition of his delivering up Chilperic and his treasures. It is difficult to say what answer Eudo, hemmed in as he was on all sides (for the Saracens were in his rear), might have given to this demand,—whether he would have consulted his own interests, or his duty to his ally and guest. But the opportune death of Clotaire, whom Carl had made king of Austrasia after the battle of Ambleve, relieved him from his dilemma. Carl, who was remarkably free from the evil spirit of revenge, declared his readiness to acknowledge Chilperic II as king, on condition of being himself appointed majordomus of the united kingdoms of Austrasia, Neustria, and Burgundy. These terms, offered by the victor to one whose very life was at his mercy, could not but be eagerly accepted; and thus, in AD 719, Carl became nominally Mayor of the Palace to King Chilperic II, but, in fact, undisputed master of the king himself and the whole Frankish empire.

The temperate course pursued by Carl in these transactions, proceeded in a great measure from the natural moderation of his character; but it was a course which the coolest calculation would suggest. He was indeed victorious, but he was still surrounded by enemies who were rather beaten than subdued, and many of them were those of his own household.

After the death of Ratbod, the "cruel and pagan" king of the Frisians, in AD 719, Carl recovered the western portion of Friesland, and reduced the Frisians to their former state of uncertain subjection. About the same time he repelled the Saxons, those unwearied and implacable enemies of the Frankish name, who had broken into the Frankish *gaus* on the right bank of the Rhine. We know little of the particulars of these campaigns, since the chroniclers content themselves with recording in general terms that the "invincible Carl" was always victorious, and his enemies utterly destroyed; a

statement which is rendered suspicious by the fact that their annihilation has to be repeated frequently, and at no long intervals.

In the year after the Saxon campaign (the date of which is rather uncertain), Carl crossed the Rhine, and attacked the Alemanni in their own country, which he devastated without any serious opposition. Subsequently, about AD 725, he crossed the Danube, and entered the country of the Bavarians; and after two successful campaigns obliged that nation also to acknowledge their allegiance to the Franks. From this expedition, says the chronicler, "he returned by the Lord's assistance to his own dominions with great treasures and a certain matron, by name Plectrude, and her niece Sonihilde". This latter, who is called by Einhard "Swanahilde, the niece of Odilo", subsequently became one of Carl's wives, and the mother of the unfortunate Gripho.

It seems natural to conjecture, that Carl had an important ulterior object before his mind in these extraordinary and sustained exertions. They were but the prelude to the grand spectacle soon to be presented to an admiring world, in which this mighty monarch with the humble name was to play a conspicuous and glorious part. A contest awaited him, which he must long have foreseen with mingled feelings of eagerness and apprehension, and into which he dared not go unprepared; a contest which required the highest exercise of his own active genius, and the uncontrolled disposal of all the material resources of his empire. He had hitherto contended for his hereditary honors against his personal enemies—for the supremacy of the Germans over the Gallo Romans, of his own tribe over kindred German tribes—and finally, for order and good government against anarchy and faction. Hereafter he was to renew the old struggle between the West and East—to be the champion of Christianity and German Institutions, against the false and degrading faith of Mohammed, and all the corrupting and enervating habits of the oriental world.

MOHAMMEDANISM.

The most sober history of the rise and progress of Islamism, and the Arabian empire, which was founded on it, has all the characteristics of an eastern fable. In the beginning of the seventh century, an Arabian of the priestly house of Haschem retired into a cave at Mecca, to brood over the visions of a powerful but morbid imagination. The suggestions of his own distempered mind, and the impulses of his own strong will, were mistaken for the inspiration and the commands of the Almighty, concerning whom his notions were in part adopted from the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. He learned to regard himself as the chosen instrument of God, for the introduction of a new faith and the establishment of a power, before which all the nations of the earth should bow. When his meditations had assumed consistency, he shaped them into a system of faith and practice, which he confidently proposed for the acceptance of mankind, as the most perfect and glorious expression of the divine mind and will. His belief in himself, in his own infallibility, and the perfection of his system, was so absolute, that he regarded all other men in the light of children, who, if they cannot be persuaded, must be forced, into the right path. The sword was the only logic he considered suitable to the case; and death or the Koran was the sole alternative which his followers thought fit to offer.

For a time the lofty pretensions of the prophet were acknowledged only by a few, and those few belonged to his own family. But his system, springing as it did from an eminently oriental mind, was wonderfully adapted to the wants and tastes of oriental nations. The only true and valuable parts of it, indeed, are mutilated shreds from the covenants of Abraham and Moses and the Revelation of our blessed Savior; but while the sublimity of these afforded writable objects of contemplation to the nobler faculties of the soul, the strongest passions of fallen human nature, pride, revenge, and lust, were not denied their appropriate gratification. What could be more acceptable to the natural man than a system which quiets the conscience amidst the excesses of sensual love, which takes away the necessity for self-discipline by the doctrine of fatalism, which teaches men to look down with a lofty contempt upon all who think differently from themselves, and, lastly, holds out as a reward for the coercion and destruction of opponents an eternity of voluptuous enjoyment in the society of celestial courtesans? Much no doubt was done by the sword of the hardy and impetuous sons of Ishmael, but this could not alone have spread the Koran over half the world; the very faults which make it odious in Christian eyes, gave wings to its progress, and excited in its favor a deep and frenzied devotion.

In AD 622, Mohammed was obliged to flee to Medina, from the virulent opposition of the members of his own tribe. Within ninety years from that time his successors and disciples had conquered and converted, not Arabia alone, but Syria, Persia, Palestine, Phoenicia, Egypt, Asia Minor, Armenia, the country between the Black Sea and the Caspian, a portion of India, and the whole of the North of Africa from the Nile to the Atlantic Ocean.

The year AD 710 found them gazing with longing eyes across the straits of Gibraltar, eager for the time when they might plant upon the rock of Calpe the meteor standard of their prophet; and thence survey the beautiful and fertile country which was soon to be their own. Nor were their hopes

deferred: their entrance into Spain, which might have proved difficult if not impossible to effect in the face of a brave and united people, was rendered safe and easy by treachery, cowardice, and theological dissensions.

The first collision, indeed, of the Arabian conquerors with the warriors of the West was rather calculated to damp their hopes of European conquest. The Visigothic kings of Spain possessed the town of Ceuta on the African coast, of which Count Julian, at the time of which we speak, was military governor. The skill and courage of this great warrior and his garrison, had hitherto frustrated all the attempts of Musa, the general of the Caliph Walid, to make himself master of the place. The Saracens were already beginning to despair of success, when they suddenly received overtures from Count Julian himself, who now offered, not merely to open the gates of Ceuta, but to procure for the Saracens a ready admittance into Spain. The grounds of this sudden treachery on the part of one who had risked his life at the post of honor, cannot be stated with any degree of certainty. By some it was ascribed to the desire of avenging himself upon Roderic, his king, who is said to have abused his daughter; and by others to the fact that he had espoused the cause of Witiza's sons, at that time pretenders to the Spanish throne. The Saracen general Musa, delighted to have found the Achilles-heel of Europe, immediately dispatched a few hundred Moslems across the strait, under the command of Tarik; from whom the modern Gibraltar (Gebel-al-Tarik) derives its name. These adventurers were well received in the town and castle of Count Julian at Algesiras, and soon returned to their expectant comrades, with rich booty and exciting tales of the fertility of the country, and the effeminacy of the degenerate Goths.

FIRST SARACEN ARMY IN EUROPE. CONQUEST OF SPAIN BY MOSLEMS.

In the April of the following year, AD 711, a body of 5000 Saracens effected a landing on the coast of Spain, and entrenched themselves strongly near the Rock of Gibraltar. These were soon followed by other troops, until a considerable Moslem army was collected on the Spanish shores. The feeble resistance made to this descent was a fatal omen for the empire of the Visigoths. This once brave and hardy tribe of Germans had lost, during a long peace, the valor and endurance to which they owed the rich provinces of Spain; and, amidst the pleasures of that luxurious country, had grown so unaccustomed to the use of arms, that it was long before they could be roused to meet the foe. At length, however, the unwarlike Roderic, having collected an army four times as great as that of the enemy, but without confidence either in their leader or themselves, encamped at Xeres de la Frontera, in the neighbourhood of Cadiz. While awaiting at this place the approach of the enemy, the Gothic king is represented as sitting in an ivory chariot, arrayed in silken garments unworthy of a man even in time of peace, and wearing a golden crown upon his head. The battle which quickly followed was fought on the 26th of July, AD 731. It was of short duration and of no doubtful issue. The timid herd of Goths, scarcely awaiting the wild charge of the Saracens, turned and fled in irretrievable confusion. Roderic himself, fit leader of such an army, was among the first to leave the field on the back of a fleet racer, which had been placed, at his desire, in the neighborhood of his tent, as if his trembling heart had foreseen the issue.

The Visigothic empire in Spain fell by a single blow. Tarik advanced with his victorious army as far as Cordova, which immediately yielded at his summons ; and he would, without doubt, have overrun the whole of Spain, had he not been recalled by the jealousy of Musa, who reserved for himself the glory of completing the splendid conquest.

Of all the Spanish towns which were captured on this occasion, Seville and Merida alone appear to have upheld the ancient glories of the Gothic name; but even these were finally reduced, and the last remnants of the Visigoths were driven from the rich plains they had so long possessed into the mountains of Asturias. It was in these rugged solitudes, and amidst the hardships and privations which they there endured, that they regained their ancient vigor, and preserved their Christian faith. It was thence that at a later period they descended upon their Moorish foes, and in many a hard-fought battle, the frequent theme of ballad, recovered, step by step, the fair possessions which their ancestors had won and lost.

And thus by a single victory Spain was added to the vast dominions of the Caliph, and the Cross once more retired before the Crescent. Nor did it seem that the Pyrenees, any more than the rock of Gibraltar, were to prove a barrier to the devastating flood of Islamism. About AD 718, Zama, the Arabian Viceroy of Spain, made himself master of that portion of Gaul, on the slopes of the Eastern Pyrenees, of which the Goths had hitherto retained possession. In AD 731 he stormed Narbonne, the capital of the province, and having put all the male inhabitants capable of bearing arms to the sword, he sent away the women and children into captivity. He then pushed forward into Aquitaine, and laid siege to Toulouse, which proved the limit of his progress; for it was there that he was defeated by Eudo, the duke of the country, who was roused to a desperate effort by the danger of his capital. The check thus given to the onward march of the Moslems was of short duration. Ambiza, the successor of Zama,

about four years afterwards once more made a movement in advance. Taking a more easterly direction, he stormed and plundered Carcassonne and Nimes; and having devastated the country as far as the Rhone, returned laden with booty across the Pyrenees.

Duke Eudo of Aquitaine, deprived of the fruits of his single victory, resigned all hopes of successfully resisting the invaders, and endeavored to preserve himself from utter ruin by an alliance with his formidable foes. He is even said to have so far belied his character of Christian prince as to give his own daughter in marriage, or concubinage, to Munuz, the governor of the newly-made Gallic conquests.

It appears that the expeditions of the Saracens into Gaul had been hitherto made by individual generals on a comparatively small scale, and on their own responsibility. The unusually slow progress of their arms at this period, is to be ascribed less to any fear of opposition, than to inward dissensions in the Arabian empire, and a rapid succession of caliphs singularly unlike in their characters and views. Nine short years (AD 715—724,) had seen the cruel Soliman succeeded by the severe, yet just and upright Omar, the luxurious Epicurean Yesid, and the little-minded, calculating Hescham.

HEAD OF MUNUZ SENT TO THE CALIPH.

It is probable, therefore, that, amid more pressing anxieties and interests, the distant conquest of Spain was forgotten or neglected by the court at Damascus; and that the generals, who commanded in that country, were apt to indulge in ideas inconsistent with their real position as satraps and slaves of an imperial master. But a change was at hand, and the new actor Abderahman, who suddenly appeared upon the scene with an army of 400,000 men, was charged with a twofold commission,—to chastise the presumption of Munuz, whose alliance with Eudo was regarded with suspicion,—and to bring the whole of Gaul under the scepter of the Caliph and the law of Mohammed. Regarding Munuz as a rebel and a semi-apostate, Abderahman besieged him in the town of Cerdagnel, to which he fled for refuge, and, having driven him to commit suicide, sent his head, together with his wife, the daughter of Eudo, as a welcome present to the Caliph Hescham.

The victorious Saracens then marched on past Pampeluna, and, making their way through the narrow defiles on the western side of the Pyrenean chain, poured down upon the plains with their innumerable hosts as far as the river Garonne. The city of Bordeaux was taken and sacked, and still they pressed on impetuously and without opposition, until they reached the river Dordogne, where Eudo, burning with rage at the treatment which his daughter had received, made a fruitless attempt to stop them. Irritated rather than checked by his feeble efforts, the overwhelming tide poured on. The standard of the Prophet soon floated from the towers of Poitiers, and even Tours, the city of the holy St. Martin, was in danger of being polluted by the presence of insulting infidels, when, in the hour of Europe's greatest dread and danger, the champion of Christendom appeared at last, to do battle with the hitherto triumphant enemies of the Cross.

It seems strange at first sight that the danger, which had so long been threatening Europe from the side of Spain, should not have called forth an earlier and more effectual resistance from those whose national and religious existence was at stake. Abderahman had now made his way into the very center of modern France; had taken and plundered some of the wealthiest towns in the Frankish empire; and, after burning or desecrating every Christian church he met with, was marching on the hallowed sanctuary of the patron saint, enriched by the offerings of ages; without encountering a single foe who could even hope to stay his progress. Where was the invincible and ubiquitous Carl, who was wont to fall like a thunderbolt upon his enemies? We might indeed be surprised at his seeming tardiness, did we not know the extraordinary difficulties with which he had to struggle, and the seemingly impossible task he had to perform. It was not with the modern superstition of Mohammed alone that he had to contend, but with the hoary heathenism of the North; not with the Saracens alone, but with his barbarous kinsmen—with nations as hardy and warlike as his own Austrasian warriors, and animated no less than the followers of Mohammed with an indomitable hatred of the Christian name. Enemies were ready to pour upon him from every side, from the green slopes of the Pyrenees and over the broad waters of the Rhine; nor could he reckon upon the fidelity of all who lay within these boundaries.

During the whole of the ten years in which the Saracens were crossing the Pyrenees and establishing themselves in Gaul, Carl was constantly engaged in wars with his German neighbors. In that short period he made campaigns against the Frisians, the Swabians, and the Bavarians, the last of whom (as we have seen) he even crossed the Danube to attack in their own country. As late as AD 728, when Abderahman must have been already meditating his desolating march, Carl had to turn his arms once more against the Saxons; and in AD 731, the very year before he met the Saracens at Poitiers, he marched an army into Aquitaine to quell the rebellion of Duke Eudo.

Such were some of the adverse circumstances under which Carl had to make his preparations, and under which he encamped with his veterans in the neighborhood of Poitiers, where, for the first time in his life, he beheld the white tents of the Moslem invaders, covering the land as far as the eye could reach.

We cannot doubt that he had long been looking forward to this hour with an anxious though intrepid heart, for all depended upon him; and that the wars in which he had lately been engaged, were the more important in his eyes, because their successful termination was necessary to secure his rear, and increase the limits of his war-ban when the time for action should arrive.

The hitherto unconquered Saracens, who had carried the banner of their Prophet in almost uninterrupted triumph from the deserts of Arabia to the banks of the Loire, were destined to find at last an insuperable barrier in the brave hearts of Carl and his Austrasian followers.

BATTLE OF POITIERS.

On a Sunday, in the month of October, AD 732, after trying each other's strength in skirmishes of small importance during the whole of the previous week, the two armies, invoking respectively the aid of Christ and Mohammed, came to a general engagement on the plains between Poitiers and Tours. The rapid onslaught of the Ishmaelites, by which they were accustomed to bear everything before them, recoiled from the steady valor and iron front of the Franks, whose heavy swords made dreadful havoc among their lightly clad opponents. Repulsed, but unbroken in courage and determination, resolved to force their way through that wall of steel or to dash themselves to death against it, the gallant Moslems repeated their wild charges until sunset. At every repulse their blood flowed in torrents, and at the end of the day they found themselves farther than ever from the goal, and gazed upon far more dead upon the slippery field than remained alive in their ranks. Hopeless of being able to renew the contest, they retreated in the night, and, for the first time, fled before an enemy. On the following morning, when the Franks again drew up in battle-array, the camp of the foe was discovered to be empty, so that, instead of awaiting the attack, they had the more agreeable task of plundering the tents and pursuing the fugitives. Abderahman himself was found among the dead, and around him, according to the not very credible account of the chroniclers, lay 300,000 of his soldiers; while the Franks lost only 1500 men.

Eudo, who, after his defeat on the Dordogne, had taken refuge with his more merciful enemy Carl, was present in the battle and took part in the pursuit and plunder. It was after this glorious triumph over the most formidable enemies of his country and religion that Carl received the surname of Martel (the Hammer), by which he has since been known, in history.

The importance of this victory to all succeeding age has often been enlarged upon, and can hardly be exaggerated. The fate of Europe, humanly speaking, hung upon the sword of the Frankish mayor; and but for Carl, and the bold German warriors who had learned the art and practice of war under him and his glorious father, the heart of Europe might even now be in the possession of the Moslem; and the Mosque and the Harem might stand where now we see the spire of the Christian church, and the home of the Christian family.

Though an effective check had been given to the progress of the Saracen arms, and they themselves had been deprived of that chief support of fanatic valor— the belief in their own invincibility,—yet their power was by no means broken, nor was Carl in condition to improve his victory. The Neustrians and Burgundians were far from being reconciled to the supremacy which the German Franks had acquired over themselves under the mighty Carolingian mayores. Their jealousy of Carl Martel's success and their hatred of his person, were so much stronger than their zeal in the cause of Christendom, that even while he was engaged in his desperate conflict with the Saracens they were raising a rebellion in his rear. But the indefatigable warrior was not sleeping on the laurels he had won. No sooner had he received intelligence of their treacherous designs, than he led his troops, fresh from the slaughter of the Infidels, into the very heart of Burgundy, and inflicted a terrible retribution on his domestic foes. He then removed all whom he had reason to suspect from their posts of emolument and honor, and bestowed them upon men on whom he could depend in the hour of danger.

In the following year, AD 734, he made considerable progress in the subjugation and, what was even more difficult, the conversion of the Frisians, who hated Christianity the more because it was connected in their minds with a foreign yoke. The preaching of Boniface was powerfully seconded by the sword of Carl, who attacked them by land and sea, defeated their Duke, Poppo, destroyed their heathen altars, and, like our own Alfred in the case of the Danes, gave them the alternative of Christianity or death.

After the victory of Poitiers, Carl had entrusted the defence of the Pyrenean borders to Duke Eudo, whom he left in peaceable though dependent possession of his territories. Eudo had received a

rough lesson from his former misfortunes, and passed the remainder of his life in friendly relations with his Frankish liege lord. At the death of Eudo, in AD 735, a dispute arose between his sons, Hunold and Hatto, respecting the succession; and it seems that in the course of their contest they had forgotten their common dependence upon Carl Martel. A feud of this nature at such a period, and in the immediate neighborhood of the Saracens, was highly dangerous to Aquitaine and the whole Frankish empire. Carl therefore lost no time in leading an army into the distracted province, to settle the disputes of the contending parties, and bring the population into a more complete state of subjection. Having advanced to the Garonne and taken the city of Bordeaux, he entered into negotiations with Hunold; and, "with his accustomed piety", conferred the duchy upon him, on condition of his renewing his father's oath of fealty to himself and his two sons, whom he thus distinctly pointed out to the Franks as their hereditary rulers.

AVIGNON TAKEN FROM THE SARACENS.

In AD 737, the infidels were once more introduced into the south of Gaul by the treachery of Christians. A man of influence in Provence, called Maurontus, who probably aimed at an independent dukedom, formed a strong party among the Neustrian seigniors against the detested German mayor.1 As the Arabian alliance was the only one which could sustain them in a conflict with Carl, they made no scruple of inviting Ibn Yusuf, the new viceroy of Septimania (Languedoc), into their country and giving him the city of Avignon as a pledge of their sincerity. The Saracens, instructed by their strange allies, passed into Burgundy, where the party opposed to Carl was strongest: having taken Vienne, they covered the country as far as Lyons with their wild and rapid cavalry, which everywhere left its traces of fire and blood.

The advance of the Saracens was so sudden, and their progress so rapid, that Carl Martel was not immediately prepared to meet them. He therefore dispatched his brother Childebrand and his principal seigniors, with such forces as were ready, to keep the enemy in check; determining himself to follow with a numerous and well-appointed army. When the advanced guard of the Franks arrived near Avignon, the Saracens retreated into that place, and prepared to stand a siege. On the arrival of Carl the town, which had resisted Childebrand, was taken by storm, and the Arabian garrison put to the sword. The Franks then crossed the Rhone, and marched through Septimania to Narbonne—a place of great importance to the Saracens, who had made it a magazine for their arms. It was defended at this time by Athima, viceroy of the Caliph in Septimania, with a considerable force. The Saracens of Spain, fearing that the garrison might be insufficient to withstand the assault of the Franks (who had invested the town on every side), fitted out a fleet, and transported a body of troops to the mouth of the river Berre (near Narbonne), in hopes of raising the siege. This movement did not escape the quick eye of Carl; who, leaving his brother with a division of the besiegers, fell with the remainder on the newly landed force of the enemy, and routed them with dreadful slaughter. He failed, however, in his attempts upon Narbonne, which remained in the hands of the Saracens; while Bezieres, Agde, Megalone, and Nimes, together with all the territory on the north side of the river Aude (subsequently known as Languedoc), were reunited to the Frankish Empire.

According to Paullus Diaconus, Carl Martel was assisted on this occasion by Luitprand, king of the Longobards in Italy, with whom he had formed a close alliance and friendship. We have hardly sufficient grounds for believing that the Longobards took an active part in this war, but the mere expectation of their approach may have exercised some influence in bringing about the results above described.

The activity of his enemies in the north again prevented Carl from pursuing his advantages against the Moslems, who might perhaps, had German Europe been united, have even then been driven back to the shores of Africa. In AD 737 we find the indefatigable warrior employed in repelling and avenging a fresh inroad of the Saxons, whom he defeated with great slaughter and drove along the river Lippe. In AD 739 he again appeared in Burgundy, where his presence had become necessary to stamp out the shouldering embers of the old conspiracy.

STATE OF ITALY.

In the meantime a new theatre was preparing for the Franks, on which they were destined by Providence to play a very conspicuous and important part. The exertions and influence of Boniface the great apostle of Germany, and the intimate religious union he had effected between the Frankish Church and the Bishops of Rome, were to produce for both parties still richer fruits than had yet appeared. To understand the circumstances which brought them into closer external relations, corresponding to the increased intimacy of their spiritual union, it will be necessary to make ourselves acquainted with the state of Italy at this period; and more especially with the very singular and anomalous position of the Bishops of Rome.

That devoted land, as if in penance for the long and selfish tyranny it had exercised over the world, had become the prey, in turn, of almost every barbarous tribe of Europe; but was at this period nominally subject to the Emperors of the East. The victories of Narses, in AD 534, had destroyed the power of the Ostrogoths, which, under the great and good Theodoric, had seemed so firmly established; and Italy was now a province of the Roman Empire, instead of being, as formerly, its centre and head. It was governed for the Byzantine court by a viceroy styled Exarch, whose residence was at Ravenna, on the eastern coast. The court and people of Constantinople, however, were too feeble to retain for any length of time a conquest, which they owed solely to the genius of a fortunate general. About thirty years after the defeat of the Goths, when the valiant eunuch had ceased to defend what he had won, the Longobards and 20,000 Saxons, descending upon Italy from the Julian Alps; expelled the Romans from the greater portion of their recent conquests, and confined them to the narrow limits of the Exarchate. The empire which the Longobards at this time established was greatly weakened by its division into several Duchies, the rulers of which were in constant strife with one another and with the central government. We may judge of the extent and consequences of these internal dissensions from the fact that, after the assassination of King Eleph (ad 574), the Longobards in Italy remained without a king for ten years, and were subject to thirty-six dukes, each of whom "reigned in his own city".

The most powerful of these were the Dukes of Benevento, Friuli, and Spoleto. At the end of this period the royalist party—favoured, no doubt, by the great mass of the people, to whom nothing is so hateful as a petty tyrant—once more obtained the ascendancy, and compelled the revolted dukes to swear fealty to Authari, surnamed Flavius, son of the murdered Kleph. The reunion of the Longobards under one head was naturally followed by a further extension of their borders at the expense of the Roman empire; and this extension was the immediate cause of a collision between the kings of the Longobards and the successors of St. Peter, which gave rise to the most important and lasting results.

POSITION OF BISHOPS OF ROME.

The Bishops of Rome had, in the meantime, been adding to the spiritual influence they owed to their position as heads of the Church in the great capital of the West, the material resources of extensive possessions, and numerous and devoted vassals. Like all other dignified ecclesiastics within the imperial dominions, the Bishops of Rome were subject to the Greek Emperor; but, as it was mainly by their influence and exertions that the city and duchy of Rome were kept in allegiance to the Greek Emperor, the balance of obligation was generally in favor of the Pontiffs, who, on that account, were treated by the court at Constantinople in a far less arrogant manner than would have been congenial to the pompous sovereigns of the East.

The aggressive attitude of the Longobards, which threatened the Greek Emperors with the loss of the small remnant of their Italian possessions, was calculated to excite no less the apprehensions of the Roman Bishops. It was open to them, indeed, to throw themselves at once into the arms of the Longobardian monarchs, from whose reverence and gratitude they might, no doubt, have acquired a commanding position in Church and State; and it was this ever-present alternative which rendered them virtually independent of their nominal sovereigns. Many reasons, however, inclined them to preserve their allegiance to the Byzantine court, or at least to refrain from transferring it to any other potentate. Old associations, and the fear of change, would have their weight in determining the course pursued; but the circumstances which chiefly influenced the Popes in their decision were, in the first place, the distance of Constantinople from Rome, which was favorable to their independence; and, in the next, the declining power and feeble character of the Emperors, which rendered them convenient masters to aspiring vassals.

The evident intention of the Bishops of Rome, to play off the Longobards and the Byzantine court against each other, and to make their own career the resultant of these two opposing forces, seemed, for some time, likely to be entirely frustrated. The iconoclastic controversy, with all its horrible and ridiculous consequences, now began to agitate the Christian world, and gave rise to the bitterest hostility between the great capitals of the East and West, and their respective rulers. The Emperor Leo III, surnamed the Isaurian, disgusted at the idolatrous worship paid by his subjects to the images which filled the churches, issued, in AD 726, his famous decree for their destruction. It was then that the independence of thought and action to which the Roman bishops had accustomed themselves was clearly manifested.

The Emperor communicated his pleasure respecting the destruction of the images to the Pope, and claimed from him the same unanswering obedience which he was accustomed to meet with from the Patriarch of Constantinople. But Gregory II, encouraged by the unanimous support of the Italians, who looked to him as the champion of their beloved idols, not only refused, in a letter full of personal

abuse, to carry out the wishes of the Emperor, but fulminated a threat of excommunication against all who should dare to lay violent hands upon the images.

LUITPRAND MARCHES UPON ROME.

After so public a renunciation of his allegiance, we might expect to see the Bishop of Rome avowedly siding with the Longobards, especially as they had forsaken the Arian heresy, and their King Luitprand himself had manifested a very high degree of veneration for St. Peter's chair. But the motives suggested above retained their force, and no such change took place; on the contrary, we are told that when the Italians, "on hearing the wickedness of Leo, formed a plan of electing a new emperor and conducting him to Constantinople", the Pope induced them to forego their purpose and adhere to their former allegiance.

Nor is his policy on this occasion difficult to understand. The Longobards were too near, and the absorption of Rome into their empire would have been too complete to allow the Bishops of Rome free scope for their lofty schemes of ambition. As subjects of King Luitprand, they would have run the risk of sinking from the rank of virtual rulers of the Roman duchy, to that of mere metropolitan bishops. And the danger of this degradation grew every day more urgent. Gregory II died in the midst of the perplexities arising from his critical position. But the same policy was pursued by his successor Gregory III with so much determination, that Luitprand, who, whatever may have been his reverence for the spiritual character of his opponent, and liberal as he was towards the Holy See, could not overlook his intrigues, and was determined to be sole master in Italy, found it necessary to advance upon Rome with a hostile army. The scruples which the pious Longobards may have felt in violating St Peter's patrimony, must have been greatly relieved by the very secular conduct of Gregory in respect to the king's rebellious vassals. Thrasamund, Duke of Spoleto, having incurred the displeasure of his sovereign, took refuge in Rome; and when Luitprand demanded that he should be given up, the Pope and the Patricians of the Romans united in giving a decided refusal. The opposition to Luitprand was further strengthened by the adhesion of Gottschalk, Duke of Benevento, who took up arms against his suzerain; and in an engagement which took place soon after, between the king and his mutinous vassals, Roman troops were seen fighting on the side of the rebels.

Contrary to the hopes and expectations of Gregory, Luitprand was completely victorious; and, justly irritated by the conduct of the Romans, to whom he had shown so much forbearance, immediately led his forces to the very gates of Rome, with the full intention of incorporating it with the rest of his Italian dominions; and thus, with all his foresight, Gregory had brought the rising structure of the papacy into the greatest danger, and appeared to be himself at the mercy of his enemies.

In this extremity the holy father bethought himself of the powerful and orthodox nation which had for so many ages been the faithful ally of the Catholic Church, and had lately been united in still closer bonds of reverence and amity to St. Peter's chair. In AD 739, Pope Gregory III applied for aid against the Longobards "to his most excellent son, the Sub-king Carl".

That this application was made unwillingly, and with considerable misgivings about the consequences, may be inferred from the extremities to which Gregory submitted before he made it.

His hesitation was owing, no doubt, in part to his instinctive dread of giving the papal chair a too powerful protector, who might easily become a master; and partly to his knowledge of the sincere friendship which existed between his opponent Luitprand and his desired ally. Of all the circumstances which threatened to prevent the realization of the papal dreams of temporal independence and spiritual domination, none were so greatly and so justly dreaded as an alliance between the Franks and Longobards; and we shall see that Gregory III and his successors spared no pains, and shrunk from no means however questionable, to excite jealousy and hatred between the Franks and their Lombard kinsmen.

While the Romans were trembling within their hastily-repaired walls, and awaiting the decisive assault of the Longobards, Carl Martel was resting from the fatigues of his late campaigns in Burgundy; and he was still in that country when the papal envoys reached him. They brought with them a piteous epistle from Gregory, in which he complains with bitterness of the persecutions of his enemies, who, he says, had robbed the very church of St Peter (which stood without the walls) of its candlesticks; and taken away the pious offerings of the Frankish princes. Carl received the communication of the afflicted Pontiff with the greatest reverence. The interests of the empire, and more especially of his own family, were too intimately connected with the existence and honor of the Bishops of Rome, to allow of his feeling indifferent to what was passing in Italy; and there is no reason to doubt that he entertained the highest veneration for the Head of the Church. Yet this first embassy seems to have justified the fears rather than the hopes of Gregory.

The incessant exertions which Carl's enemies compelled him to make for the maintenance of his authority would long ago have destroyed a man of ordinary energy and endurance, and were beginning to tell even upon his iron frame. He was aware that the new order of things, of which he was the principal author, depended for its continuance and consolidation solely upon his presence and watchfulness. So far from being in a condition to lead his forces to a distant country, and to make enemies of brave and powerful friends, it was not long since he had sought the assistance of the Longobards themselves; and he knew not how soon he might stand in need of it again.

He therefore contented himself with opening friendly negotiations with Luitprand, who excused himself to Carl, and agreed to spare the Papal territory on condition that the Romans should cease to interfere between himself and his rebellious subjects. The exact terms of the agreement made between Gregory and Luitprand, by the mediation of Carl Martel, are of the less moment, as they were observed by neither party. In AD 740 the Longobards again appeared in arms before the gates of Rome; and the Pope was once more a suppliant at the Frankish court. In the letter which Carl Martel received on this occasion, Gregory bitterly complains that no effectual aid had been as yet afforded him; that more attention had been paid to the "lying" reports of the Lombard king than to his own statements, and he earnestly implores his "most Christian son" not to prefer the friendship of Luitprand to the love of the Prince of the Apostles. It is evident from the whole tenor of this second epistle, that the Frankish mayor had not altered his conduct towards the King of the Lombards, in consequence of Gregory's charges and complaints; but had trusted rather to his own knowledge of his friend than to the invectives of the terrified and angry Pope.

To give additional weight to his written remonstrances and entreaties, Gregory sent the bishop Anastasius and the presbyter Sergius to Carl Martel, charged with more secret and important instructions, which he scrupled to commit to writing. The nature of their communications may be gathered from the symbolical actions by which they were accompanied. The envoys brought with them the keys of St. Peter's sepulcher, which they offered to Carl, on whom they were also empowered to confer the title and dignity of Roman Patricius. By the former step, the offer of the keys (an honor never before conferred upon a Frankish ruler), Gregory expressed his desire to constitute the powerful mayor Protector of the Holy See; and by conferring the rank of Roman Patricius without, as seems probable, the sanction of the Greek Emperor, he in effect withdrew his allegiance from the latter, and acknowledged Carl Martel as liege lord of the Roman duchy and people. It was in this light that the whole transaction was regarded at the time, for we read in the chronicle of Moissiac, written in the beginning of the ninth century, that the letter of "the Pope was accompanied by a decree of the Roman Principes; and that the Roman people, having thrown off the rule of the Greek Emperor, desired to place themselves under the protection of the aforesaid prince, and his invincible clemency".

Carl Martel received the ambassadors with the distinguished honor due to the dignity of the sender, and the importance of their mission; and willingly accepted at their hands the significant offerings they brought. When they were prepared to return, he loaded them with costly presents, and ordered Grimo, the Abbot of Corbey, and Sigebert, a monk of St. Denis, to accompany them to Rome, and bear his answer to Pope Gregory. Rome was once more delivered from destruction by the intervention of Carl, and his influence with Luitprand.

DEATH OF CARL MARTEL. HIS CHARACTER AND ACTIONS.

And thus were the last days of the great Frankish hero and Gregory III employed in marking out a line of policy respecting each other, and the great temporal and spiritual interests committed to them, which, being zealously followed up by their successors, led in the sequel to the most important and brilliant results. They both died nearly at the same time, in the same year (AD 741) in which the events above described took place. The restless activity of Carl Martel had prematurely worn him out. Conscious of the rapid decline of his powers, he began to set his house in order; and he had scarcely time to portion out his vast empire among his sons, and to make his peace with heaven in the church of the patron saint, when he was seized by a fever in his palace at Chiersy, on the Oise; where he died on the 15th (or 21st) of October, AD 741, at the early age of fifty. He was buried in the church of St. Denis.

Carl Martel may be reckoned in the number of those great men who have been deprived of more than half the glory due to them, "because they want the sacred poet". Deeds which, in the full light of history, would have appeared sufficient to make a dozen warriors immortal, are despatched by the Frankish chroniclers in a few dry words. His greatness, indeed, shines forth even from their meager notices; but we feel, as we read them, that had a Caesar or a Livy unfolded his character and described his exploits,—instead of a poor pedantic monk like Fredegar,—a rival might be found for the Caesars, the Scipios, and the Hannibals.

We have seen that he inherited little from his father but the hereditary vigour of his race. He began life as the prisoner of an envious stepmother. When he escaped from his prison at Cologne, he

was surrounded by powerful enemies; nor could he consider himself safe until, with a force which voluntarily joined his standard, he had defeated three armies larger than his own. His subsequent career was in accordance with the deeds of his early life. Every step in his onward progress was the result of a contest. He fought his way to the seat of his mighty father. He defeated the Neustrians, and compelled them to receive a sovereign at his hands. He attacked and defeated, in rapid succession, the warlike nation of the Frisians and the Saxons; he refixed the Frankish yoke more firmly upon the necks of the Swabians, the Bavarians, the Aquitanians, and Gascons; and, above all, he stemmed the mighty tide of Moslemism which threatened to engulf the world.

Nor was it with external enemies alone that he had to contend. To the last days of his active life he was engaged in quelling the endless seditions of the great seigniors, who were as impatient of control from above as of opposition from below.

His mighty deeds are recorded; but of the manner in which he set about them; of the resources, internal and external, mental and physical, by which he was enabled to perform them; of his personal character and habits; of his usual dwelling-place; of his friends and servants, his occupations, tastes, and habits, we are left in the profoundest ignorance.

The great and important results of his activity were the predominance of the German element in the Frankish empire, the preservation of Europe from Mohammedanism, and the union of the principal German tribes into one powerful State. And all these mighty objects he effected, as far as we are able to judge, chiefly, though not entirely, by the sword. He beat down everything which barred his course; he crushed all those who dared to oppose him; he coerced the stubbornness of the independent German tribes, and welded them together by terrific and repeated blows. Our prevailing idea of him, therefore, is that of force—irresistible energy; and his popular surname of Martel, or the Hammer, appears a particularly happy one.

The task which he performed was in many respects similar to that of Clovis at an earlier period; but it is not difficult to see that it was performed in a very different spirit. “He is not”, says Guizot, “an ordinary usurper. He is the chief of a new people which has not renounced its ancient manners, and which holds more closely to Germany than to Gaul”. Though superior to Clovis, even as a warrior, we have no sufficient reason to accuse Carl Martel of being either treacherous or cruel. The incessant wars in which he was unavoidably engaged, necessarily imply a great amount of confusion in the State, and of sacrifice and suffering on the part of the people. And we have sufficient evidence of a direct nature, to show that the usual effects of long-continued wars were severely felt in the Frankish empire. The great mass of the people is seldom honored by the notice of the Chroniclers, and never except in their relation to those for whom they toil and bleed; and we might have been left in blissful ignorance of the cost of Carl Martel’s brilliant deeds, had not the coffers of the Church been heavily mulcted to defray it.

VISION OF ST. EUCHERIUS.

Ecclesiastical property, which, at the time we speak of, comprised a large proportion of the land, was exempted, by various immunities and privileges, from bearing its due share of the public burdens. Carl Martel, therefore, to whom a large and constant supply of money was indispensable, was accustomed to make a portion of the wealth of the Church available to the wants of the State. This he effected by bestowing bishoprics and rich benefices on his personal friends and trustiest followers, without much regard to their fitness for the clerical office. It was for this offence that, notwithstanding the support he gave to Boniface and his brother missionaries, and the number of churches which he founded and endowed, he was held up by ecclesiastical writers of a later age as a destroyer of monasteries, “who converted the property of the Church to his own use”, and on that account died “a fearful death”. More than a hundred years after Carl’s decease (in AD 858) Louis, the German, was reminded, by a synod held at Chiersy, of the sins committed by his great ancestor against the Church. “Prince Carl”, said the assembled fathers to the king, “the father of Pepin, who was the first among the Frankish kings and princes to alienate and distribute the goods of the Church, was solely on that account eternally damned”. They then proceeded to relate the well-known “Visio S. Eucherii”, a forgery of Archbishop Hincmar, according to which, Eucherius, bishop of Orleans, having been transported to the other world in a trance, beheld Carl Martel suffering the pains of hell. On his inquiring, of the angel who accompanied him, the reason of what he saw, he was told that the mighty majordomus was suffering the penalty of having seized and distributed the property of the Church. The astonished bishop related what had befallen him to Boniface, and Fulrad the abbot of St. Denis, and repaired in their company to the sepulcher of Carl Martel. On opening the coffin, which was charred on the inside and contained no corpse, a dragon rushed out and made its escape.

Against these and other harsh judgments of the great hero’s character (none of which are earlier than the ninth century), the acrimonious nature of which betrays their source, we may set the respect of his contemporaries, the friendship of Boniface and Pope Gregory, and the fact that he endowed and

enriched a great number of religious houses, and was frequently applied to by the Pope to defend St. Peter's chair. That his own necessities, and the excessive wealth and troublesome privileges of the Church, induced him to take measures which operated injuriously on the character of the clergy, cannot be denied; but he proved in many ways that he acted in no hostile spirit to religion or its ministers, but under the pressure of circumstances which he could not control. If he used a portion of the revenues of the Church to pay and equip his soldiers, he led those soldiers against the bitterest enemies of Christendom, the heathen and the Moslem. His lot was cast in the battlefield, but the part which he there performed was useful as well as brilliant. Though evidently a warrior of the highest class—great in the council as in the field—he was not that degraded being, a mere warrior. He never seems to have sought war for its own sake, or to have delighted in bloodshed. He was willing to negotiate with an enemy, even when he felt himself the stronger; and was placable and generous to his bitterest foes. The aid he afforded to Boniface and others in their efforts to convert the heathen, and the sympathy he showed in their success, sufficiently prove that he was not indifferent to religion; and that he could appreciate, not only the brave exploits of the gallant soldier, but the self-sacrificing labors of the zealous missionary.

V.

CARLOMAN AND PEPIN THE SHORT.

AD 741—768

Carl Martel left two sons, Carloman and Pepin, by his first wife of whom nothing is known, and a third, Gripho, by the captive Bavarian princess Sunehild, who is sometimes called his second wife and sometimes his concubine. In the first partition of his dominions, which was made known before his death, he apportioned Austrasia, Swabia (Alemannia), and Thuringia, the German provinces, to his eldest son, Carloman; Neustria, Burgundy, and Provence, to Pepin, the chief inheritor of his glory. In this arrangement the son of Sunehild was wisely passed over; but the entreaties of his beautiful spouse induced Carl, at the very end of his life, to set apart a portion from each of the two kingdoms above mentioned for Gripho; an unfortunate step, which only brought destruction on him who received the fatal gift.

The mischievous effects of the new partition showed themselves immediately. The subjects of Gripho, among whom alone he could look for sympathy and support, were discontented at being arbitrarily separated from the rest of the empire; and the ill-feeling of the seigniors and people in all parts of the country appears to have been enhanced by the prejudice existing against Sunehild, both as a foreigner and on account of the great influence she exercised over the heart of Carl. So strong, indeed, was the feeling of the Franks upon the subject, that we may fairly doubt whether Carloman and Pepin themselves, had they been so inclined, would have been able to secure to their brother the possession of the territory allotted to him.

Whatever sentiments the two eldest brothers previously entertained towards Gripho, they were soon rendered openly hostile by the flight of their sister Hiltrude to the court of Bavaria, and her unauthorized marriage with Odilo, the duke of that country. Sunehild and Gripho, who were naturally looked upon as the instigators of this unwelcome alliance, shut themselves up in the fortress of Laon; but being entirely without resources, they yielded up the place and themselves as soon as Carloman and Pepin appeared with an army before its walls. The favorite wife of the mighty Carl Martel was sent into a nunnery at Chelles, and Gripho was imprisoned in the castle of Neufchateau, in the forest of Ardennes.

The great importance which the youthful rulers attached to the flight of Gripho and his mother, and the clandestine marriage of Hiltrude, was owing to their knowledge of the troubled state of Bavaria, where a rebellion broke out soon afterwards. Carloman and Pepin, like their forefathers, were called upon, at the very commencement of their reign, to show themselves worthy of the scepter they had inherited. No sooner was the heavy hand of Carl Martel withdrawn from their necks, than Swabians, Bavarians, and Aquitanians once more flew to arms for the recovery of their independence. Nor can we condemn the proceedings of these warlike tribes as unseasonable, or altogether rash and hopeless. They had no reason to suppose that, contrary to the usual course of nature, the Carolingian race would go on forever producing giants like the two first Pepins and Carl Martel; and they knew that it needed a giant's grasp to hold the mighty empire of the Franks together. But the spirit of their father lived in both his sons, as their enemies had soon good reason to know; and any natural hopes the revolted nations may have founded on family dissensions were dispelled by the captivity of Gripho, and the lasting harmony which existed between Carloman and Pepin.

Having placed a Merovingian named Childeric on the throne, which their father for some time before his death had left unoccupied, the young princes marched an army towards Aquitaine; for Hunold the son of Eudo, the sworn vassal of Carl Martel, had manifested his rebellious intentions by throwing Lantfred, the Frankish ambassador, into prison. Crossing the Loire, they devastated Aquitania as far as Bourges; and were on the point of overrunning the whole country, when the intelligence of the still more serious rebellion of the Swabians compelled them suddenly to break off their campaign in the south, and return to the heart of their dominions. Preparations of unusual magnitude had been made for the war by the Dukes of Swabia and Bavaria, who had invited the Saxon and Slavonian tribes to make common cause against the Franks. The sudden return of the Frankish army, however, frustrated their half-completed plans. In the autumn of the same year, Carloman crossed the Rhine, fell upon the Swabian Duke Theobald before his Bavarian allies were ready to take the field, and compelled him to renew his oath of allegiance, and to give hostages for its observance.

In the meantime, Odilo, Duke of Bavaria, the husband of the fugitive Princess Hiltrude, was doing all in his power to strengthen himself against the expected attack of the Franks, and was

evidently acting in concert with Duke Hunold of Aquitaine. The defeat of the Swabians was a heavy blow to his hopes; but he had gone too far to recede, and having united a body of Saxons and Slavonian mercenaries with his own subjects, he took up a position on the farther side of the river Lech, and stockaded the banks to prevent the enemy from crossing. The Franks came up soon afterwards, but found the Bavarians so strongly entrenched, that they lay fifteen days on the opposite bank without attempting anything. After a diligent search, however, they discovered a ford by which they crossed the river during the night, and, falling on the unsuspecting enemy, put them to flight, and drove them with great slaughter across the river Inn.

The Frankish princes are said to have remained for fifty-two days in the enemies' country; but their expedition partook more of the nature of a foray than a conquest, and left the Bavarians in nearly the same condition of semi-independence in which it had found them. The activity of the revolted tribes rendered it dangerous for Carloman and Pepin to lead their forces too far in any one direction. As Hunold had been saved by the revolt of the Swabians, so Odilo was now relieved from the presence of the Franks by diversions made in his favor in two other quarters; by the Saxons, who had fallen upon Thuringia; and by Hunold, who, emboldened by impunity and the absence of the Franks, had crossed the Loire and was devastating the land as far as Chartres. The Saxons claimed the first attention of the Frankish leaders, since the latter dared not march towards the south with so dangerous an enemy in their rear. Carloman is said to have defeated the Saxon army, which consisted in all probability of undisciplined marauders, in two great battles, and to have carried off one of their leaders, named Theoderic, into Austrasia. Pepin was, in the meantime, engaged with the Swabians under Theobald, whom he soon reduced to obedience. Having thus, for the time, secured their rear, the brother-warriors marched (in AD 745), with united forces, against Hunold, who, conscious of his utter inability to resist their undivided power, laid down his arms without a contest, consented to give hostages, and to renew his brittle oaths of fealty. Disgusted with his ill success, he soon afterwards resigned the government in favor of his son Waifar, and retired into the monastery of St. Philibert, in the island of Rhé, on the coast of Aquitaine.

We cannot fairly number Hunold among the princes of Europe who have resigned their crowns from a real and settled conviction of the worthlessness of all but spiritual goods and honors. The precise motives which actuated him can only be guessed at; but the very last explanation of his conduct to which we should have recourse is that he sought in retirement a more undisturbed communion with God. The same chronicles which record his abdication inform us, that in order to secure the undisputed succession of the vacant throne to his son, he lured his own brother "by false oaths" from Poitiers, and, after putting out his eyes, kept him in strict confinement. Such was his preparation for the monastic life!

Though it is not easy to discover in what respect the Swabians were more in fault in the war just mentioned than the other revolted nations, it is evident that they incurred the special resentment of their Frankish conquerors. All had broken their allegiance, and had sought to regain by force the independence of which they had been forcibly deprived. Yet while the Bavarians and Aquitanians were merely compelled to renew their engagements on honorable terms, the treatment of the Swabians has left an indelible blot on the character of Carloman.

This brave and once powerful people had retired, after their defeat by Pepin, into the fastnesses of the Alps, but were soon compelled to make their submission, and to resume their former allegiance. In AD 746, however, they appear to have meditated a new revolt, and were accused of having incited the Bavarians to try once more the fortune of war. Rendered furious by the seemingly interminable nature of the contest, Carloman appears to have thought himself justified in repaying faithlessness by treachery of a far more heinous nature; and this is the only shadow of an excuse which can be offered for his conduct. Having led his army to Cannstadt in AD 746, he ordered Theobald, the Swabian duke, to join him with all his forces, in obedience to the military ban. Theobald obeyed without suspicion, supposing that he should be employed, in conjunction with the rest of Carloman's forces, against some common enemy.

"And there", says the chronicler of Metz, "a great prodigy took place, that one army seized and bound another without any of the perils of war!". No sooner had the two armies met together in an apparently friendly manner, than Carloman ordered his Franks to surround the Alemannians (Swabians), and to disarm and bind them. He then instituted an inquiry respecting the aid afforded the Bavarians; and, having seized those chiefs who had assisted Odilo "against the invincible princes, Carloman and Pepin, he mercifully corrected each according to his deserts". Lanfried II received the vacant throne of Theobald, who, in all probability, was one of those who lost their lives by Carloman's merciful correction. In the following year, the connection between the Carolingian family and the Roman Church, which had grown continually closer, was still farther strengthened by the voluntary abdication of Carloman, and his admission into the monastic order. The reasons which induced this

mighty prince and successful warrior to take so singular a step are quite unknown. Remorse for his recent treachery, disgust at the bloodshed he had caused and witnessed, the sense of inferiority to his brother Pepin, and doubts as to the continuance of fraternal harmony, a natural tendency to religious contemplation increased by the influence of Boniface, whose earnest faith and spotless life could not but make a deep impression upon all who knew him; these and other causes will occur to the mind of every one as being, singly or in different combinations, adequate to the result. Yet we can but guess at motives which were unknown to the generations immediately succeeding him, and which he himself perhaps would have found it difficult to define.

With the full concurrence of his brother Pepin, whose appetite for worldly honors was by no means sated, Carloman set out for Rome with a numerous retinue of the chief men in his kingdom, taking with him magnificent presents for the Pope. He was received by Zachary with great distinction; and by his advice Carloman vowed obedience to the rules of St. Benedict before Optatus, the Abbot of Monte Casino, and founded a monastery to St. Sylvester on the classic heights of Mount Soracte. But he was far too much in earnest in his desire of solitude to find the neighborhood of Rome a suitable or agreeable residence. The newly founded monastery was soon thronged with curious visitors, eager to behold the princely monk who had given up all to follow Christ. He therefore abandoned Mount Soracte, and, concealing as far as possible his name and rank, enrolled himself among the Benedictine monks of Monte Casino.

As no stipulation had been made in favor of Carloman's son Drogo, Pepin now became sole ruler of the whole Frankish empire. It is a no less singular than pleasing fact that one of the very first uses which Pepin made of his undivided authority was to release his brother Gripho from his long imprisonment; singular, because it seems to imply that Carloman, whose susceptibility to religious influences cannot be doubted, was the only obstacle to this act of generosity and mercy. It is indeed open to us to suppose that Carloman foresaw more clearly than his brother the injurious consequences of Gripho's restoration to freedom; for the policy of this step was certainly more questionable than its generosity. The liberated prince thought more of what was withheld than of what was granted, and had never ceased to consider himself entitled to an equal share of the dominions of his father.

In AD 748, not long after his release, while Pepin was holding a council of the bishops and seigniors at Düren, Gripho was forming a party among the younger men to support his pretensions to the throne. In company of some of these he fled to the Saxons, who were always ready to make common cause against the hated Franks. Pepin, well aware of the extremely inflammable materials by which his frontiers were surrounded, and dreading a renewal of the conflagration he had so lately quenched in blood, immediately took the field; marching through Thuringia, he attacked and defeated the Nordosquavi, a Saxon tribe who lived on the river Wipper, between the Bode and Saale. The Saxon leader Theoderic was taken prisoner for the third time, and a considerable number of the captives taken on this occasion were compelled to receive Christian baptism, according to the usual policy of that age.

After fruitless negotiations between the brothers, Gripho endeavored to make a stand at the river Oker; failing in this, he fled to the Bavarians, among whom an enemy of Pepin was sure to find a welcome. After devastating the Saxon territory for forty days, and reimposing the tribute formerly exacted by Clotaire, Pepin directed his march towards Bavaria, in pursuit of his brother. Odilo, the former duke of this country, was now dead, and had been succeeded by his son Tassilo, who ruled under the influence of the Frankish Princess Hiltrude. These inveterate enemies of Pepin were also joined by a mighty Bavarian chief, called Suitger, and the Swabian duke, Lanfried II.

If we understand rightly a passage in the annals of Metz, Gripho succeeded in depriving Tassilo and his mother of the reins of Government and making himself master of Bavaria. Gripho, Suitger, and Lanfried united their forces, but not venturing to await the attack of the Franks upon the Lech, as Odilo had done on a former occasion, they retreated at once behind the Inn, which had already proved so effectual a bulwark. Pepin, however, no longer embarrassed by a variety of enemies, determined to bring the matter to a final decision, and was already making preparations to cross the Inn, when the leaders of the allied army, convinced of the futility of braving the superior force of the Franks, voluntarily surrendered themselves prisoners of war. The leniency with which the Bavarians were treated seems to imply that favorable terms of surrender bad been granted, at any rate, to them. Tassilo received back his duchy, for which he had to swear fealty to the Frankish ruler; while Alemannia was finally incorporated with the Frankish dominions. The fate of Lanfried II, the last of the Swabian dukes, is not known; but the character and general policy of Pepin are a guarantee that he was not treated with unnecessary harshness. Gripho was once more indebted to his brother for life and liberty, and not only received a full pardon, but was endowed with twelve counties and the town of Mans—a fortune splendid enough to have satisfied the desires of anyone who had not dreamed too much of independence and royal authority.

The ill success which attended the efforts of Gripho, whose claims but a few years before would have rallied thousands of malcontents round his standard, and the rapid and easy suppression of the Swabian and Bavarian revolts, afford us evidence that the once bitter opposition of the seigniors, both lay and clerical, to the establishment of the Carolingian throne, was finally overcome; and that Pepin possessed a degree of settled authority which neither his father nor his grandfather had enjoyed. Many circumstances contributed to this superiority in the position of Pepin, even as compared with his immediate predecessor. He had, in the first place, the great advantage of a quiet and undisputed succession to his father's dignities. His authority could not be regarded merely as that of a great officer of the crown or a successful warrior, but had already acquired an hereditary character, as founded on the mighty deeds of a series of noble ancestors: in the second place, the military constitution of the country had acquired consistency in the long and successful wars of Carl Martel. This constitution, as we shall show, was intimately connected with the seigniorship, now fully developed, and the system of *beneficia*, or non-hereditary grants, by which the Frankish rulers endeavored to secure the services of the powerful chieftains and their dependent followers; and lastly, we must attribute much of the tranquility enjoyed by Pepin to the vigour with which Carl Martel chastised his unruly subjects, and forced the boldest to succumb to the valor and fortune of his glorious race. And hence it was that Pepin found both strength and leisure to regulate by wise laws, the dominions which his father had only been able to overawe by his upraised sword. In this work he was ably seconded by Boniface, whose counsel he sought on all important occasions, and to whom, in turn, he gave material aid in the grand objects of the noble martyr's life—the extension of the Christian faith, and the regulation of the visible Church according to the Roman ritual.

SYNOD OF LESTINES.

It was during the mayoralty of Pepin, and not, as is generally assumed, in that of Carl Martel, that the famous and important act of 'Secularization' took place, which will again be spoken of in the chapter on the Church. The practice into which Carl Martel had been driven by his necessities, of bestowing ecclesiastical benefices on laymen who assumed the priesthood with purely secular views, was inconsistent with the peace and good order, and inimical to all the higher interests, of the Christian Church. As an exceptional state of things, however, even rigid disciplinarians and pious churchmen like Boniface had thought it expedient to yield a tacit assent to the employment of Church revenues for military purposes. But when, on the one hand, the consequences of these irregular and violent expedients had become, with the lapse of time, more clearly evident; and, on the other, a stricter discipline, and a more religious and ecclesiastical spirit had been diffused through the great body of the clergy by the labors of Boniface and his school, it became more and more repugnant to the feelings of all true friends of the Church to see its highest offices filled by masquerading laymen, who had nothing of the priest about them but the name and dress. In this repugnance we have every reason to believe that both Carloman and Pepin largely shared; and yet, though not engaged in an internecine struggle like their father, they carried on expensive wars, and needed large supplies of land and money. It was not therefore to be expected that they should ease the Church from all participation in the public burdens, especially at a time when it had absorbed a very large proportion of the national wealth. Under these circumstances, a compromise was effected by the influence of Boniface at the Synod of Lestines. In this important council the assembled bishops consented, in consideration of the urgent necessities of the State, to make a voluntary surrender of a portion of the funds of the Church; with the stipulation that the civil rulers should, on their part, abstain for the future from all arbitrary interference with its discipline and property.

Preparatory to the meeting of the Synod at Lestines, Carloman and Pepin summoned, on the 21st of April, AD 742 (at Saltz?), a council of the great seigniors, temporal and spiritual, to consider how the laws of God and of the Church, which had fallen into confusion and ruin under former rulers, might be best restored. "For more than eighty years", says Boniface, in his epistle to the Pope on this occasion, "the Franks have neither held a synod, nor appointed an archbishop, nor enacted or renewed their canons; but most of the bishoprics are given to rapacious laymen or dissolute and avaricious priests for their own use; and though some of these profess to be chaste, yet they are either drunkards or followers of the chase; or they go armed into battle, and shed with their own hands the blood of Christians as well as heathens!".

Before this first assembly, which was a council of state, and not an ecclesiastical synod, Boniface as papal legate brought forward his measures for the reform of the Church and the settlement of its relations to the State. Through the influence of Carloman many of these propositions received the sanction of the council, and they must be regarded as concessions made by the State to the Church. It was enacted that annual synods should be held; that the property of which the churches and monasteries had been violently deprived should be restored; that the counts and bishops in their respective jurisdictions should be directed to put down all heathen practices (to which the people in

some parts of the country were still addicted); that the rules of St. Benedict should be reintroduced into the monasteries; and that the clergy should be prohibited from war and the chase, from sexual intercourse, and the use of military accoutrements.

In the following year (743), the Synod of Lestines itself was summoned for the final settlement of the points just mentioned; and it was here that the terms on which the consent of Carloman and Pepin to the proposition of Boniface had been given, were made public. "We also enact", runs the decree of these princes, "by the counsel of God's servants, and of the Christian people, that, in consideration of impending wars and the persecutions to which we are subject from surrounding nations, we be allowed, by the indulgence of God, to retain for some time *sub precario et censu* a portion of the Church's property, for the support of our army; on these conditions, that a solidus (gold piece of 12 denarii) should be paid annually to the church or monastery for every estate, and that the church be reinvested with its property at the death of the present holder. Should, however, necessity compel, or the prince ordain it, the *precarium* (or life-interest) must be renewed and a new document drawn up; and, in every case, care must be taken that the churches and monasteries, of which the property is in *precario* (granted for a single life), suffer no want or poverty. But if poverty renders it necessary, the whole property must be restored to the church or house of God".

It is not surprising that the remarkable document before us has been quoted, on the one hand, in evidence of the absolute power which the Carolingian mayors assumed over the Church; and, on the other, of the inviolability of Church property, and the disapprobation with which the conduct of Carl Martel was regarded even by his own sons. Our first impression, on reading this decree, is that the clergy had little reason to rejoice in the results of Boniface's mediation between themselves and the civil power. Not only are the grants of ecclesiastical property, made to laymen for secular and warlike purposes, retained during the lives of the occupants, but express provision is made for the renewal of similar grants, "when necessity compels or the prince commands it". The powers here given of employing the superfluous wealth of the Church for secular purposes could hardly be greater; yet such a relation between Church and State is quite consistent with the circumstances of the times.

Humanly speaking, the Frankish Church, surrounded as it was on either side by the still heathen Germans and the Mohammedan conquerors, owed its preservation to the sword of Carl Martel. Boniface himself emphatically declares that the success of his missionary efforts was to be ascribed in a great measure to the same potent instrument. The influence which the great ecclesiastical dignitaries derived from their sacred calling—the great extent and valuable immunities of their lands, and their skill in forming and leading parties in the State—had been greatly lessened by the bold inroads of the same vigorous prince upon their exclusive privileges, and his triumph over the factious nobles. The irresponsible power, too, of the bishops within the Church itself was also curtailed by the successful efforts of Boniface to restore the chain of subordination among the clergy, and to bring the whole body under the absolute supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. The important results of this change are sufficiently evident; for this head of the Western Church was himself an unwilling tributary to the Longobards, and a suppliant to the Frankish mayors for deliverance from triumphant enemies.

We cannot, then, be surprised that the ecclesiastical synods should submit to any terms which promised a settled state of things for the future. And on close examination of the acts of the Synod of Lestines, we shall find that, though much is conceded under the pressure of the moment, the future is carefully provided for. The State acknowledges, in the first place, that certain lands now held by laymen had belonged, and did still essentially belong, to the Church; and its claim, though held in abeyance, is effectually kept alive by the payment of a small fixed rent to the original owners; and, secondly, ecclesiastical property is spoken of as a whole; a point of very great importance—since the possessions of every religious body, however weak in itself, were thus placed under the protection of the universal Church.

The vast funds which the 'Secularisation' placed at the disposal of the Frankish princes contributed in no small degree to establish the Carolingian throne; for it enabled them to carry out to its full extent the system of beneficial (or non-hereditary) grants, and to secure the services of the powerful seigniors, who were bound to the Sovereign, not only by a sense of gratitude, but by the hope of future favors and the fear of deprivation.

A change took place at the period at which we have now arrived, which, though easily and noiselessly made, and apparently but nominal, forms an important era in Frankish history. It costs us an effort to remember that Carl Martel, Carloman and Pepin, were not kings, but officers of another, who still bore the royal title, and occasionally and exclusively wore the crown and sat upon the throne. Carloman and Pepin, when they were heading great armies, receiving oaths of allegiance from conquered princes, and giving away duchies, were mayors of the palace to Childeric III, a Merovingian king. Even they had thought the time not yet come for calling themselves by their proper name, and

had placed Childeric on the throne. The king's name was a tower of strength, which they who had met and defeated every other enemy seemed to shrink from attacking.

The foundations of the Merovingian throne, indeed, had been thoroughly, perhaps systematically, sapped. The king-making mayors had set up monarchs and deposed them at their pleasure; they had even left the throne vacant for a time, as if to prove whether the nation was yet cured of its inveterate notion that none but a Merovingian could wear a Frankish crown. This last experiment resulted, as we have said, in the placing of Childeric III upon the throne; an act by which Carloman and Pepin must have thought that some advantage would be gained, or some danger be avoided. At the commencement of their reign powerful tribes were in rebellion, and semi-dependent princes might think themselves absolved by a change of dynasty from their oaths and engagements, and regard revolt as a duty as well as a pleasure. The Franks themselves had not yet received sufficient proof that the sons were worthy of their sire; and the heathen among them naturally clung to the primeval race.

But circumstances changed. The mayors became more and more the heads of a great semi-feudal system, to the members of which they were the sole source of wealth, authority and honor. The intestine troubles of the kingdom had in great measure been healed; the revolted tribes were reduced to more complete obedience; Pepin himself acquired great military renown, and the limits of the empire were extended to the furthest point which they had ever reached. Pepin was already king indeed; and even towards the adoption of the royal name and style some gradual progress had been made. It had become customary to reckon in dates by the years of the mayor's office as well as the king's reign. The title of princeps and dux is freely given in the chronicles to Carl Martel and his sons, who regarded the royal palaces as their property, and conferred both lands and dignities in their own name. There was but one step more to the throne, and that step was taken at last, when there was scarcely a man in the empire who had either the power or the wish to prevent it.

PEPIN USURPS THE CROWN.

In AD 750 Pepin assumed the name of king, with the full consent of the nation and the sanction of the Pope; and the last of the Merovingians was shorn of his royal locks, the emblems of his power, and sent to end his days in the monastery of St. Bertin, at Sithiu (St. Omer in Artois).

The immediate motive for the change is not apparent; and the remarkable absence of all impatience on the part of Pepin to assume the royal name seems to justify the notion that the coup-de-grâce was given to the Merovingian dynasty by another hand than his. It might perhaps have been still deferred, but for the growing intimacy of the relations between the Carolingians and the Pope.

The Bishops of Rome had by no means surmounted the difficulties and dangers by which they had been long surrounded. The Greek emperors, to whom they were nominally subject, were too weak either to afford them the necessary protection against their enemies, or to enforce obedience to themselves; and, in addition to this, the Eastern and Western Churches were continually diverging from each other, both in their theological views and secular objects.

The Longobards hung over the eternal city like a cloud which might at any moment send forth the destructive flash. Its only chance of safety for the moment, its only hope of independence and spiritual dominion in the nearer and more distant future, were founded upon a close alliance with the Carolingian dynasty. It was a cherished object, therefore, with the Popes to bind this illustrious family to themselves by the strongest of ties, the sense of common interest and mutual indispensability. It was probable that Pepin would one day ascend the Frankish throne, and it was of the highest moment to the Bishops of Rome to assume the initiative in this inevitable dynastic revolution; for thus they would acquire a title to the gratitude of the new king, and give him an interest in the preservation of the source from which his royal title seemed to spring. The part which Boniface took in this transaction is unknown; but his position as the most zealous supporter of the papacy, and the intimate friend and counselor of Pepin, leads to the conjecture that a change so much in accordance with his known views was not made without his cooperation. All that has been transmitted to us is the fact that, in AD 750 (or 751), an embassy, composed of Burchard Bishop of Würzburg, Fulrad Abbot of St. Denys, and Pepin's own chaplain, appeared at Rome at the Papal Court, and laid the following question before Pope Zachary for his decision: "Whether it was expedient that one who was possessed of no authority in the land should continue to retain the name of king, or whether it should be transferred to him who really exercised the royal power".

It is not to be imagined for a moment that Zachary was unprepared with his reply to this momentous question, which would certainly not have been proposed had there been any doubt respecting the answer. The Pope replied, that "he who really governed should also bear the royal name"; and the embassy returned to Pepin with this message, or, as some writers take a pleasure in

calling it, this command. A grand council of the nation was assembled at Soissons in the same year, and the majordomus was unanimously elected sole king of the Franks, and soon afterwards anointed and crowned, with his wife Bertrada, by his old and faithful friend Boniface.

This solemn consecration by the use of holy oil, and other ceremonies, observed for the first time at the coronation of the Carolingian king, were not without their important significance. The sentiment of legitimacy was very strongly seated in the hearts of the Frankish people. The dethroned family had exclusively supplied the nation with their rulers from all time; no one could trace their origin, or point to a Merovingian who was not either a king, or the kinsman of a king. It was far otherwise with Pepin. He was the first of his race who had not fought for the office of majordomus with competitors as noble as himself. It was little more than a century since his namesake of Landen had been dismissed from his office by the arbitrary will of Dagobert. The extraordinary fertility of the Carolingian family in warriors and statesmen had hitherto enabled them to hold their own against all gainsayers. But if the new dynasty was to rest on something more certain and durable than the uninterrupted transmission of great bodily and mental powers in a single family, it was of vital importance to the Carolingians to rear their throne upon foundations the depth of which was beyond the ken of vulgar eyes. Such a foundation could be nothing else than the sanction of heaven, and was to be sought in the Christian Church, in the fiat of God's representative on earth, who could set apart the Carolingians as a chosen race, and bestow upon them a heavenly claim to the obedience of their countrymen.

We have already referred to the successful efforts of Boniface and his followers in the cause of Roman supremacy. The belief in the power of the Bishops of Rome, as successors of St. Peter, to bind and to loose, to set up and to set down, had already taken root in the popular mind, and rendered the sanction of the popes as efficacious a legitimiser as the cloud of mystery and fable which enveloped the origin of the fallen Merovingians.

So gradually was this change of dynasty effected, so skillfully was the new throne founded on well-consolidated authority, warlike renown, good government, and religious faith, that as far as we can learn from history, not a single voice was raised against the aspiring mayor, when his warriors, more majorum, raised him on the shield, and bore him thrice through the joyful throng; and when Boniface anointed him with holy oil, as King of the Franks "by the grace of God", not a single champion was found throughout that mighty empire, to draw his sword in the cause of the last monarch of the house of Clovis.

Pepin was not long allowed to enjoy his new dignity in peace, but was quickly called upon to exchange the amenities of the royal palace for the toils and dangers of the battle-field.

The Saxons had already recovered from, and were desirous of avenging, the chastisement inflicted upon them; and having rebelled "in their way", were now marching upon the Rhine. But Pepin, who had not ceased to be a general when he became a king, collected a large army, with which he crossed the Rhine, and entering the territory of the Saxons, wasted it with fire and sword, and carried back a large number of captives into his own dominions. "When the Saxons saw this", says the chronicler, "they were moved by penitence; and, with their usual fear, begged for the king's mercy, declaring that they would take an oath of fidelity, and pay more tribute than they had ever paid before, and never revolt again. King Pepin returned, by the aid of Christ, in great triumph to Bonn".

It was on his return from this campaign that he received the news of his brother Gripho's death. This restless and unhappy prince—whom the indelible notion of his right to a throne rendered incapable of enjoying the noble fortune allotted to him by his brother—had fled to Waifar, Duke of Gascony, in the hope of inducing him to take up arms. But Waifar was not in a condition to protect him; and when the ambassadors of Pepin demanded that he should be given up, Gripho was obliged to seek another asylum. The fugitive then directed his course to King Haistulph, foreseeing, probably, that Pepin would be drawn into the feud between the Pope and the Longobards, the subjects of Haistulph, and therefore think-ing that he might already regard the latter as the enemy of his brother. As he was passing the Alps, however, with a small retinue, he was set upon, in the valley of St. Jean de Maurienne, by Count Theodo of Vienne and the Transjuran Count Friedrich. Gripho was slain, but not until after a desperate struggle, in which both the counts above mentioned also lost their lives.

Pepin now retired to his royal residence at Dietenhoven, on the Moselle, and spent the few months of peace that followed the Saxon war in ordering the affairs of the Church; which he effected chiefly through the instrumentality of ecclesiastical synods. The influence of these assemblies had very much increased since Boniface first summoned them, and their jurisdiction extended itself beyond the sphere of merely ecclesiastical matters into the wide and undefined field of public morals.

King Pepin was now called upon to repay the obligations conferred upon him by the Papacy when it hallowed his usurpation of the Frankish crown. The influence of Carl Martel with his ally and friend Luitprand, and the reverence which the latter entertained for the Popes in their spiritual character, had caused a temporary lull in the affairs of Italy. But Luitprand died about two years after the accession of Pepin, and was succeeded, first by his grandson Hildebrand, who reigned seven months, and then by Ratchis Duke of Friuli, under whom the Longobards renewed the war against Rome. In this emergency, Zachary, who, like many other popes, trusted greatly and with good reason to his personal influence over the rude kings and warriors of the age, went himself to Perugia to beg a peace from Ratchis.

The result was favorable to a degree beyond his highest expectations. The Lombard monarch not only recalled his troops—which were already besieging the towns of the Pentapolis—and granted a peace of forty years, but was so deeply affected by the dignified demeanor and eloquent exhortations of the holy father, that, like another Carloman, he renounced his earthly crown, and sought a refuge from the cares of government in the quiet cloisters of Monte Casino.

Ratchis was succeeded in AD 749 by his brother Haistulph, a man by no means so sensible to spiritual influences, and remarkable for his energy and strength of purpose. In three years from his accession to the Lombard throne, he succeeded in driving out Eutychius, the last exarch of the Greek emperors, from the Exarchate of Ravenna, and made himself master of the city. Having thus secured the possession of the southern portion of the Roman territory, he marched upon Rome itself; and when Pope Zachary died, 15th March, in the year AD 752, it must have been with the melancholy conviction that all his efforts to preserve the independence of Rome, and to further the lofty claims of the Papacy, were about to prove fruitless. Once more was Hannibal at the gates; but, fortunately for the interest of the threatened city, the successor of Zachary, Stephen II, was a man in every way equal to the situation. By a well-timed embassy and costly presents, he stayed the uplifted arm of the Lombard for the moment, and, as often happens in human affairs, by gaining time he gained everything.

After remaining quiet for a few months, Haistulph again resumed his threatening attitude towards the Romans, and demanded a palpable proof of their subjection to himself, in the shape of a poll-tax of a gold solidus per head. A fresh embassy from the Pope, which the Lombard king received at Nepe (near Sutri, N. of Rome), met with no success, and the holy Abbots of St. Vincent and St. Benedict, who composed it, returned to their monasteries in despair.

Nor was any greater effect produced by the arrival of John, the imperial Silentiarius, who was sent by the Greek emperor from Constantinople. This pompous messenger brought letters for the Pope and King Haistulph, in which the latter was called upon to desist from his present undertaking and to restore the whole of the territory of which he had unjustly robbed the Grecian empire. The high-sounding language and haughty requirements of the Byzantians, unsupported as they were by any material power, could make no impression upon such a man as Haistulph, and he dismissed the imperial envoy with an unmeaning answer.

The danger of Rome had now reached its highest point, and no deliverance seemed nigh. “King Haistulph”, in the language of the chronicler, “was inflamed with rage, and, like a roaring lion, never ceased to utter the most dreadful threats against the Romans, declaring that he would slay them all with the sword, if they did not submit themselves to his rule”. An appeal which the Pope had made to the Byzantine emperors for protection was entirely fruitless, and the Romans were utterly unequal to sustain unaided a contest with the warlike Longobards. It was in this extremity that Stephen determined to test once more the value of that close relation which it had been the object of so many popes to form with the Frankish people, and more especially with the Carolingian family. He knew that it would be no easy matter to induce King Pepin or his Franks to undertake an expedition into Italy with a force sufficient for the object in view. He felt, too, that a mere letter from Pepin, such as Carl Martel had sent to his good friend Luitprand, would be of no avail to turn the ambitious Haistulph from his purpose. He therefore adopted the singular resolution of crossing the Alps, throwing himself at the feet of the Frankish monarch and thus giving him a convincing and affecting proof that the very existence of the Papacy was at stake.

With this view the holy father, seeing that all his entreaties “for the fold which had been entrusted to him (Rome), and the lost sheep” (Istria and the Exarchate of Ravenna), were fruitless, started from Rome on the 14th of October, AD 753, in company with the Abbot Rotdigang and Duke Autchar, whom Pepin had previously sent to Stephen with general promises of support. He was also followed by a considerable number of the Roman clergy and nobility. On his journey northwards he passed through the city of Pavia, where Haistulph then was; and though the latter had forbidden him

to say a word about restoration of territory, he once more endeavored, by rich presents and earnest entreaties, to induce the king to give up his conquests and forego his hostile purposes. He was warmly seconded by Pepin's envoys, and another epistle from the Greek emperor; but the mind of the fierce Longobards remained unchanged.

It is evident, indeed, that he would have prevented Stephen by force from continuing his journey but for the threats of the Frankish ambassadors. As it was he endeavored to intimidate the Pope in the presence of Rotdigang into a denial of his wish to proceed to the court of Pepin; and only then dismissed him when he saw that Stephen would yield to nothing but actual violence.

CORONATION OF PEPIN AND BERTRADA.

Pepin was still at his palace at Dietenhofen, when the intelligence reached him that the Pope, with a splendid retinue, had passed the Great St. Bernard, and was hastening, according to agreement, to the monastery of St. Maurice at Agaunum. It had been expected that the king himself would be there to receive the illustrious fugitive; but Stephen on his arrival found in his stead the Abbot Fulrad and Duke Rothard, who received the holy father with every mark of joy and reverence, and conducted him to the palace of Pontyon, near Châlons, where he arrived on the 6th of January, AD 754. As a still further mark of veneration, the young prince Carl was sent forward to welcome Stephen at a distance of about seventy miles from Pontyon; and Pepin himself is said to have gone out three miles on foot to meet him, and to have acted as his marshal, walking by the side of his palfrey. The extraordinary honors paid by Pepin to the aged exile proceeded partly, no doubt, from the reverence and sympathy which his character and circumstances called forth. But his conduct might also result from a wise regard to his own interests, and a desire of inspiring his subjects with a mysterious awe for the spiritual potentate at whose behest he had himself assumed the crown.

The decisive conference between Pepin and Stephen took place at Pontyon on the 16th January. The Pope appeared before the Frankish monarch in the garb and posture of a suppliant, and received a promise of protection, and the restoration of all the territory of which the Longobards had deprived him.

The winter, during which no military operations could be undertaken, was spent by Stephen at the monastery of Saint Denis at Paris. The spectacle of the harmony and friendship subsisting between the Roman Pontiff and King Pepin was calculated to produce a good effect on the Romance subjects of the latter; who, on account of his German origin and tendencies, was regarded with less attachment in Neustria and Burgundy than in his Austrasian dominions. This effect was increased by Stephen's celebrating in person that solemn act of consecration which he had already performed by proxy. At the second coronation of Pepin, which took place with great solemnity and pomp in the church of St. Denis on the 28th July, AD 754, his Queen, Bertrada, and her two sons Carl and Carloman, were also anointed1 with the holy oil, and the two last were declared the rightful heirs of their father's empire. That nothing might be wanting on the part of the Church to set apart the Carolingian family as the chosen of God, Stephen laid a solemn obligation on the Franks, that "throughout all future ages neither they nor their posterity should ever presume to appoint a king over themselves from any other family". The title of Patricius, which had first been worn by Clovis, was bestowed by the Pope upon the king and his sons. It is difficult to understand how this dignity could at this period be imparted to any one without the authority of the Byzantine emperor. Constantine (nicknamed Copronymus) may indeed have taken the opportunity of the Pope's journey to offer the patriciate to Pepin; but it is more consistent with the circumstances we have described to suppose that Stephen was acting irregularly and without authority in conferring a Roman title on the Frankish king; and that he in-tended at the same time to give a palpable proof of his independence of the Emperor who had neglected to aid him, and to point out Pepin as his future ally and protector.

The task which Pepin had undertaken to perform was by no means an easy one, nor did the execution of it depend solely on himself. The empire indeed was enjoying an unwonted freedom from foreign wars and domestic broils; but the great vassals of the crown were averse to distant campaigns, both from the length of time they consumed, and the ruinous expense of maintaining followers far from home.

On the 1st of March, AD 755, however, he summoned his council of state at Bernacum (Braine), where the war against the Longobards was agreed to, provided no other means could be found to reinstate the Pope. In the meantime ambassadors were dispatched to Haistulph, with terms which show that the Franks were by no means eager for the expedition. King Pepin on this occasion styles himself "Defender of the holy Roman Church by Divine appointment" and demands that the "territories and towns should be restored"—not to the Byzantine emperor, to whom they at any rate nominally belonged, but "to the blessed St. Peter and the Church and commonwealth of the Romans". It is at this crisis of affairs that Carloman, the brother of Pepin, once more appears upon the stage, and

in a singular character—viz. as opponent of the Pope. Haistulph, by what influence we are not informed, prevailed upon him to make a journey to the Frankish court, for the purpose of counteracting the effect of Stephen's representations. He met of course with no success, and was sent by Pepin and Stephen into a monastery at Vienne, where he died in the same year.

Haistulph on his part was equally determined, and war became inevitable. He would make no promise concerning the conquered territory, but would grant a safe conduct to Stephen back to his own diocese. The lateness of the season allowed of no lengthened negotiations. Immediately after the receipt of Haistulph's answer Pepin began his march towards Italy, accompanied by Stephen; and having sent forward a detachment to occupy the passes of the Alps, he followed it with the whole force of the empire. Passing through Lyons and Vienne, he made his way to Maurienne, with the intention of crossing the Alps by the valley of Susa, at the foot of Mont Cenis. This important pass, however, had been occupied by Haistulph, who had pitched his camp there and was prepared to dispute the passage. According to the chroniclers, he endeavored to strengthen his position by the same warlike machines which he had "wickedly designed for the destruction of the Roman state and the Apostolic Chair". The onward march of the Franks was effectually checked for the moment, and Pepin pitched his camp on the river Arc. In a short time, however, a few of the more adventurous of his soldiers made their way through the mountains into the valley of Susa, where Haistulph lay. Their inferior numbers emboldened the Longobards, who immediately attacked them.

"The Franks", says the chronicler, "seeing that their own strength and resources could not save them, invoked the aid of God and the holy Apostle Peter; whereupon the engagement began, and both sides fought bravely. But when King Haistulph beheld the loss which his men were suffering, he betook himself to flight, after having lost nearly the whole of his army, with the dukes, counts and chief men of the Longobards". The main body of Pepin's army then passed the Alps without resistance, and spread themselves over the plains of Italy as far as Pavia, in which the Lombard king had taken refuge. The terrible ravages of the invaders, who plundered and burnt all the towns and villages which lay along their route, and the imminent danger which threatened himself and his royal city, subdued for the moment the stubborn spirit of Haistulph, and he earnestly besought the Frankish prelates and nobles to intercede for him with their 'merciful' sovereign. He promised to restore Ravenna and all the other towns which he had taken "from the holy see" to keep faithfully to his allegiance to Pepin, and never again to inflict any injury on the Apostolic Chair or the Roman state. The Pope himself, who had no desire to see the Franks too powerful in Italy, earnestly begged his mighty protector "to shed no more Christian blood, but to put an end to the strife by peaceful means". Pepin was by no means sorry to be spared the siege of Pavia, and having received forty hostages and caused Haistulph to ratify his promises by the most solemn oaths, he sent the Pope with a splendid retinue to Rome, and led his army homewards laden with booty.

POPE STEPHEN'S LETTERS TO PEPIN.

But Haistulph was not the man to sit down quietly under a defeat, or to forego a long cherished purpose. In the following year he renewed the attack upon the Roman territory with a fury heightened by the desire of vengeance. Rome itself was besieged, and the church of St. Peter on the Vatican sacrilegiously defiled. Pope Stephen II, from whose life and letters we gain our knowledge of these circumstances, repeatedly wrote to Pepin and his sons for aid, in the most urgent, and at times indignant terms. In one of his epistles, St. Peter himself is made to address them as "his adopted sons" and to chide the delay and indecision of the king. After assuring them that not he (the Apostle) only, but "the Mother of God, the ever-Virgin Mary", and "thrones and dominions, and the whole army of Heaven, and the martyrs and confessors of Christ, and all who are pleasing to God", earnestly sought and conjured them to save the holy see, the Apostle promises, in case of their compliance, that he will prepare for them "the highest and most glorious tabernacles" and bestow on them "the rewards of eternal recompense and the infinite joys of paradise". "But if", he adds, "which we do not expect, you should make any delay, know that, for your neglect of my exhortation, you are alienated from the kingdom of God and from eternal life". When speaking in his own person Stephen says, "Know that the Apostle Peter holds firmly in his hand the deed of gift which was granted by your hands". Nor does he neglect to remind the Frankish princes of their obligation to the Papacy and the return that they were expected to make. "Therefore", he says, "has the Lord, at the intercession of the Apostle Peter and by means of our lowliness, consecrated you as kings, that through you the holy Church might be exalted and the prince of the Apostles regain his lawful possessions".

The boundless promises and awful denunciations of the Pope might have been alike unavailing, had not other and stronger motives inclined the king to make a second expedition into Italy. The interests of his dynasty were so closely connected with those of the Roman Church, that he could not desert the Pope in this imminent peril without weakening the foundations of his throne; and his honor as a warrior and a king seemed to require that the Lombards should be punished for their breach of

faith. The influence of Boniface, too (who was still alive, though he died before the end of the campaign), was no doubt exerted in behalf of the Papacy which he had done so much to raise. Pepin determined to save the Pope, but he did so at the imminent risk of causing a revolt among his own vassals, who openly and loudly expressed their disapproval of the war. “This war” (against the Longobards), says Einhard, “was undertaken with the greatest difficulty, for some of the chief men of the Franks with whom he (Pepin) was accustomed to take counsel were so strongly opposed to his wishes that they openly declared that they would desert the king and return home”.

Pepin found means to pacify or overawe these turbulent dissentients, and persisted in his determination once more to save the head of the Church from the hands of his enemies. In this second expedition Pepin was accompanied by his nephew Tassilo, who, in obedience to the war-ban of his liege lord, joined him with the Bavarian troops. The Frankish army marched through Châlons and Geneva to the same valley of Maurienne and to the passes of Mont Cenis, which, as in the former year, were occupied by the troops of Haistulph. The Franks, however, in spite of all resistance, made their way into Italy, and took a fearful vengeance for the broken treaty, destroying and burning everything within their reach, and giving no quarter to their perfidious enemies. They then closely invested Pavia; and Haistulph, convinced of his utter inability to cope with Pepin, again employed the willing services of the Frankish seigniors to negotiate a peace. Pepin on his side accepted the overtures made to him with singular facility, but obliged Haistulph to give fresh hostages, to renew his oaths, and, what was more to the purpose, to deliver up a third of the royal treasure in the city of Pavia. Haistulph also agreed to renew an annual tribute, which is said to have been paid for a long time previously to the Frankish monarchs.

And thus a second time was the Papacy delivered from a danger which went nigh to nip its budding greatness, and reduce it to the rank of a Lombard bishopric.

Haistulph died while hunting in a forest, before he had had time to forget the rough lessons he had received and to recover from his losses in blood and treasure. The fact that his life was preserved while he was besieging Rome and desecrating St. Peter’s church, and the consideration that good men too are sometimes killed while hunting, did not prevent the chroniclers from giving an unanimous verdict of “struck by Divine vengeance”. We know but little of him beyond this, that he was an ambitious man with a strong will, and not more scrupulous in keeping oaths than the other princes of his age. Unfortunately we cannot use the letters of the Roman pontiffs as sources for the biography of their opponents, on account of the exceeding vigor of their style. “The tyrant Haistulph” says Stephen II, “the child of the devil, who thirsted for the blood of Christians and destroyed churches, has been struck by the hand of God, and thrust into the abyss of hell in the same days in which a year before he had marched out to destroy Rome”.

A danger from another quarter, which threatened the development of the papal power, was also warded off by the power and steadfastness of Pepin. When the Exarchate of Ravenna was overrun by the Longobards, it was taken, not from the Pope, but from the Greek Emperor; and even the towns and territories which were virtually under the sway of the papal chair, were, nominally at least, portions of the Eastern Roman Empire. As Stephen had never formally renounced his allegiance to the Emperor, he could receive even the Roman duchy only as a representative of his sovereign, and to the other remains of the Roman Empire in Italy he had no claim whatever. The Longobards had dispossessed the Greeks, and the Franks had expelled the Longobards. It was therefore open to the conqueror to bestow his new acquisition where he pleased; but, at all events, the claim of the Greek Emperor was stronger than that of his vassal the Bishop of Rome. We cannot wonder, then, when we read, that ambassadors from Constantinople came to meet Pepin in the neighborhood of Pavia, and begged him to restore Ravenna and the other towns of the exarchate to the Roman Emperor. “But they did not succeed,” says the chronicler, “in moving the steadfast heart of the king; on the contrary, he declared that he would by no means allow these towns to be alienated from the rule of the Roman chair, and that nothing should turn him from his resolution”. Accordingly, he dispatched the Abbot Fulrad, with the plenipotentiary of King Haistulph, to receive possession of the towns and strong places which the Lombard had agreed to resign. The abbot was further instructed to take with him a deputation of the most respectable inhabitants from these towns, and in their company to carry the keys of their gates to Rome, and lay them in St. Peter’s grave, together with a regular deed of gift to the Pope and his successors.

TEMPORAL POWER OF THE POPE.

The independence of the holy see, as far as regarded the Greek Empire, was thus secured, and a solid foundation laid for the temporal power of the Popes, who may now be said to have taken their place for the first time among the sovereigns of Europe.

The rising fortunes of the Roman pontiffs were still further favored by a disputed succession to the Lombard throne. On the death of Haistulph, his brother Ratchis, who had formerly changed a crown for a cowl, was desirous of returning to his previous dignity, and appears to have been the popular candidate. Desiderius, Duke of Tuscia, Constable of Haistulph, obtained the support of the Pope. In order to secure this valuable alliance, he had promised "to comply with all the holy father's wishes", to deliver up other towns in Italy besides those mentioned in Pepin's deed of gift, and to make him many other rich presents. "Upon this", says the chronicle, "the Arch-shepherd took counsel with the venerable Abbot Fulrad, and sent his brothers, Diaconus Paulus and Primicerius Christopher, in company with Abbot Fulrad, to Desiderius, in Tuscia, who immediately confirmed his former promises with a deed and a most fearful oath".

After this prudent precaution, it was agreed at Rome that the cause of Desiderius should be supported, even by force of arms if necessary, against Ratchis. "But Almighty God ordered matters in such a manner that Desiderius, with the aid of the Pope, ascended the throne without any further contest". The promised towns, Faventia (Faenza), with the fortresses Tiberiacum, Cavellum, and the whole duchy of Ferrara, were claimed, and, according to some accounts, received, by the papal envoys; though the next Pope complains that Desiderius had not kept his promises. Stephen II ended his eventful life on the 24th of April, AD 757.

With the exception of an unimportant expedition against the Saxons, in which Pepin gained a victory on the river Lippe, and again at Sithiu, near Dülmen on the Stever (in Westphalia), nothing of importance, in a military point of view, appears to have been undertaken before AD 760; when, according to some authors, Narbonne was taken from the Saracens, who were now driven from all their possessions on the Gallic side of the Pyrenees.

FRANKS MARCH AGAINST AQUITANIANS.

In AD 760, began a long series of annual expeditions against Aquitaine, a country which had asserted a degree of independence highly offensive to the Franks. The Aquitanian princes, too, are supposed to have been peculiarly odious to Pepin, as off-shoots from the Merovingian stock. Waifar, the reigning duke, the son of that Hunold who had retired from the world in disgust after his defeat by the Franks, inherited the restless and haughty spirit of his father, and was ready to renew the contest which Hunold had abandoned in despair. The ambitious desires of Pepin, quickened by a personal dislike of Waifar, were seconded by a strong mutual antipathy existing between his own subjects and the Aquitanians. German blood did not enter largely into the composition of the population of Aquitaine, and that small portion which did flow in their veins was supplied by the Ostrogoths, a German tribe, indeed, but one which differed very widely from their Frankish kinsmen. The Aquitanians appear at this time to have possessed a degree of civilization unknown to the Franks, whom they regarded as semi-barbarians; while the Franks, in turn, despised the delicacy and refinement of their weaker neighbors. Their mutual dislikes and jealousies were kept alive by a perpetual border warfare, which was carried on (as formerly between England and her neighbors on the north and west) by powerful individuals in either country, without regard to the relations existing between their respective rulers. It was from these causes that Pepin came to look upon the Aquitanians and their duke in the same light as the Welsh were regarded by our own Edward I. The affected independence of Waifar, and the continual inroads made by the Aquitanians into his dominions, exasperated his feelings in the highest degree; and he evidently sought the quarrel which occupied him for the remainder of his life.

In AD 760, Pepin sent an embassy to Waifar, with demands which betrayed his hostile intentions against that unfortunate prince. On this occasion, too, the Frankish monarch came forward as a protector of the Church. He demanded of Waifar that he should give up all the ecclesiastical property in his dominions which had been in any way alienated from the Church; restore the immunities which the lands of the clergy had formerly enjoyed; and cease for the future from sending into them his officers and tax-gatherers. Furthermore, he demanded that Waifar should pay a weregeld "for all the Goths whom he had lately put to death contrary to law"; and, lastly, that he should deliver up all fugitives from the dominions of Pepin who had sought refuge in Aquitaine.

Waifar had thus the option given him of submitting to become a mere lieutenant of Pepin, or of having the whole force of the Frankish empire employed for his destruction. He chose the latter alternative, as every high-spirited prince must have done under the circumstances; and the war began at once. "All this", says the chronicler, "Waifar refused to do; and therefore Pepin collected an army from all quarters, although unwillingly, and, as it were, under compulsion". The Frankish army marched through Troyes and Auxerre, and, crossing the Loire at the village of Masua, and passing through Berri and Auvergne, devastated the greater part of Aquitaine with fire and sword. Waifar, who was not sufficiently prepared for the attack, made an insincere profession of penitence which deceived

no one; and, after taking the necessary oaths of fidelity and giving hostages, was relieved from his unwelcome visitors. That this was a mere marauding expedition, to which Waifar offered no serious resistance, is proved by the fact that "Pepin returned back without having suffered the slightest loss".

In the following year Waifar, who had formed an alliance with Humbert, Count of Bourges, and Blandin, Count of Auvergne, considered himself strong enough to venture upon an inroad into the Frankish territory; and, in company with these allies, he led his army, plundering and burning, as far as Châlons on the Saône. Pepin's rage at hearing that the Aquitanians had dared to take the initiative, and had ravaged a large portion of Neustria, and even burned his own palace at Melciacum, was further increased by the knowledge that some of his own counts were aiding the invaders. Hastily collecting his troops, he took a terrible revenge, and showed the unusual exasperation of his feelings by putting his prisoners to death, and allowing a great number of men, women, and children to perish in the flames of the conquered towns. As Waifar still continued contumacious, a similar expedition was undertaken by the Franks in the following year, and Bourges and Thouars were stormed and taken. Pepin, according to the chronicles, invariably returned from these campaigns victorious "by the aid of God", or "under the guidance of Christ", "laden with booty, and without the slightest loss".

At the return of spring, in AD 763, Pepin held the Campus Mains at Nevers, at which it was resolved once more to carry fire and sword into the devoted land of Aquitaine, the inhabitants of which had already lost almost everything but their stubborn hatred of their Frankish oppressors. It is curious, when we consider that this war was undertaken by Pepin on behalf of the Church (which Waifar was accused of despoiling), to read the account of the destructive march of the Franks. "After desolating nearly the whole of the country about Limoges", says the chronicler, "and plundering many monasteries, he marched to Issandon (near Limoges), and laid waste a great part of Aquitaine, which was chiefly covered with vineyards; for, in nearly the whole of Aquitania, the churches and monasteries, the rich and the poor, cultivated the vine, but he destroyed everything". The campaign of this year is remarkable for the sudden defection of Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria and nephew of Pepin, who, during the march towards Aquitaine, suddenly withdrew with his troops under pretence of illness, with the firm resolve "never to see his uncle's face again". When about twenty-one years of age, Tassilo had been compelled to swear fealty to Pepin at the Campus Maius held at Compiegne in AD 757. Since that period he had been kept continually near his uncle's person, as if the latter was not satisfied with the sincerity of his subservience. The defection of Tassilo, at a time when the Frankish power was engaged in this desperate and bitter contest with the Aquitanians, caused great anxiety to Pepin; and though the march was continued as far as Cahors, little of importance was effected.

The diet was held in the following year, AD 764, at Worms, where it was discussed whether the war should be proceeded with or the revolt of the Bavarians be first suppressed. It would appear, however, that Pepin found it impossible to induce his vassals to march in either direction, for we are told that he passed the whole year at home, and spent the winter at his palace at Chiersy. He endeavored, indeed, to plant a thorn in the side of Waifar by bestowing the lately conquered town of Argenton and the province of Berri on Remistan, the uncle of Waifar, who had voluntarily sworn allegiance to him. But this hope, too, failed; for Remistan was false to his own treachery, and soon reconciled himself to his nephew, and took up the national cause. To show his sincerity in this second change, Remistan devastated the territory of Bourges and Limoges in so terrible a manner that "not a farmer dared to till his fields or vineyards".

PEPIN DEVASTATES AQUITAINE.

The effect of the perpetual and harassing inroads of the Aquitanians upon the Franks was such as Pepin most desired. It exasperated them to such a degree that they were ready to make any sacrifice to destroy their troublesome enemy. In the campus Maius, therefore, which Pepin held at Orleans in AD 766, he found his vassals fully prepared to second his designs, and determined, at any cost, to finish the war. Considerable progress was made towards the subjugation of Waifar's territory during this year, but still more in the two following; in the former of which the city of Toulouse and the fortresses Scoraille, Turenne, and Peiruce were taken, and in the latter the Frankish army pressed on as far as the Garonne, Perigueux, and Saintes.

Waifar and his people were by this time utterly exhausted by their exertions and calamities, and, being without the means of continuing the war, lay at the mercy of the conquerors. Embittered by the opposition he had met with, Pepin acted with unusual harshness. Taking his family with him to Saintes, and leaving them there, "he turned his whole mind to the destruction of Waifar, and determined never to rest till he had captured or killed the rebel". Remistan was soon afterwards taken prisoner and hung as a traitor. The mother, sister, and niece of Waifar fell into the hands of the Franks, and were sent off into the interior of the kingdom. That unhappy prince himself, deprived of every hope, and every consolation in disaster, deserted by the great mass of the Gascons, and hunted from

hiding-place to hiding-place like a wild beast, met with the common fate of unfortunate monarchs; he was betrayed and murdered by his own followers in the forest of Edobold in Perigord. The independence of Aquitaine fell with him, and the country was subsequently governed by Frankish counts like the rest of Pepin's empire.

The victor returned in triumph to his queen Bertrada (who was awaiting him at Saintes), rejoicing, doubtless, in having at last attained the object of so many toilsome years. His implacable and hated foe was no more; the stiff-necked Aquitanians were at his feet; his southern border was secure; and the whole empire was in an unwonted state of peace. He had every reason to look forward with confidence to an interval at least of quiet, which he might spend in domestic pleasures and in the regulation of the internal affairs of the vast empire over which he ruled.

But where he had looked for repose and safety an enemy awaited him more terrible than any whom he had encountered in the field. A short time after he arrived at Saintes, he was attacked by a disease which is variously described as fever and dropsy. Convinced that his case was beyond all human aid, he set out with his wife and children to Tours, and, entering the church of St. Martin, earnestly prayed for the intercession of that patron saint of the Frankish kings. From thence he proceeded to Paris, and passed sometime in the monastery of St. Denis, invoking the aid of God through his chosen servants. But when he saw that it was the will of heaven that he should die, he provided for the future welfare of his subjects; summoning the dukes and counts, the bishops and clergy of his Frankish dominions, he divided the whole empire, with their concurrence, between his two sons, Carl and Carloman. He died a few days after the settlement of the succession, on the 24th of September, AD 768, in the twenty-fifth year of his prosperous reign, and was buried by his sons, with great pomp, in the church of St. Denis, at Paris.

CHARACTER OF PEPIN.

Pepin was described by Alcuin, in the following generation, as an "energetic and honorable prince, distinguished alike by his victories and his virtues"; and although such epithets were used, more especially in that age, without sufficient discrimination, there is every reason in the present case to adopt them in their full significance. In the field, indeed, he had fewer difficulties to deal with than his warlike father. In all his military undertakings the odds were greatly in his favor; and he had not the same opportunities as Carl Martel of showing what he could effect by the mere force of superior genius. Yet, whatever he was called upon to do, he did with energy and success. He quickly brought the revolted German nations, the Bavarians and Swabians, to the obedience to which the hammering of his predecessor had reduced them; and he drove back the restless Saxons to their wild retreats. Twice he led an army across the Alps against a brave and active enemy, and twice returned victorious, after saving the distant city of Rome from imminent destruction and securing the independence of the Pope.

As a civil ruler he showed himself temperate and wise. Though greatly superior in every respect to his brother, he took no unfair advantage of him, but lived and acted with him in uninterrupted harmony. Though his ambition induced him to assume the name of king, he did so without haste or rashness, at a time and under circumstances in which the change of dynasty was likely to cause the least amount of ill-feeling or disturbance.

In his relations to the Church he displayed both reverence and self-respect. From conviction as well as policy, he was a staunch supporter of Christianity and the Roman Church: but he was no weak fanatic; he cherished and advanced the clergy, and availed himself of their superior learning in the conduct of his affairs; but he was by no means inclined to give way to immoderate pretensions on their part. He always remained their master, though a kind and considerate one; nor did he scruple to make use of their overflowing coffers for the general purposes of the State.

Of his private life we know scarcely anything at all; but we have no reason to suppose that it was inconsistent with that respect for religion, that love of order, justice, and moderation which he generally manifested in his public acts. In his last campaigns against Waifar and the Aquitanians alone does he seem, to have been betrayed into a cruel and vindictive line of conduct; and from them, as we have seen, he received the greatest provocation.

With such high qualities, important transactions, and glorious deeds, connected with his name, we might wonder that the fame of Pepin is not greater, did we not know the diminishing force of unfavorable contrast. Unfortunately, for his renown at least, he had a father and a son still greater than himself. Such a man would have risen like an alp from the level plain of ordinary kings: as it is, he forms but a link in a long chain of eminences, of which he is not the highest; and thus it has come to pass that the tomb of one who ruled a mighty empire for twenty-five years with invariable success, who founded a new dynasty of kings, and established the Popes on their earthly throne, is inscribed with

the name of his still more glorious successor; and all his high qualities and glorious deeds appear to be forgotten in the fact that he was “Pater Caroli Magni!”

SECOND PART

BOOK I.

FROM THE BIRTH OF CHARLEMAGNE TO HIS ACCESSION.

AD 742 TO AD 768.

The precise birth-place of the greatest man of the middle ages is unknown; neither have any records come down to us of his education, nor any particulars of those early years which are generally ornamented by the imagination of after biographers, even when the subject of their writing has left his infancy in obscurity. Eginhard, who possessed the best means of knowledge, frankly avows that he was himself ignorant; and the manuscript of a contemporary author, whose propensity to anecdote gives a value to his details, which neither the style of his composition, nor the accuracy of his statements, could bestow, is defective in that part which might have afforded some information, however vague, regarding the youth of Charlemagne. The year of his birth, however, as ascertained by computation from other data, seems undoubtedly to have been AD 742, about seven years before his father, Pepin the Brief, assumed the name of King.

His mother was Bertha, daughter of Charibert, Count of Laon; and concerning her early union with Pepin, a thousand pleasant fables have supplied the place of all accurate information. Although one of the papal epistles to Charlemagne insinuates that Pepin at one time contemplated a separation from Bertha, for the purpose of marrying another woman, it is evident that she was loved and honored by her husband, from the fact of her having shared in the new and solemn spectacle by which Pepin attempted to consecrate, in the eyes of the people, his usurpation of the supreme authority.

To the forms usually observed on the accession of a new monarch of the Francs, Pepin added various ceremonies which had never before been used in Gaul. Amongst these, the most striking, from its novelty, was the unction which bad been instituted for the kings of Israel, and which was readily performed for the Frankish usurper by the famous Boniface, Archbishop of Metz. In all the solemnities which dignified the elevation of her husband, Bertha was a partaker; and many have been the laborious struggles of historians to discover, or invent, various complex and political motives for so very natural an occurrence; but it would seem, that the simple desire of distinctly marking that his personal elevation to the royal station implied the elevation of his whole family, and the permanence of the kingly office in his race, was the sole view of the new sovereign of the Francs. The influence which she exercised over her husband, and the reverence which her children always displayed towards her, render it probable that to Bertha herself was entrusted the early education of Charlemagne. Still it is greatly to be regretted, that we do not possess any details of the tuition under which the mind of that prince put forth, between infancy and manhood, those grand and splendid qualities which, hidden in the darkness that overhangs his youth, shine out immediately on his accession to the throne, like the rising of a tropical day, which, we are told, bursts forth at once in its splendor, unannounced by the slow progress of the dawning twilight.

Nevertheless, although nothing is known of the minute particulars either of his domestic instruction or his early habits, there was a grander species of education to which he was subject, and of which we have better means of judging: I mean the education of circumstances. It is a common influence of troublous times, not alone to bring forward, but to form great intellect. The familiarity with scenes of danger and excitement—the early exercise of thought upon great and difficult subjects—the habit of supporting, encountering, and vanquishing, the very proximity of mighty schemes and mighty changes,—must necessarily give expansion, vigor, and activity, to every faculty of the mind, as much as robust exercises and habitual hardships strengthen and improve the body. In the midst of such uncertain and eventful times, and surrounded by such grand and animating circumstances, was passed the youth of Charlemagne, and though we cannot discover whether paternal or maternal care afforded the means of cultivating his intellect or directing his pursuits, to a mind naturally great and comprehensive, like his own, the world was a sufficient school—the events by which he was surrounded sufficient instructors.

The first act performed before his eyes was the consummation of all his ancestor's ambitious glory, by the mighty daring of his own father: and this instance of the ease with which great deeds are

achieved by great minds, was a practical lesson and a powerful incitement. The first act of his own life—a task which combined both dignity and beneficence—was to meet, as deputy for his father, the suppliant chief of the Roman church, and to conduct him with honor to the monarch's presence. The event in which he thus took part, and which afterwards affected the current of his whole existence, originated in the unhappy state of Rome, which I have before slightly noticed, and in the continual and increasing pressure of the Lombards upon that unstable republic which had arisen in Italy, after its separation from the empire of the East. The second and third Gregory had in vain implored the personal succor of Charles Martel to defend the Roman territory from the hostile designs of their encroaching neighbors; and Zacharias, who had succeeded to the authority and difficulties of those two pontiffs, had equally petitioned Pepin for some more effectual aid than remonstrances addressed to the dull ear of ambition, and menaces which began to be despised.

Under Stephen, who followed Zacharias, and ascended the papal chair soon after the elevation of Pepin to the sovereign power, the danger of Rome became still more imminent; for Astolphus, the Lombard King, contemning alike the threats of an avenger who did not appear, and the exhortations of a priest who had no means of resistance, imposed an immense tribute on the citizens of Rome, and prepared to enforce the payment by arms. But by this time the popes or bishops of Rome had established a stronger claim upon the rulers of France than that which they had formerly possessed. The instability of Pepin's title to the crown, had made him eager to add a fictitious authority to the mutable right of popular election; and, having, as we have before seen, joined to the voice of the people the sanction of the Pope, he divided between two, a debt which might have been dangerous or burdensome while in the hands of one. By this means, however, he gave to the Roman pontiffs a claim and a power; and Stephen now resolved to exert it in the exigency of his country.

In the moment of immediate danger, when Rome was threatened by hostile armies, and her fields swept by invading barbarians, the prelate, with a worthy boldness, set out from the ancient queen of empires, as a suppliant, determined to apply, first for justice and immunity at the court of Astolphus, the King of the Lombards, and, in case of rejection, then for protection and vengeance, at the hands of the new monarch of the Francs. Astolphus was deaf to all petitions, and despised all threats. Ravenna had fallen, and Rome he had determined to subdue. But the Pope pursued his way in haste; and, traversing the Alps, set his foot with joy on the territories of a friend and an ally. The French monarch was then returning from one of his victorious expeditions against the Saxons; and the messengers from Stephen met him on the banks of the Moselle.

The most common of all accusations against the human heart, and, I might add, against the human mind, is ingratitude. But in an uncivilized state of society, where rights are less protected, and mankind depend more on the voluntary reciprocation of individual benefits and assistance, than on fixed rules and a uniform government, the possession of such emotions as gratitude and generosity, would seem to be more necessarily considered as a virtue, and the want of them more decidedly as a crime, than in periods or in countries, where the exertions of each man is sufficient for his own support, and the law is competent to the protection of all.

Besides a feeling of obligation towards the Roman pontiffs, which the new sovereign did not hesitate a moment to acknowledge and obey, the call of the Pope was perfectly consonant to Pepin's views and disposition, as a man, a king, and a warrior. To welcome the Bishop of Rome, therefore, the monarch instantly dispatched his eldest son Charles, then scarcely twelve years of age, and every honor was paid to the head of the Catholic church that reverence or gratitude could inspire.

This is the first occasion on which we find Charlemagne mentioned in history; but the children of the Francs were trained in their very early years to robust and warlike exercises; and there is every reason to believe that great precocity, both of bodily and mental powers, fitted the prince for the office which was entrusted to him by his father.

From the distinction with which Pepin received the prelate, and from the bold and candid character of that monarch, little doubt can exist that he at once determined to protect the Roman state from the exacting monarch of the Lombards, by the effectual and conclusive interposition of arms. The King of the Francs, however, had still something to demand at the hands of the Pope; and the remonstrance of Astolphus, who pleaded hard by his envoys against the proposed interference, raised Pepin to the character of umpire and judge, enhanced the value of his mediation, and gave him a claim, not likely to be rejected, for some return on the part of Stephen. In regard to many of the particular circumstances of this time, contemporary historians are silent; and Anastasius, who lived at a later period, when the papal power had obtained, in a great measure, the ascendancy which it so long possessed, is so evidently incorrect in regard to several of the numerous details he gives, that great caution is necessary in receiving his account.

With those anxious fears for the stability of his authority which must always attend usurpation, Pepin eagerly sought every means of strengthening his title to the throne of France; and, not content with the pontifical sanction already given, determined on obtaining from the Pope, during his visit of supplication, some new act of recognition and consecration. On a positive promise of aid from the monarch of the Francs, Stephen formally absolved him for the breach of his oath of allegiance to Childeric; and repeated the ceremony of his coronation in the church of St Denis. Nor were precautions wanting, to guard against any future exercise of the same popular power, which had snatched the crown from one monarch, and bestowed it on another. The Pope launched his anathema at all those who should attempt to deprive the Carolingian line of the throne they had assumed; and Charles and Carloman, the two sons of Pepin, were crowned together with their parents, by the hands of the Roman pontiff.

As he had chosen by the papal sanction to prop his authority, originally raised upon the sandy foundation of popular election, the French monarch was of course moved by every principle of prudence, as well as by the remembrance of his promise, to strengthen and support the Roman church. Almost immediately on the arrival of the Pope, Pepin dispatched messengers to Astolphus, requiring him to abandon his demands upon the city of Rome, and to cease his aggressions on the Roman territory. Astolphus refused to comply; but, as he well knew the power of the Frankish nation, he sought to avert the storm which threatened him before he prepared to encounter it. Carloman, the brother of Pepin, who had resigned his inheritance in France, abandoned the world, and sought the best desire of human nature, peace, in the shade of the cloister, was at that time dwelling in a monastery, within the limits of the Lombard dominions. The eye of Astolphus immediately fell upon him, as a fit messenger to his brother; and he was compelled by the orders of his abbot to journey into France, and to oppose, at the court of the French monarch, the wishes and designs of the pontiff.

A custom, which must be more particularly noticed hereafter, existed at this time amongst the Francs, of determining upon war or peace, at the great assembly of the nation, in what was called a Champ de Mars; and though the Maires of the Palace had frequently violated this ancient institution, Pepin, who courted popularity, called upon his people, in almost all instances, to sanction any warfare he was about to undertake.

In the present case, where greater and more important interests were involved, he did not fail to add the consent of the nation to his own determination; and, at the Champ de Mars, held after his coronation, he announced to the nobles of the land his resolution of defending Rome from her enemies by force of arms. In the same assembly, his brother Carloman is said to have remonstrated publicly against this purpose; but the assertion is founded on the faith of after historians, whose evidence is doubtful, if not inadmissible. In the dim obscurity which hangs over these far ages, the more important facts only appear distinct; and those which are clearly known, in regard to the transactions of which we speak, are simply, that the nobles of France, concurred completely in the views of the king, and that Pepin marched with an immense army towards the frontiers of Italy; leaving Bertha, his wife, and Carloman, his brother, at Vienne, in Dauphiny, where Carloman died before the monarch's return from his Italian expedition.

The Lombards, warned of the approaching invasion, immediately occupied the passes of that mountain barrier, which nature has placed for the defence of the Italian peninsula. A battle was fought amongst the hills; the Lombards were defeated; and the Francs poured down into the ancient territories of the Romans. Pepin marched forward with that bold celerity, which distinguished all his race; and at once laid siege to Pavia, within the walls of which Astolphus had taken refuge. The war was carried on by the Francs with all the unsparing activity of a barbarous nation: and, while the Lombard capital was invested on all sides, bands of plunderers were spread over the country to ravage, pillage, and destroy.

Astolphus at length submitted to the power he was in no condition to resist; and, opening a negotiation with Pepin, he agreed to yield the exarchate, and the Pentapolis, which the monarch of the Francs had pledged himself to reannex to the territories of Rome. Forty distinguished hostages were given to ensure the performance of the treaty; and Pepin retired from Italy, satisfied that he had compelled the restitution of possessions which had been unjustly withheld.

Perhaps the most important point of discussion in the history of the middle ages is now before us, and one, in regard to which, a greater variety of different opinions has been offered and maintained, than any other question has elicited. The formal and distinct connection of the exarchate of Ravenna, and the territories of the Pentapolis, with the Roman domains, forms the basis of the temporal throne of the Popes, and, consequently, has been a subject of warm contestation in all its parts, between the friends and the enemies of the Romish church.

It is neither necessary nor fitting here, to state even the most prominent of the many conclusions to which authors have come upon this question; nor to endeavor to refute errors or correct mistakes, farther than by a simple statement of the ascertained facts, and a few deductions from them.

When Italy threw off the dominion of the Emperors of the East, its language was more submissive than its actions; and the authority of the empire was acknowledged long after its arms were resisted, and its power was at an end. As some sort of government, however, was absolutely necessary, the Romans, as I have already stated, recalled many of the forms of the old republic, and though tacitly submitting to their Popes, or Bishops, who led, counseled, and protected them, they still, as a senate and people, named their own governors, and entrusted that portion of their freedom which they were obliged to sacrifice for defence, to whomsoever their own wisdom or necessities might dictate. The office of exarch, which had been instituted by the Emperors for the government of their Italian provinces, was still continued by the Roman people as a means of obtaining protection; and the persons who filled it were by them elected, under the names, which had become synonymous, of Exarch or Patrician.

By fraud or violence, and probably by both, the Lombards, who had first armed in defence of the Romans against the Emperors, took possession of Ravenna and its dependencies; but the Popes never ceased to claim that territory, originally in behalf of the Roman people, and ultimately in the name of the Roman church.

UNION OF THE EXARCHATE AND PENTAPOLIS TO ROME

The rulers of the Francs, beginning with Charles Martel, had been successively elected by the senate and people of Rome to the post of Patrician, or Exarch; and, consequently, were bound, by the fact of accepting that office, to maintain the integrity of the Roman territory. Pepin, therefore, in his expedition against Astolphus, was only fulfilling one of the duties of the exarchonate, and reannexed the recovered tract to the rest of the appendages of Rome, rather as an act of restitution, than of donation. As the separation of Italy from the empire of the East had originated in an ecclesiastical dispute, the interests of the state became identified with that of the church. Gradually, in after ages, the Popes acquired the supreme power over the whole territory; and, anxious to find a title of more weight than mere possession, they assumed that the act of Pepin was the gift of a province, conquered by the Frankish king, directly bestowed upon the see of Rome, rather than a successful campaign of the exarch for the recovery of a province belonging to the republic. They afterwards attempted to support this pretence by a supposititious donation of a part at least of the same district by Constantine; and the Pontiff, in their letters, alluded more and more strongly, as the progress of years obscure the memory of realities, to fictitious rights which fictitious gifts had created.

Whatever was the nature of Pepin's restoration of the Exarchate and Pentapolis, the terms in which it was expressed were verbal; and even in the famous letter of Pope Adrian to Charlemagne, wherein he boldly declares the donation of Constantine, which was supposed to have taken place in remote and indistinct times, he touches most tenderly upon those after gifts of the same territory which were subject to immediate examination and refutation.

Individual ambition continually defeats its purpose by hurrying too rapidly towards its object; but a number of men, in long succession, conducting a permanent establishment, in which their own personal interests are entirely merged, often acquire a fearful superiority to those around them, by the calm regularity of their progress in advance, and the passionless caution by which they secure each advantage as it is obtained. The march of the papal power was slow and gradual. The Exarchate was reannexed to Rome; the Pontiffs subsequently chose to believe it bestowed upon the church, and on that hypothesis founded their temporal dominion, while, by similar means, they extended the limits of their spiritual authority. Nevertheless events, which will soon come under review, will show that the monarchs of the Francs looked upon the whole transaction in a different light, and considered all the temporal, and part even of the ecclesiastical, power in the provinces which they had restored to Rome, as still vested in themselves in their quality of Patrician, or Exarch. Although the youth of the Frankish nation were often permitted to bear arms at a very early period of life, it does not appear whether Charlemagne did, or did not, accompany his father in the first expedition against the Lombards. Several years follow, in the records of that period, without mention of the future monarch. During that lapse of time, Pepin again invaded Lombardy, in order to enforce the execution of the treaty which Astolphus had entered into the year before, and which he had unscrupulously broken, as soon as the sword of the Franc was withdrawn from his throat. The Lombard king was again driven to submission, and forced to begin the restitution which was demanded; but he did not live to complete it; and, after his death, which took place in consequence of a fall from his horse, Desiderius, who had commanded a part of his troops, was elected King of the Lombards, by the influence and support both of Pepin and the Pope,—a subject of which I must necessarily speak more hereafter.

In the meantime, Charlemagne continued to advance towards manhood. Successive wars, the fruits of a barbarous and unsettled state of society, where rights were undetermined, and law was in its infancy, afforded a continual school for the acquisition of that military knowledge and that corporeal strength, which, in those times, supplied the place of science in government, and talent in command. Early taught by his father all that was then known of warfare as an art, Charlemagne had but too frequent opportunities of gaining practical experience. It is more than probable, from the known habits of his nation, that he accompanied his father in most of his campaigns; but the first occasion on which he is decidedly stated by the chronicles to have followed the King to any of the many military expeditions which consumed the reign and the talents of Pepin, was on the renewal of the war with Waifar, Duke of Aquitaine, whose ambitious turbulence neither clemency could calm, nor punishment repress.

This struggle with the Dukes of Aquitaine, which continued with greater or less activity during two hundred years, is worthy of some attention. At that time, as already remarked, the right of succession was, in most cases, vague and undefined, and in none more so than in the transmission of the crown. Indeed, there are many reasons for believing that the chiefs of the Francs were originally elective, t as was the case also with the Lombards, and that the royal office became hereditary by the progress of gradual innovation and customary submission. However this might be, it seems clear, that the Dukes of Aquitaine had some immediate connection with the Merovingian Kings of France, and some collateral claim upon the throne itself—the existence of which claim and connection, has caused much greater disputes amongst the antiquaries of modern times, than it did amongst the princes of their own day.

It does not appear, in any degree, that this title was put forth, or considered of consequence, in the times to which this book refers. Pepin was seated safely on the throne; the Dukes of Aquitaine are never found to have disputed his right; and their consanguinity with the Merovingian Kings would be unworthy attention, were it not necessary to show, that they stood in a different relationship to the French monarchs from the other dukes or governors of provinces, and claimed the territory they possessed, not indeed as independent sovereigns, but as hereditary, though subordinate princes, holding their feof,—or beneficium, as it was called under some circumstances,—not by the will of the reigning monarch, but in right of clear descent.

On various occasions, the Merovingian Kings themselves endeavored to restrict the power of the Dukes of Aquitaine to the same limits as that enjoyed by the simple governors of a province; and the charter of Charles the Bald expressly states, many years afterwards, that they only possessed the duchy of Aquitaine in the name of the Kings of France. Nevertheless, it is beyond doubt, that Dagobert, to end the continual claims of the children of his brother Charibert, granted to his nephews the whole of Aquitaine as a perpetual lordship, on condition of tribute and homage; which is the first clear instance of a direct hereditary feof. Standing thus in a position totally different from that of any other of the French noble of the time, the Dukes of Aquitaine were continually trying the new and unascertained power which they held, against the monarchs by whom it had been conceded, and still more frequently against the maires of the palace, who afterwards governed in their name.

In the time of Charles Martel, Eudes, Duke of Aquitaine, was constantly in revolt, whatever phantom king shadowed the Merovingian throne; and all the moderation of the hero of that age, could never bind the turbulent prince to his alliance, nor all the exercise of his tremendous power, awe him to obedience and to peace. Continually defeated, Eudes still rose from his temporary submission, and, the moment that the presence of his conqueror was removed, allied himself to anyone who would aid him in the breach of those promises and treaties which fear and necessity had alone extorted. Charles, on the contrary, still triumphed and forgave; and, although the Duke of Aquitaine had even leagued with the Saracens, at once the enemies of his faith and his country, their defeat was followed by his pardon.

After the death of Eudes, the same turbulent spirit descended with the inheritance; and, though the territories he left were divided between his three sons, the rulers of the French found that the enmity of the Dukes of Aquitaine was transmitted entire. Hunald, who, as eldest of the three, had received Aquitaine for his portion, was soon forced to submit, by Charles Martel, and did homage, not to the Kings of France, but to the Maire of the Palace. Yet the spirit of revolt subsisted still; and no sooner had death unnerved the hand of the victor, than Hunald was once more in arms, plundering the provinces of Pepin and Carloman. Again subdued, the courage of the Duke sank. Remorse for having blinded his brother Hatton, operated, together with superstition and disappointment, to give him a temporary disgust to the world; and, resigning his territories to his son Waifar, he retired into the cloister,

No greater degree of tranquility accrued to France from this change in the government of Aquitaine; for Waifar proved still more rebellious and turbulent than his predecessor; and Pepin had soon to take arms, in order to put an end to his incursions. Several of these expeditions against Aquitaine are mentioned in the chronicles of the time; but that in which Charlemagne first appears in a military character, is marked as having been preceded by two years of peace,—an extraordinary duration of tranquility, in times when the scepter ever implied the sword.

The nominal cause of warfare, on the present occasion, was the plunder of church property by Waifar; and, on the approach of Pepin, the Duke promised immediate restitution, at the same time giving hostages for his future conduct. In those days, falsehood seems to have been sufficiently frequent to teach caution to the most unsuspecting; yet credulity—always a quality of an infant state of society—was carried to a very extraordinary height. Pepin, after having been repeatedly deceived, again trusted his rebellious subject; and Waifar, who, by his apparent submission, had alone sought to gain time for preparation, forgot his promises as soon as he could collect an army; threw off his allegiance; and, adding outrage to revolt, advanced into the territories of France, ravaging the country with fire and sword.

But the vengeance of the monarch was prompt and powerful. Accompanied by his eldest son, Pepin took the field, entered Aquitaine at the head of immense forces, and, with rapidity almost incredible, subdued the whole province, from Auvergne to Limoges. Here Charlemagne had one of those examples of grand and extraordinary celerity in the movement of immense armies, which he afterwards so often practiced himself with magnificent success. In the course of a very few weeks, many hundred miles of an enemy's territory were conquered. Speed set preparation at defiance, and surprise changed resistance into terror. In this, as in almost all other wars, the people were made the expiatory sacrifice, to atone for the faults of their rulers. Blood and flame wrapped one of the finest districts in France, and ruin and destruction marked the consequences of the vassals' revolt, and the vengeance of the sovereign.

DEATH OF REMISTAN

During four years Pepin pursued the war against Aquitaine, displaying many instances of extreme clemency and extreme rigor, the causes of which dissimilarity of conduct, at different times, must remain in darkness; as the chronicles of that age do not explain the motives, and the historians of after years have only substituted hypotheses for facts. The greater part of the revolted country at length submitted, and Remistan, the uncle of Waifar, himself joined the party of the king, and bound himself, by the most solemn oaths, to aid the monarch as a vassal and a friend. His engagements, though voluntary, were as frail as those of the rest of his family and but a short time elapsed before he was again in arms against the sovereign who had trusted him, pursuing his designs with all the acrimonious virulence of conscious treachery.

The territory of Limoges and Bourges, where Pepin had built himself a palace, and established his residence, was ravaged by the orders of this faithless ally; and, not content with simple aggression, Remistan had the criminal boldness to appear, with hostile purposes, within sight of the monarch he had insulted, and the friend he had betrayed.

The fate he courted soon overtook him. Not long after he had presented himself before Bourges, he was taken in an ambush laid by some of the officers of the king, and was brought bound into the royal presence.

The character of Pepin might doubtless have derived a fictitious air of magnanimity in the eyes of after ages, from a display of clemency on this occasion; but it can hardly be denied, that mercy to Remistan, after the gross treachery he had committed, and the blood he had caused to flow, would have been anything but mercy to the rest of France.

The justice of his execution, which has been denied, depended upon whether he maintained rights as an independent monarch, and was a conquered king, rather than an arrested subject. The fact, however, is clear, that, whatever were his original claims to royalty, his ancestors had renounced them in a thousand instances; and also that, whatever force had been used to compel that renunciation on their part, he himself had acknowledged voluntarily the sovereignty of Pepin, and had actually served him as his liegeman. Unless, therefore, rights are to be looked upon as mere matters of caprice, and obedience to an established government is to be granted and withdrawn, at the pleasure of each individual, Remistan was in reality the treacherous and revolted vassal of the French king; and, while his pardon would have been an act of folly, his punishment was but a deed of justice.

No clemency was shown: Remistan was instantly condemned and hung; and the war of Aquitaine was soon after terminated for the time, by the death of Waifar, who appears to have been slain by the hands of his attendants, probably instigated by Pepin himself. On this point, it is true, we

have no certain information, the only passage in the ancient chronicles which hints at the agency of the French monarch in the death of his rebellious vassal, leaving the matter still as a doubtful report.

Such means of destroying an enemy were but too common at that period; and, though the frequency of the fact can in no degree be brought forward to justify or even palliate a great moral offence, it at all events gives more probability to the rumor of its having been committed.

Pepin had many motives for seeking to bring the war in Aquitaine to as speedy a conclusion as possible, amongst which was the defection of Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria, who, but a short time before, had sworn allegiance to him, and acknowledged himself in the most solemn manner a vassal of the crown of France. The precise duties which he took upon himself by this oath and acknowledgment, we do not discover; nor is it easy to distinguish what was the distinction at that time between this higher class of vassals, and the inferior nobles more immediately within the jurisdiction of the monarch. The feudal system, the seeds of which had been long sown, was beginning to rise in different directions; but was far from possessing that great and extraordinary form which it afterwards assumed. Each particular age in the world's history brings forth the peculiar institution suited to the character of society at the time; but it does so slowly and by degrees, as necessity prompts the desire of alteration, and experience presents the mode. No sudden and general changes have ever been attended with permanent success, for although, by reiterated experiment, and the accumulated experience of many, it is impossible to say what degree of perfection may be ultimately reached, it would seem that the mind of man is incapable of conceiving at once any great and universal system. Each age may improve upon the last; and each individual epoch may produce and perfect the scheme of society necessary for itself,—at once the consequence of its existence, and the type of its character. But still the creation of great institutions is like the sculpture of a statue, and a thousand slight blows from Time's chisel are required, to change the marble ruggedness of the mass into the perfect and harmonious form.

At the time of which I now speak, the feudal system, the chief institution of the middle ages, was yet in its first rudeness, and a number of accidental circumstances were still required to give it consistency, solidity, and extent. It is impossible, and would be of little use, to trace all the events which contributed to that effect. The revolt and subjection of vassals—the power of some monarchs and the weakness of others—the rights of different orders, mutually wrung from each other—and the imperative necessity of some fixed barrier, however frail, between the claims of various classes,—gradually produced a state of society fitted to those times, and those times alone.

Amongst these causes were such insurrections as those of Waifar and of Tassilo. But though Pepin succeeded in subduing the former, and in annexing almost the whole of Aquitaine to the crown, the complete subjection of the dukedom of Bavaria was reserved for his successor.

On his return from his last and most successful expedition against Waifar, the monarch of the Francs was seized with a low fever at Saintes, which preyed severely upon a constitution shaken by mighty cares and never ceasing activity. His first resource under the depression of sickness, was a humble petition for aid at the shrine of St Martin of Tours, which had been rendered famous as a place of marvelous cure, by the folly and ignorance of the age, and the impudence and talent of its prelates. But the malady of the King was not one of those in which mental medicine can prove efficacious; and, however great might be his faith or superstition, Pepin returned, weaker and nearer to death than he went. He then proceeded to Paris; and took up his abode in the monastery of St Denis, where his sickness each day advanced more and more rapidly. At length, the period came when the approach of death forced itself upon his conviction; and after having, with the consent of the principal men of the kingdom, divided his whole dominions between his two sons, Charles, (afterwards called Charlemagne), and Carloman the younger, he died at the age of fifty-three.

Between Pepin and his father, Charles Martel, there existed a strong point of resemblance in their excessive promptitude of resolution, and their wonderful rapidity of execution, which qualities combined, formed the great secret of their power and their success. In other respects they differed from each other essentially. Charles Martel, despising the superstition of the day, oppressed the church; and, contented with his own power, contemned and circumscribed that of the nobility. Pepin, on the contrary, with greater ambition and greater piety, courted both the clergy and the nobles; and easily did away the phantom king, under the shadow of whose name Charles Martel had been satisfied to rule severely the other orders of the state.

Charles Martel left to his sons the regal power. Pepin transmitted to his children both the power and the name,—which is in all ages a great addition. As in war, an earthen mound, which an infant could crawl over with ease while unopposed, becomes, when defended, an important post; so in policy a mere title, which, abstractedly considered, is but air, very often becomes, in the struggle of contending parties, a mighty barrier and a strong defence.

In assuming the hereditary title of his Merovingian predecessors, however, Pepin unfortunately adopted also their system of dividing the succession—a system which had distracted the dominion of their race, and proved the destruction of his own

BOOK II.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF CHARLEMAGNE AND HIS BROTHER, TO THE DEATH OF CARLOMAN AND THE REUNION OF THE KINGDOM. FROM 768 TO 771

The two sons of Pepin,—Charles, known in modern history by the name of Charlemagne, by which title I shall in future designate him, and Carloman, his younger brother,—succeeded, at the death of their father, to one of the most fertile, the most extensive, and the most powerful kingdoms, which Europe has beheld since the fall of the Roman empire. The Pyrenees, the Alps, the Mediterranean, and the ocean, were boundaries supplied by nature to defend it from aggression, and to limit its extent; and the Rhine seemed intended for the same purpose by the same beneficent disposer. But rivers, however large, are ever very feeble and inefficient harriers between nations; and continual struggles had taken place upon the German frontier of France, from the period of the first establishment of the Frankish dominion in ancient Gaul, to the accession of the Carolingian race, the consequences of which struggles affected the whole reign of Charlemagne.

Without attempting to trace the progress of aggression on either side, and without joining in the censure often cast upon the barbarian tribes, for pursuing that system of migration which nature herself dictated, and for giving way to that thirst of conquest which was the first motive in their advance towards civilization, I must touch briefly on the causes which, during so long a period of the middle ages, rendered the northeastern limit of France the scene and object of incessant contention. The spirit of predatory migration affected the whole people of the north of Europe from the moment that the population became so general and so dense, in relation to the means of support, as to require a relief and force an outlet. The first impulse might be given by some accidental circumstance, unconnected with any regular design of seeking more abundant fields, or more extensive hunting grounds. It might be afforded by the vagabond habits of the Scythian herdsmen, who peopled a great part of the north, and by their pressure upon the more settled nations, whom they either infected with their own desire of wandering, or drove forth by their superior power. However that may be, it is not necessary to examine the remote and difficult question of national origins, in order to discover, amongst the various tribes who quitted the north to conquer and plunder the more civilized and enfeebled parts of Europe, two very distinct modifications in their principles of action, which led to great and important results. Some of these nations, whether they derived such a peculiar character from their native stock, or from some fortuitous circumstance, passed rapidly from country to country, contenting themselves with pillage, rapine, and destruction; sometimes returning to their own country after a successful expedition; sometimes proceeding to ravage some other land; but never dreaming of settling themselves anywhere, till centuries of roaming had obliterated the first character of their savage state, and gradually blended with them different races of a milder blood. Other tribes again, whether driven from their native habitation by strife with a superior power, or actuated by the general spirit of migration, seemed still to covet some fixed abode; and though often forced by circumstances to change from place to place, showed at each step the same inclination to settle, like a swarm of bees which congregate upon a thousand various points, before they find a spot where they can hive at last.

The first mentioned class of invaders, appear to have been animated in their expeditions by the desire of moveable plunder alone; the second class seemed to have acquired the more refined idea of territorial acquisition; though both were at the same time inspired by the spirit of conquest, the first great passion of a savage people. Of those who seem more or less to have felt the wish for permanent establishment, the Goths, the Burgundians, the Lombards, and the Francs were the principal. The Francs fixed their dominion in the last portion of that civilized and fertile territory, towards which the stream of barbarian invasion was continually tending. The same desires which had led them forth, still animated the nations they had left behind; and, on taking possession of the Roman dominions in Gaul, they had to turn upon those who followed, in the very same path by which they had entered; and to defend what they themselves bad wrung from the Romans against the tribes of kindred plunderers, which trod upon their steps.

Thus the German frontier became a scene of incessant strife; but the Francs were a young and warlike people, mighty in adolescent energies, and tremendous in indefatigable activity. Far from

contenting themselves with the barrier of the Rhine, the desire of conquest, which had made them masters of Gaul, led them to strive for dominions beyond the natural limits of the land they had obtained and in their struggles against the nations which followed—with forces concentrated for one great object, and with regularity of government ensuring stability of purpose—though sometimes defeated, and often repelled, they restrained the barbarians with whom they had to contend, and retained, as well as acquired, extensive territories on the farther bank of the Rhine. The boundaries of these territories were, from the very manner in which they were held, vague, uncertain, and varying from day to day, so that it is now impossible to draw with any precision the line of frontier which in this direction separated France from the uncultivated tribes of the North, at the epoch of the death of Pepin, and the accession of his sons.

The provinces beyond the Rhine, however, were considerable and, together with the rest of the Frankish possessions, formed the most extensive, as well as most powerful of the European monarchies. This descended without dispute to Charles and Carloman; but several circumstances accompanied the transmission of the supreme power to their hands, which are worthy of notice. I have before had occasion to point out the uncertain character of the succession to the crown of France, during the domination of the first race; nor is it very easy to discover any universal principle by which this important point was regulated. The will of the dying monarch seems to have been of some effect in the allotment of his dominions amongst his children; but the general assembly of the nation was always called upon to confirm or explain the dispositions of the former king.

It is difficult also to conceive the permanent unity of the people as a nation, while the territory was divided between two or more monarchs; and the only means we have of accounting for the long existence of such a state of things, is to look back to the original constitution of the Francs, as a German tribe, and to remember that, in that day, nations, not countries, formed the true divisions of mankind. This was a natural consequence of the migratory habits of the northern hordes, who, having no fixed habitation during many years, were long before they suffered the spirit of national union to deviate, in any degree, into local attachment.

The French, therefore, remained one people, however the state might be divided, or the country allotted; and the inheritance which Pepin transmitted to his sons, was not an united rule over the whole, but the government of a certain portion of the nation, and the possession of a certain portion of territory, severally assigned to each, while the general coherence of the Francs, as a people, remained unbroken.

The exact division of the country which took place upon the death of the great overthrower of the Merovingian race, is involved in much obscurity; for the two best authorities of the time are in direct opposition to each other. Eginhard, the friend and servant of Charlemagne, assigns to him that portion of France called Neustria, with its usual dependencies; while the continuators of Fredigarius, give him Austrasia, declaring Neustria to have been the portion of Carloman. The latter prince, however, according to both accounts, was crowned at Soissons, which was sometimes included in the kingdom of Austrasia; and Charles was, on the same day, inaugurated at Noyou, which always formed a part of Neustria.

The question, in regard to these two provinces, is indeed of little moment; as the difficulty is only an historical doubt of the present day, concerning a point which, notwithstanding the discrepancy of contemporary statements, seems to have been perfectly clear in those times, and gave rise to no consequences of any import. Charlemagne and his brother appear to have been perfectly satisfied with the division of the northern part of France, and each took possession of his own; but the sovereignty of Aquitaine, reunited to the crown by the arms of Pepin, proved a cause of doubt and disagreement between the two princes, which might have ended in open warfare, had not the early death of the younger intervened. On this subject also the Fredigarian Chronicle and the account of Eginhard are totally at variance. The first declares that Pepin, in dying, divided Aquitaine between his sons; but Eginhard positively states, that that province was attached to the portion of Charlemagne. In all probability, the matter was left in doubt, both by Pepin and the national assembly; but even a doubt where equal partition was regarded as a right, very naturally created coolness and jealousy towards his brother in the mind of Carloman, and loosened the bonds of kindred affection.

The quarrels of those persons in high stations, between whom Heaven, for their mutual defence and support, has established the close ties of blood, afford to the interested and ambitious so many means of gain or aggrandizement, that there would be ever found many to foment them, even were vanity, weakness, and malice, not continually ready in a court to promote hostility and render disunion irreparable. Carloman, apparently a feeble and easily governed prince, found plenty, both of knaves and sycophants, in his palace, to prompt his anger against his brother, and drive him on to acts of unkindness, if not aggression. Thus, their reign began in coldness and suspicion; but peace was still

maintained, by the influence of their mother, Bertha; and the insurrection of a part of their dominions, seemed to furnish a motive for union and for mutual support.

It unfortunately happened, however, that the war, to which they were thus called as allies by every principle of good policy, had for its site and its motives, the very territory of Aquitaine, which had been the cause of their own dissension. Hunald, the father of that turbulent and unfortunate prince, from whom Pepin had wrested, after a nine years' contest, both his feof and his life, no sooner beheld the throne of France once more occupied by two young and inexperienced monarchs, than, encouraged by the too evident disunion which existed between them, he issued forth from the cloister to which he had devoted himself; called Aquitaine to arms; and, working upon the mind of a warlike but inconstant people, easily raised an army, and declared his sovereignty and independence.

Charlemagne instantly prepared to repress his rebellious subjects, and called upon Carloman to aid him in his design. Carloman promised his support; and even advanced into Poitou to confer with his brother on the conduct of the war; but their meeting terminated in a manner unsatisfactory to either; and Carloman returned to his own dominions, refusing to take any share in the expedition. In regard to his reasons for thus withdrawing the assistance he had promised to his brother, we have no information; and though it has been supposed that he wished to make the partition of Aquitaine the price of his support, and retired in resentment on refusal, it is better not to venture a conjecture in the utter absence of recorded fact.

His defection in the hour of need, drew forth at once the great and overpowering energies of his brother's mind. The revolted Duke was at the head of a large and increasing army, and was carried on by the power of a fresh and hitherto successful enthusiasm in a bold, adventurous, and excited people. The forces of the young monarch, on the contrary, were but scanty in number; and, suddenly deprived of the aid on which he had confidently relied, he was left alone, unknowing alike the extent of his own powers, and of the attachment of his people, to lead the Francs to the field for the first time, against a warlike race and a desperate enemy. He paused not, however, for a moment; but pursued his expedition undaunted; and combining in his own person all the military talents of his ancestors, with high qualities entirely his own, he subdued the revolted provinces with a celerity of movement, and a decision of action, hardly equaled in ancient or in modern times. Notwithstanding the small army which he brought into the field, it would appear that the energetic activity of the young monarch surprised and terrified his opponent. Hunald fled without fighting; and, hard pressed by Charlemagne, only escaped into Gascony by his superior knowledge of the country, the complicated mazes of whose mountains were unknown to those by whom he was pursued. The place of refuge which he chose was the court of his nephew, Lupo, Duke of Gascony, who had joined in the revolt of Aquitaine, although his rebellion had never proceeded to actual warfare with the young monarchs of France. This asylum proved anything but a secure one. The ties of blood, indeed, connected the fugitive chief strongly with him, whose protection he claimed; but it must be remembered, that Hunald, in the day of his power, had, in a fit of ambitious jealousy, deprived his own brother Hatton, the father of Lupo, of his sight.

In almost all barbarous nations, where law is not sufficient for the chastisement of crime and for the reparation of wrong, revenge is considered as a virtue, and principle gives permanence to what is originally but a transitory passion. Lupo at first received his uncle with an appearance of hospitality; but Charlemagne advancing to the banks of the Dordogne, sent on messengers to summon his vassal the Duke of Gascony, to yield the rebellious subject who had taken refuge at his court, and to make atonement for his own revolt by instant submission and compliance. Obedience waited the command of the King; and Lupo, notwithstanding the ties of kindred and the rights of hospitality, made no scruple to deliver up the man who had robbed his father of his sight; thus at once avenging the ancient injury of his house, and securing both pardon and favor from the young monarch, to whom he at the same time acknowledged his homage and dependence.

Clemency was a natural quality in the mind of Charlemagne. It seldom if ever deserted him, even when age had taken from the first softness of the heart; and, in the whole course of a long life, we find few or no instances of cruelty recorded against him, while every historian rings with the praises of his moderation and gentleness. The single example of great severity which I shall have to notice hereafter, was the effect of that stern, though perhaps necessary policy, from which the mind of youth impetuously revolts. But in the present instance, young and happy himself—in the possession of those physical powers, and that ease of corporeal sensations which give natural amenity to the disposition and also blessed with that inexperience of abused lenity and of unrequited kindness, which leaves the heart free to act—cruelty could scarcely form a part in the character of Charlemagne.

No bloodshed stained his triumph over Hunald, gratified the revenge of Lupo, or blackened the Gascon's treachery by its consequences; and the young monarch spared his rebellious subject, though prudence, and even humanity, taught him to guard against future insurrection.

While waiting the return of his envoys from the court of Lupo, Charlemagne dedicated his time to the construction of a fortress on the banks of the Dordogne, in order both to employ his own troops, and to overawe the turbulent people of Aquitaine; and, after Hunald had been delivered bound into his hands, he contented himself with confining him to a seclusion scarcely more strict than that of the monastery which he had abandoned for the purposes of rebellion. The submission and obedience of Lupo, who had been an accessary, if not a participator, in the insurrection, was received as sufficient atonement; and thus the war, which had been boldly undertaken, and vigorously carried on, was terminated both with prudence and humanity.

This display of energy and power was anything but pleasing to Carloman; and the jealousy which he entertained towards his elder brother, was greatly increased by the triumphant expedition, in which he might have gloriously shared, but which he had ignominiously abandoned. Men were not wanting in his court to urge him on to open hostility, and it required every effort of calmer and wiser counselors to obviate the approach of internal warfare. Nor was the disagreement between the two French princes nourished in secret or brooded over in silence. Their disputes were heard throughout Europe, and became matter of rejoicing to the enemies, and of terror to the allies, of France.

A mediatrix, however, still existed of sufficient influence to avert actual war. Bertha, the mother of Charles and Carloman, was equally beloved and honored by each of her children; and her good offices between them, succeeded, though with difficulty, in maintaining peace, and producing an apparent reconciliation between the brothers. Having accomplished so far her excellent intention, she turned her whole thoughts towards the restoration of that general tranquility which had been so long a stranger to Europe. Her zeal in the cause of peace now led her to form the scheme of an alliance, which, however thwarted by the violent passions of others, and however unfortunate in its event, was wisely and nobly designed by her in whom it originated. This was a union with the court of Lombardy, and an extension of the relations between the various states of Italy and France. For the purpose of conducting the negotiations in person, the Queen set out for the Roman territory; but took occasion to pass through Bavaria, in order to avert a rupture between Tassilo, Duke of that country, and his sovereigns, the Kings of France. Having opened a communication between the Duke and Charlemagne, which afterwards produced the effects she desired. Bertha proceeded to Italy, on her journey of peace and reconciliation.

In the meantime, several changes deserving of notice had taken place in the relative position of the Lombards and the Romans, since the last expedition of Pepin, which rendered the interposition of Bertha not unnecessary. The death of Astolphus, against whom the arms of the Frankish monarch had been turned, had occurred immediately after his submission, and a struggle ensued for his vacant throne. Desiderius, who had commanded for Astolphus a considerable body of troops, and who to some military talent added great hypocrisy and much barbarian cunning, instantly determined to seize the crown of his dead master, and made every preparation for that object. But a strong party was soon formed against him, at the head of which appeared Rachis, once King of Lombardy, but who, in former years, had abandoned the robe of royalty for the monastic gown. Desiderius soon found that his influence amongst the Lombards was quite insignificant, compared with that which Rachis could oppose to him; and the wily aspirant, rather than yield the prize at which he aimed, resolved to strengthen his power, by alliance with two persons who had proved the most formidable enemies of his nation, namely, the Roman pontiff and the monarch of the Francs.

Pepin, who was then still alive, was entirely guided in this instance by the Pope; and Stephen the Second willingly promised his aid to the ambitious soldier, on condition that Desiderius would undertake to fulfill to the utmost all those engagements which Astolphus had left unaccomplished at his death. The Lombard, who scrupled to break no promises, had little hesitation in pledging himself to whatever was demanded as the price of assistance and support. He acceded to every particular which the papal envoys were instructed to require, and bound himself by the most solemn vows, to the completion of the treaty of Pavia. Stephen, forgetting, what experience should have taught him long before, that oaths to hold ambition are but as the green withes wherewith the Philistines bound the limbs of the Hebrew giant, believed the sincerity of the Lombard, armed, threatened, and solicited, in his favor; and, finally, seated him on the throne for which he struggled.

The moment his object was attained, the promises of Desiderius were forgotten, and their fulfillment skillfully evaded. Pepin was at this time fully occupied with the wars of Aquitaine; and the Lombard, seeing that the Roman pontiff was not likely to receive any speedy assistance, proceeded by degrees from refusing restitution to renewed aggression, and finally struggled, both by art and arms, to recover the territory which the French monarch had formerly wrested from the usurping grasp of his predecessor.

Though the dominion of the Eastern empire had been cast off by the people of Italy, no declared and precise separation had yet taken place. The two countries were disunited, in fact; but the Greeks held some small territory on the peninsula; the words of absolute disjunction had not been spoken; and the Emperors still kept up their claim upon Italy, and their hope of recovering it. Aware, that in all the struggles between the enfeebled power of Constantinople and the Roman states, a thousand opportunities would be afforded to the Lombards for aggrandizement and rapine, Desiderius called the Greeks back, to the Italian shores, and endeavored to allure them to the attempt, by promising the aid of all his forces. In the dangers and difficulties with which these intrigues enveloped them, the Popes had again and again recourse to Pepin; and Paul I, who succeeded to his brother, Stephen II, seems to imply, by the many expressions of gratitude and obligations which fill his letters, that the monarch of the Francs, though still prevented, by the wars of Aquitaine, from personally chastising the treachery of the Lombard king, had exercised some effectual influence, from time to time, in behalf of the Roman, church.

To Paul—after the mad attempt to establish the lay Pope Constantine, who became the victim of his own ambition, was deposed, and blinded—had succeeded Stephen III, one of the weakest men who ever filled the apostolic chair. His election had hardly taken place, ere he sent messengers to Pepin, praying for the continuance of that assistance which had been afforded to his predecessor. But Pepin was, by this time, no more; and Sergius, the faithful friend and envoy of the Pope, found Charles and Carloman sovereigns of France. The ready activity of the two young Kings was easily worked upon by the eloquence of the papal legate; and a mission with some troops, was dispatched by each, to give protection and assistance to Stephen, then the inveterate enemy of Desiderius, and of the whole Lombard race.

Itherius, charged with this mission to Italy by Charlemagne, executed it with care and circumspection, and contrived to give much satisfaction to the pontiff, without embroiling his master in a distant contention, at a moment when the monarch was engaged in suppressing the revolt of Aquitaine. He remained no longer in Rome than the duty he had to perform required; but Dodo, the commissioner of Carloman, either by desire of the monarch, or for his own purposes, protracted his stay in Italy, and warmly advocated the cause of the Roman church against the King of the Lombards. Combining with Sergius, the nomenclator of the Holy See, and his father Christopher, he attempted to enforce the restitution of the Roman lands and cities, and urged in his purpose with imprudent haste, so that all ended towards open warfare between the Francs and the Lombards.

It was at this time that Bertha, the mother of the French princes, undertook the work of pacification, and conceived, that, by uniting her eldest son Charlemagne to the daughter of Desiderius, the King of Lombardy might be induced to restore the contested territory to Rome, and that tranquility might be recalled to Europe. Her journey into Italy, and its object, soon reached the ears of Stephen; and all the influence of the Roman church was exerted to prevent an alliance between the hereditary friend and protector of the Popes, and a daughter of the inimical Lombards.

A letter of the weak pontiff, upon this subject, still remains, showing a lamentable want of dignity and temper, with common decency lost in vehemence of expostulation. Innumerable base and degrading epithets are applied to the Lombard race; and few languages could have supplied the prelate with more vulgar and dirty abuse than he has found in the elegant tongue of the Romans. Every obstacle, also, that the most politic ingenuity could devise, was thrown in the way of the proposed marriage; but the motive for abstaining, which surely should have been the most conclusive in the eyes of the young monarch, had it really existed, was his own union with another woman.

That Charlemagne had already had a son, called Pepin, by a person named Himiltruda, is known; but that the character of the connection between him and the mother of his son was but temporary, is evident. It is certain that the nation of the Francs did not consider it as a legitimate marriage; nor, even if they had, would it have proved an insuperable obstacle, for the bonds of that engagement, on which so much of the safety and welfare of society depends, were of no very strong and tenacious quality in the barbarous age to which our eyes are now turned. Divorces were easily and frequently obtained; and there were even cases where no formal interposition of the law was necessary to legalize a second marriage, while the husband or wife of the first was still living. The Pope, however, selfishly fearful of the new alliance, insisted strongly upon the indissolubility of the existing union, whatever it was. He not only remonstrated, but threatened, and even proceeded to anathematize all who should neglect his warning.

Notwithstanding his menaces and his wrath, the marriage took place, and before long, a change in his own feelings, induced Stephen himself to look upon it with a more lenient eye. Neither excommunications nor interdicts were then such formidable engines as they afterwards became; and, ignorant of the powers of the thunder they possessed, the Popes, in the infancy of their dominion,

contented themselves with launching the bolts at molehills, with which they afterwards learned to rend the mountains. Though a weak man, Stephen III was too wise to assail his benefactors; and the storm of malediction with which he had threatened the proposed espousals hung suspended on his lips the moment they were completed. At the same time, Desiderius made some concessions to the Roman see, and succeeded in once more persuading the pontiff that he was willing to become his ally, and restore to Rome all that his predecessors had snatched from her sway. Nor did his dissimulation stop there; but, as Sergius and Christopher had been the constant and talented opponents of the Lombard power, and had not only counseled the Pope in his resistance, but had counseled him well, he contrived, by the artful agency of Paul Affiarta, who possessed the spirit, and acted the part, of tribune of the people, to blacken the character of those two faithful servants in the eyes of the feeble prelate. Stephen was easily deceived: the unhappy Sergius became the object of his dread and apprehension; the Lombard king was called to Rome by the blinded pontiff to defend him against his best friends; and, in a weak and ill concerted effort, made by Sergius, Christopher, and Dodo, to take possession of the Lateran, and exclude the foreign monarch from the city, the people abandoned them at the command of the Pope, and those three leaders fell into the hands of their enemies.

The two Romans were given up to the wrath of Desiderius and Affiarta; and though the sanguinary history of the Roman prisons is ever obscure, it is believed, that Christopher, after having submitted to the horrible operation which doomed him to endless darkness, died of the consequences; and that Sergius, his son, was strangled in his dungeon. Dodo, the Franc, was only allowed to escape out of respect or fear for Carloman, his master, whom it was wise to conciliate, and dangerous to outrage. With that prince, Desiderius, it is evident from many circumstances, kept up a constant and intimate correspondence towards the close of the year 770,and, as one of the learned Benedictines has observed, we have reason to regard it as more than probable, that the coldness of Carloman towards his brother Charlemagne, is to be greatly attributed to the machinations of the Lombard. Though it is unwise in general to imagine, in a remote age, those extended views of policy which seem the produce of a more enlightened state of society, yet the profound art of Desiderius is established beyond a doubt by all his actions; and the project of weakening a mighty and , dangerous power, by fomenting disputes between the two monarchs who swayed it, was certainly within the scope of even barbarian cunning.

His efforts to create divisions, and increase dissentions, were greatly weakened by the influence of Bertha over both her sons, an influence which she ever employed to promote union; and the magnanimous character of Charlemagne himself, was a still greater obstacle in the way of such attempts. Neither coldness, suspicion, nor even anger, on the part of his brother, could provoke him to one hasty word, or one rash act; and it would appear that this moderation was not wholly without effect, even on Carloman himself, who, after many long, and, on his part, violent discussions, was at length reconciled to the kindred monarch in so public a manner, that congratulations on their restored affection forms the subject of one of the papal letters.

After the death of Sergius and Christopher, the confidence placed by the Pope in the King of the Lombards, was strong, in proportion to the weakness of his own understanding. All his opinions of Desiderius and his nation were changed; and, without remembering that he had very lately indulged in the most violent and unchristian abuse of both the sovereign and people of Lombardy, he now poured forth, with the same facility, a torrent of ill-judged and unseemly praise.

This change of sentiment may have tended greatly to allay his wrath at the marriage of Charlemagne with the daughter of Desiderius. But, at all events, the humane policy of Bertha seemed, for some time, quite successful. She visited the court of Desiderius, paid her vows at the shrines of the most esteemed saints in Italy, brought back her proposed daughter-in-law to France, witnessed her union with Charlemagne, and saw the papal opposition cease. Italy was tranquillized; the Roman pontiff was reconciled to his dangerous neighbor; and, in Bavaria, the Queen's intercession had been anything but in vain. Charlemagne had readily consented to peace, on the first overture of Tassilo, and dispatched Sturmius, abbot of St Fulda, to negotiate with his disaffected vassal. Terms were easily concluded with a clement king; and the aspect of all things promised tranquility to the world.

Such auguries, however, soon proved false. But, though the germs of future warfare lay hid in all the circumstances of the peace—though the ambition of Desiderius looked upon it merely as a temporary means —and the turbulence of Tassilo only regarded it as a short repose, — yet the first blow given to its stability was by Charlemagne himself; and a personal repugnance to the alliance he had formed, produced the same evil consequences as ambition, revenge, or any of those passions which we are accustomed to regard as the grander impellents of human nature. Some strong disgust seized on the monarch of the Francs towards his Lombard wife; and he determined on seeking, through the lax laws of divorce which then existed, the only means of deliverance in his power. His purpose was not effected, without considerable opposition from his nobles, his relations, and his mother Bertha. The latter, who had cemented the union of her son with the Lombard Princess, could

not, of course, behold its speedy dissolution, without great pain; nor could she contemplate the consequences without apprehension. She argued, she remonstrated; she threatened to withdraw from the young monarch her society, which she knew he loved, and her counsels, which she knew he esteemed; and his immoveable resolution produced the only serious disagreement which ever troubled the intercourse of Bertha and her son.

Charlemagne persisted in his determination, and pursued his object without pause. The cause of divorce on which he insisted, incurable sterility, tom natural defect, has been more than once admitted as valid in the case of monarchs; and the King found no difficulty in inducing his bishops to dissolve the marriage. Desideria was repudiated; and Charlemagne, whose temperament and desire of offspring did not permit of his remaining unmarried, immediately raised to his bed Hildegarde, the laughter of a noble family in Swabia, who proved a more happy and more prolific wife.

It was not to be expected, that Desiderius should forget the insult offered to his race; and the means which had been employed to unite the Lombards to the Francs by the bonds of peace, thus became the cause of new disunion, and added personal hatred to political opposition. The enmity of the Lombard King towards Charlemagne, was at once taken for granted throughout Europe, and was acted upon by all who were themselves inimical to the monarch of the Francs; so that the court of Pavia became a general refuge for the fugitives from Gaul. Hunald, Duke of Aquitaine, appears to have been the first who made it his asylum. How he effected his escape from the confinement to which Charlemagne had subjected him, is not now to be discovered; but, after a very short imprisonment, we find him seeking protection at Rome. Whether the Pope, Stephen III, by this time cured of his mistaken friendship for the Lombards, and fearful of offending his best supporter, Charlemagne, refused to receive Hunald in his flight; or whether he himself, doubting the inviolability of a sanctuary, whose chief guardian was his successful enemy, abandoned it voluntarily, does not appear; but it would seem that his stay in Rome was very brief. In all probability, as soon as he heard that the daughter of Desiderius had been put away by Charlemagne, calculating on human nature, he sought refuge at the Lombard court. No evil, however, thence accrued to the French monarch. The long, unhappy, and turbulent existence of Hunald was now drawing near a terrible close; and, having either embraced some heresy obnoxious to the Lombards, or abandoned Christianity altogether, he was stoned to death, within a short period after his arrival at Pavia.

Another fugitive soon appeared at the court of Desiderius with claims and rights which gave that monarch new hope of dividing and neutralizing the power of the Francs, and of avenging the insult he had received in the person of his daughter.

Late in the year 771, Carloman, the sharer of the French monarchy, expired; and, though no mention is made by any of the annalists of the precise cause of his death, except that it proceeded from some disease in the ordinary course of nature, there is reason to believe that his decease was sudden, as we find no attempt, on his part, to secure the succession of his territory to his children, nor any dispositions in regard to its partition between them. Scarcely had the funeral ceremony been performed, and the body of Carloman laid in the earth at the church of St Remigius of Rheims, when the evident disaffection of her husband's vassals and the fear of a brother, towards whom that husband had ever shown both jealousy and suspicion, induced Giberga, the widow of the dead king, to fly to Italy. This step Eginhard pronounces to have been unnecessary in itself; but it was certainly in no degree surprising, at a time when the immediate succession to the throne depended upon the choice of the people; and when the death of a competitor was often considered necessary to the security of a successful candidate. Her flight, therefore, was not extraordinary; but when, instead of trusting to the protection of the church, she chose, as the place of her refuge, the court of her brother-in-law's profound enemy, Desiderius; and solicited him to establish her children on the throne of their father, without the consent, and contrary to the customs of the nation; she seems to have acted with hasty passion rather than with prudent care. She chose to trust to the arms of strangers, which could never prevail where national affection was wanting. Very few of her husband's nobles accompanied her into exile; and the rest, forming the great body of the nation, unanimously declared Charlemagne their king.

Were it necessary here to reiterate all that has been before said concerning the uncertain nature of the regal succession in France, it might be clearly shown, that, in all instances, hereditary right was only acknowledged by the people in a limited sense, requiring to be accompanied by the specific consent of the nation; nor can it be doubted, that no repartition of the kingdom was held valid without the confirmation of the General Assembly of the Francs. This popular power had been preserved by frequent exercise under the whole of the Merovingian race, and had been confirmed most strikingly by the deposition of Chilperic and the elevation of Pepin. The right, therefore, of the nobles of Carloman's dominions, to choose his brother for his successor, was undeniable; and many circumstances induced them to do so without hesitation.

A reign of two years over a considerable portion of the French people, had already sufficiently displayed the character of the young monarch, to show that he possessed all those talents requisite to lead a barbarous nation, in difficult and momentous times. The nobler, the finer, the grander qualities of his mind and his heart, it is probable the rough chiefs of his warlike people neither saw nor estimated; but it was the peculiar attribute of that great prince, to add to feelings and powers which would have ornamented the brightest times, those animal abilities and ruder perfections, calculated to dazzle; captivate, and control the age in which he lived. His courage, his skill, and his activity, as a commander, were well known throughout the land; and, after the death of his father, his liberality and protection had been extended to all the faithful friends and adherents of the great king to whom he succeeded. He was thus esteemed, admired, and loved, by the clergy, the soldiers, and the people; and it is anything but wonderful, that such a leader should have been the universal choice of the Francs, in preference to an infant monarch and a female regent.

In accepting a crown which the nation had every right to bestow, Charlemagne was justified. He committed no crime—he violated no law—he was no usurper. But whether it would not have been nobler to have preserved the throne of their father for his brother's children, is a question not so easy of solution. The appearance of such an action would certainly have been more magnanimous, whether the reality were so or not; and where a doubtful procedure redounds to the advantage of the person who adopts it, the world is ever ready, and often just, in attributing it to a selfish cause. Nevertheless, a number of truly patriotic motives, to a mind so extensive in its views as that of Charlemagne, might act in opposition to kindred affection and native generosity. The good of the people that he was called to govern, certainly required some other rule than that of women and children. Too many instances were before his eyes of the fatal effects springing from such an administration, for a doubt upon that point to enter his imagination; and, on the other hand, even if the nation would have consented to his governing in the name of his nephew, till the child grew up into the man, it is evident that his sister-in-law, Giberga, anxious for the supreme power herself, would never have yielded her assent. At the same time, it must be remembered, that the very proposal would have been an attack upon the rights of the French people to a voice in the succession of their monarchs, which Charlemagne was then in no condition either to make or to support.

Other motives undoubtedly concurred to determine the young King in his acceptance of the crown. If we may judge from the immensity which he afterwards accomplished, and from the steadiness and unity of design with which he pursued the general civilization of Europe, we shall find cause to believe, that great scheme to have been the offspring of his mind at a very early period, and to suppose, that all the power he acquired was regarded by him only as the means of accomplishing a vaster purpose. To reason thus of any vulgar conqueror would be idle, but the life of Charlemagne, taken as a whole, justifies the argument; and if such were his general views, he could not doubt that, in his hands, the union of the whole French empire would be more beneficial to itself in every part, to Europe, and to the world, than any portion of that power could be, entrusted to a woman and a child. Let it be granted that, even under this view, Charlemagne was ambitious; and, had he violated any right—had he usurped the power which he accepted, the end could not have justified the means, and his ambition would have been criminal. But the Francs had a just title to offer him the crown; he had an equal title to accept it; and if he did so for the benefit of his country, or for the benefit of mankind, his design was great, and his ambition was noble and glorious.

Whatever were his motives, Charlemagne received without hesitation the homage of those subjects who, since the death of his father, had been placed under the dominion of Carloman; and the whole of France was again united beneath one scepter.

The empire which was thus given at once to his command, was, beyond doubt, the most powerful in Europe in every point of view. Italy was divided and exhausted; Greece was weak and debased; the north was portioned amongst various tribes, and, under the government of each and all, was still barbarous and distracted. England, separated into many kingdoms, was inefficient as a whole; and Spain was still agitated and employed by the bloody struggles of her different conquerors. But France, blessed with a hardy and a vigorous race, unenervated by luxury, and unweakened by divisions, comprised the whole extent of country from the Mediterranean to the Ocean, from the Pyrenees to the Alps. A regularly organized state of society existed, though that state was far from perfect. Her laws, though scanty, were well known, were mild, and were more generally enforced than those of any other country. Her population was numerous, and her produce sufficient for her population. Her resources of all kinds were immense, and those resources were now entrusted to one, who, with extensive and extraordinary powers, combined love for his country and feeling for mankind.

BOOK III.

FROM THE DEATH OF CARLOMAN TO THE CAPTURE OF PAVIA.

FROM AD 771 TO AD 774.

The intrigues of Desiderius were strengthened and directed by the presence of the widow and children of Carloman; but whether Charlemagne, strong in the love and support of his people, despised the weak machinations of his enemies in Italy, or whether a more pressing danger in the north called first for his attention, certain it is, that the immediate effort of his arms, after reuniting the two great parts of the French monarchy, was turned against those barbarian tribes who still ravaged the German frontier of France. With a pertinacity which nothing could overcome, and with a ruthless disregard of oaths, engagements, and ties, which no chastisement could correct, they, year after year, pillaged and desolated the transrhenane dominions of the Francs, slaughtered the inhabitants, and carried off the wealth of the country.

The chief of these nations, was that people, or confederation of tribes, called the Saxons, of whom the Frisons were either a mere branch, or else perpetual allies. With the origin of the Saxons, I am not called upon to meddle. Suffice it, that the first mention of such a people in history, is to be found in Ptolemy, who flourished in the second century of the Christian era. They were then an insignificant tribe, inhabiting, with several others, the small peninsula of Jutland, and possessing three islands at the mouth of the Elbe. Their territories, however, were soon augmented, partly by aggression on the neighboring states, and partly by coalition with other nations, who—feeling that, as numbers formed the truest strength, union was the surest policy,—combined with the Saxons, to participate in the plunder which that race continually acquired, and gradually lost their distinctive appellations in the general name of the people with whom they associated themselves.

In the time of Charlemagne, the possessions of this great league were very extensive, stretching, at one point, from the banks of the Rhine, nearly to the Oder, and on the other hand, from the North Sea, to the confines of Hesse and Thuringia. Warlike in their habits, vigorous in body, active and impatient in mind, their geographical situation, operating together with their state of barbarism, rendered them pirates, extending the predatory excursions, common to all the northern tribes, to the sea, as well as to the land.

A thousand circumstances had combined, in the course of several hundred years, to lead the Saxons to carry on their warfare upon the waves. The fleets which the Romans had built before their eyes, as well as the maritime alliance which two Roman rebels, Carausius and Magnentius, had entered into with Germany, for the purpose of obtaining support in their usurpation of the purple, taught the barbarian confederates both naval architecture and naval skill. Thus, while the art was gradually forgotten by the declining Romans, the Saxons went on in progressive improvement, and at length became, properly speaking, the only maritime people at that time in Europe.

In an age, and amongst a people, where plunder and conquest were the only substitutes known for general commerce, the Saxons felt the great advantage of possessing all the insulated positions, which could afford shelter to their frail and ill-constructed vessels. They held, from an early period, greater part of the islands scattered round the mouths of the German rivers; and soon beginning to extend their dominion, they captured, at different times, all those on the coast of France and in the British sea. Not contented, however, with this peculiar and more appropriate mode of warfare, the Saxons who remained on land, while their fellow-countrymen were sweeping the ocean, constantly turned their arms against the adjacent continental countries, especially after the conquest of Britain had, in a manner, separated their people, and satisfied to the utmost their maritime cupidity in that direction.

Surpassing all nations, except the early Huns, in fierceness, idolaters of the most bloody rites, insatiable of plunder, and persevering in the purpose of rapine to a degree which no other nation ever knew, they were the pest and scourge of the north. Happily for Europe, their government consisted of a multitude of chiefs, and their society of a multitude of independent tribes, linked together by some bond that we do not at present know, but which was not strong enough to produce unity and continuity of design. Thus they had proceeded from age to age, accomplishing great things by

desultory and individual efforts; but up to the time of Charlemagne, no vast and comprehensive mind, like that of Attila, had arisen amongst them, to combine all the tribes under the sway of one monarch, and to direct all their energies to one great object.

It was for neighboring kings, however, to remember that such a chief might every day appear; and, once more leading on the barbarians of the north, might extinguish in blood the little light that still remained in Europe, if some means were not taken either to break their power, or to mitigate their ferocity. Such was the state of the Saxons at the reunion of the French monarchy under Charlemagne; and it would seem, that the first step he proposed to himself, as an opening to all his great designs, was completely to subdue a people, which every day ravaged his frontier provinces, and continually threatened the very existence of the nations around.

Against them, consequently, were turned the first efforts of his arms, as soon as he became the sole sovereign of France; but to overthrow and to subjugate was not alone his object. Doubtless, to defend his own infringed territory, and to punish the aggressors formed a part of his design; but beyond that, he aimed at civilizing a people whose barbarism had been for centuries the curse of the neighboring countries, and, at the same time, communicating to the cruel savages, who shed the blood of their enemies less in the battle than in the sacrifice, the bland and mitigating spirit of the Christian religion.

That in the pursuit of this object he should have ever committed, either on a principle of policy, or of fanaticism, or of necessity, a great and startling act of severity, is to be much lamented. But no inference can be drawn from a single fact in opposition to the whole tenor of a man's conduct; and Charlemagne proved incontestably, by every campaign against the Saxons, that his design was as much to civilize as to subdue. These wars have been made the subject of bitter accusation against him, and it has been said, that his true policy should have been to defend his frontier by a strong line of fortresses; but we have only to turn our eyes for one moment to the invasion of the Eastern empire by the Huns, in order to find an example of the utter inefficacy of fortresses in staying the progress of barbarian armies. The hundred castles of the Illyrian border impeded not one hour the march of Attila; nor did the greater cities, though fortified by all that the united experience of Greece and Rome could suggest to strengthen them, offer any more effectual obstacle to the barbarian. The fate of the East was tried and decided in the field; and thus, with France, no fortresses could have defended her frontier from an enemy, whose inroad was ever as rapid and as destructive as the lightning. The Saxons were not less fierce, active, or vigorous than the Huns; and Charlemagne had but one choice—either boldly to seek and subject them by force of arms, to soften their manners and change their habits by the combined effect of law and religion—or, to wage constant, bloody, and disadvantageous war with them on his own frontier while they continued in separate tribes, and, if ever they united under one great chief, to risk his crown, his country, and the world, wherever and however they chose to call him to the field.

His resolution was immediately taken and, the year after the death of his brother and the choice of the people had placed him on the throne of the reunited kingdom, he held a great diet of the nation at Worms, and announced his intention of leading his warriors to the chastisement of the Saxons. Many of those who heard him had suffered, either in their property or through their relations, from incursions of the barbarians; and all willingly assented to an expedition which proposed to vindicate the insulted honor of France, and punish the spoilers of her territory. The military preparations of the young monarch were soon completed; and, entering the enemy's territory, he laid waste the whole land with fire and sword, according to the cruel mode of warfare in that day. No force appeared to oppose him, and he penetrated, without difficulty, to the castle of Eresburg, where a garrison had been left. The fortifications were speedily forced by the Frankish soldiers, and a much more important conquest followed than that of the castle itself, namely, that of the famous temple of the Irminsula, or great idol of the Saxon nation. The temple consisted of an open space of ground, surrounded by various buildings, ornamented by everything rapine could collect and offer at the altar of superstition. In the centre rose a high column, on which was placed the figure of an armed warrior; and gold and silver, lavished on all the objects around, decorated the shrine, and rewarded the struggle of the conquerors.

Nearly at the same spot, it would appear, the famous battle took place between Arminius and Varus, in which the Roman was signally defeated, and Germany freed from the yoke of the empire. The grateful Germans, we are told, in memory of their emancipation, and in honor of their liberator, raised a rude pillar on the spot, calling it Hermansaule, or the pillar of Arminius. But, as years passed by, and many a barbarian tribe swept over the country, the occasion of its erection was forgotten—the name was corrupted to Irminsul—the reverence of the people for the monument of their victorious struggle deviated into adoration—and the statue of their triumphant general became an idol, to which many a human sacrifice was offered. It is more than probable, indeed, that Mars, the god of battles, had supplied the place of the conquering German in the minds of his succeeding countrymen; and it seems

certain, that this idol was not alone the object of veneration to one particular tribe, but was considered as the great tutelary deity of the whole people.

Its capture, therefore, was naturally an ominous event in the eyes of the Saxons; and, following rigorously his purpose of extinguishing their Pagan rites, Charlemagne at once overthrew the vain object of their worship—an old and convincing mode of proving the impotence of false gods. The fane was at the same time demolished, the pillar was cast down, and buried deep below the surface of the earth, and three days were consumed in the work of destruction. This long delay, in the heat of summer, and in a dry and barren country, saw the waters of the rivers round about exhausted, and exposed the army of the Francs to all the horrors and difficulties of a general drought, in the midst of an unknown and inimical country. To advance was impossible; to retreat was perilous in the extreme; and Charlemagne was placed in a situation both painful and dangerous. One of those happy accidents, however, which, forgotten in the fate of meaner men, are marked and remembered when they second the efforts of those whose genius and whose perseverance raise them to great eminence—intervened to save the monarch and his army. While the troops were reposing, during the heat of the day, a sudden torrent filled the bed of a river, which had lain, for many days, dry before their eyes. The soldiers devoutly believed that a miracle had blessed and rewarded the destruction of the idol; and, elevated in mind as well as refreshed in body, they marched boldly on to the banks of the Weser, ready to fight with all the burning zeal of fanaticism, or to die with the iron constancy of martyrs.

Neither battle nor bloodshed proved necessary. Disunion amongst themselves, a wasted country, and a powerful enemy, were quite sufficient motives to induce the Saxons to offer once more that nominal submission, which they had so often rendered, and so often thrown off.

Charlemagne had not yet experienced their utter faithlessness himself, though the history of his predecessors furnished him with many an instance of pledges given and forgotten, and treaties entered into and violated, by the same barbarian enemy. His clemency, however, taught him to overlook the past; and, seeking rather to reclaim than punish, he accepted the twelve hostages which the Saxons offered as sureties for their future tranquility, withdrew his troops, and left the missionaries to effect by persuasion, what the sword is impotent to enforce.

It is worthy of remark, that in the course of this campaign, which may be taken as an example of the system of hostilities pursued by the Saxons against the Francs through the whole war, no general battle was fought. Scattered in various bands, a sort of federative republic without any general government, the Saxons seldom, if ever, could collect a sufficient force to oppose the great and formidable armies of the Francs. A country but slightly cultivated, and property entirely moveable, afforded them the means of abandoning the land with little risk or loss; and they vanished before the footsteps of an invading enemy, or only appeared to harass his march, and out off his supplies. Whenever he showed any inclination to advance far into the country, they obtained his absence by pretended submission, and by oaths never intended to be observed; and the moment they were freed from his presence, they endeavored to repay themselves for any damage he had occasioned, by ravaging and spoiling his frontier provinces.

In the present instance, either Charlemagne was deceived by their submission, or trusted to the capture of their fortress, and the destruction of their great idol, to intimidate and repress them. At the same time, many circumstances combined to call the young monarch back to France, and after receiving the Saxon hostages, he returned to his own country with all speed. New wars and new conquests lay before him. The storm which had been gathering in Italy, though it broke not immediately on his own head, by falling on a friendly power, whose regard for his interest had drawn it down, required him in honor and justice to interpose.

Various changes had taken place in the Italian peninsula during the expedition into Saxony, which ultimately brought about some of the greatest events in the whole of the French monarch's magnificent career. The intrigues which Desiderius had not for a moment ceased to carry on, in order to deceive and plunder the weak pontiff of the Roman church, had been principally conducted by the well-known Paul Afiarta, one of the most wily and subtle negotiators of the day. Endowed with a persuasive and popular eloquence, devoid of all moral feeling, and without any fixed principle but ambition, he had allied himself with Desiderius, in order that, supported by the Lombards, he might govern Rome, by a double influence over the prelate, and the populace. With the people he was ever a favorite, and for some time he was successful with the Pope; but, before the close of his pontificate, Stephen, notwithstanding the weakness of his understanding, began to discover how completely he had been deceived by the Lombard, and to perceive that the restoration of the contested cities was more distant than ever.

His mind was not sufficiently firm to make any equal and vigorous efforts in defence of the Roman state and he lived not long enough, after having opened his eyes to the treachery of the

Lombard King, to display many of those passionate and indecent struggles, which were more in accordance with his temper and understanding. During the last few months of his life, he did little to free himself, although he saw the bonds with which he had suffered his hands to be enthralled; and dying, he left the Roman mitre nearly in the gift of Afiarta.

Adrian, who succeeded to the vacant chair, well understood the dark and ambitious character of the popular leader; but as the Roman citizens had then a principal voice in the election of their bishops, he dissembled his feelings towards Afiarta, till he himself was placed securely in the pontifical seat, by the unanimous consent of the clergy and people.

Nor even then did he venture at once to traverse the designs of the demagogue by open opposition. Afiarta was still honored and employed; and his approaching disgrace was concealed under the appearance of an honorable embassy to the court of Desiderius. Had a distant mission to an inimical monarch been proposed to the wily Roman, he would probably have suspected his danger, and refused to absent himself from a city where his safety was ensured by his influence over the multitude; but when the road laid before him was short, and the monarch to whom he went was his own immediate confederate, he saw no risk, and undertook the task. The opportunity, also, for conferring with Desiderius, seemed the most favorable that could be chosen; and Afiarta set out for Pavia, in the full belief that he was carrying on his own purposes to their consummation.

Still Adrian wisely refrained from any hasty attempt to execute his designs against the traitor, who had betrayed his predecessor, and was preparing to betray him also. He suffered Afiarta to reach the Lombard court, and to transact both the public business with which he was charged, and the private intrigues on which he was intent. But, in the meantime, the influence of the demagogue fell gradually lower and lower amongst the people of Rome, while that of Adrian, who was not himself deficient in popular talents, increased in a great degree. The Pope then found that, supported by his own favor with the citizens, and their fickle forgetfulness of their former leader, he could venture to do justice; and as the false minister was returning from his embassy, he was arrested at Ravenna by the bishop of that city, tried, condemned, and executed for the murder of Christopher and Sergius.

The exact chronology of the other events of this period is somewhat obscure; and I have separated the fate of Afiarta from the circumstances affecting Charlemagne, as I could not discover what was the part which the Roman took in any of them. It is certain, however, that Adrian was scarcely seated in the chair of St Peter, when the Lombard King, seconded probably by Afiarta, repeatedly and anxiously pressed the pontiff to acknowledge the children of Carloman, who were then in exile at his court; and to consecrate them as the rightful sovereigns of that part of France which their father had possessed during his life.

The enmity of Desiderius towards Charlemagne was both personal and political; and his object in the present instance was easy to divine. Perfectly impotent himself to invade with effect the territory of France, or to injure the monarch of an united people, he hoped, by establishing a new claim upon the Francs, supported by the sanctifying authority of the church, to raise up a powerful party for the children of Carloman in that monarch's former dominions, and thus to create the means of attacking Charlemagne, both by drawing a large body of Francs to his own cause, and weakening his enemy through their defection.

For the purpose of gaining the pontiff, it would seem that he once more renewed his often violated oaths of making full restoration of every part of the Exarchate and Pentapolis. But Adrian was too wise, either to trust to vows whose fragile nature had been so often proved, or to abandon the alliance of a firm and powerful friend, for the promises of a feeble and treacherous enemy. His decided refusal to anoint the children of Carloman, together with the death of Afiarta, drew down upon him the utmost wrath of Desiderius. The Lombard King had not only accompanied his solicitations with promises in case they were granted, but also with threats in case they were rejected; and these threats he proceeded immediately to execute.

Taking advantage of the absence of Charlemagne in the north, and the difficulties of the Saxon warfare in which he was engaged, Desiderius prepared to follow the universal policy of his predecessors, and to aim at the possession of the whole Roman territory. His first act was the farther dismemberment of the Exarchate, from which he seized the cities of Faienza and Commacchio; an act of violence considerable in itself, but which was only the prelude to greater aggression.

The Pope remonstrated both by letters and ambassadors; but in vain. The cities remained in the hands of the Lombards; and Desiderius, at the head of a large army, entered the papal territory, and marched upon Rome itself. Adrian had no forces whatever with which he could keep the open country against the power of the Lombards; but, though straitened in every way, attacked much more rapidly than he had expected, and blockaded in the very heart of the Roman states, he remained firm and

inflexible. A spark, caught from the flame of that ancient courage, which had so often shone forth in other days amongst the palaces and temples wherein he stood, seemed to blaze up in the pontiff's heart; and Adrian resolved once more to defend the walls of Rome. The old gates, which had seen many a barbarian torrent ebb and flow, but which were now too much shattered by the siege of time to promise long defence, were taken down by his order, and new ones erected in their place; an action which at once gave additional courage to the citizens, and expressed to his enemies his unconquerable determination. Rome, however, could sustain no protracted blockade, and the aid of the Francs was absolutely necessary to save from fresh capture and spoliation the city which had herself extended conquest so far.

Even to implore such aid was a task of difficulty. By this time the whole of the surrounding country was in the hands of the Lombards, and the only means of communication still open between Rome and France, was by the Tiber and the Mediterranean. No European nation except the Saxons could be considered at that time as a maritime people. The Greeks, indeed, amongst the remains of all the mighty things which had come down to them from the golden age of the empire, possessed the ruins of a navy; and the Venetians were just beginning to aspire to dominion at sea; but the citizens of Rome were little accustomed to trust themselves to the waves; and the attempt to pass into France by the Mediterranean was, confessedly, one only to be thought of, because every other passage was obstructed. Nevertheless, an ecclesiastic of the name of Peter was found to undertake the task; and having accomplished the marine portion of his journey in safety, he arrived at Marseilles, from which place he was obliged to traverse almost the whole of France to Thionville, where, during the winter, Charlemagne was reposing after his expedition against the Saxons, and rejoicing in the birth of a son.

Admitted to the presence of the young monarch of France, the papal envoy urged, in strong language, the propriety and the duty of succoring Rome and her pontiff. Nor are the precise terms in which this demand was couched unimportant, as affecting, particularly, the only question by which the position and government of any country in the present day, is immediately connected with the age of which I speak. The messenger appeared before the King, "demanding", says the Chronicle of Moissiac, "that he should free the Romans from the oppression of King Desiderius", adding, that "he, Charlemagne, was the legitimate guardian and defender of that people, because Stephen the Pope, of blessed memory, had consecrated him to the Roman patriciate, anointing him with the holy unction".

Charlemagne immediately saw that both policy and honor required him to interfere in behalf of Rome, and to support a prelate, whose resolute adherence to his cause, had brought upon him the danger against which protection was implored. Still, though thus moved by every inducement which could influence a person in his situation, though beyond all doubt warlike as a man and ambitious as a monarch, Charlemagne did not hurry on to an invasion of the Lombard territory without consideration and reluctance, nor mix in the strife of the neighboring powers—though one was his avowed enemy, the other his attached friend—without endeavoring to bring about peace by intercession, and to obtain justice by negotiation.

With a spirit of moderation, such as perhaps no monarch ever displayed but himself—notwithstanding certainty of success, confidence in his own tried powers, the enthusiastic support of his people, the urgent solicitations of a friend, a just cause for warfare, and the prospect both of glory and advantage—Charlemagne employed every milder means ere he unsheathed the sword; and paused long, in the hope of still avoiding war ere he broke the happy bonds of peace.

Desiderius, however, confiding in the advances he had already made against Rome, in the army he had raised, and in the possession of the Alpine passes, rejected every pacific offer. Twice in the course of the spring, did envoys from the sovereign of the Francs visit the court and camp of that monarch, proposing terms of peace, and offering even to buy the justice with gold which was refused to solicitation; and twice they were sent back by the Lombard, with insulting messages of arrogant refusal.

The situation of Rome had, by this time, become eminently hazardous; and Charlemagne felt that farther delay would be an act of injustice to his ally. The very consciousness of power had rendered the monarch scrupulous in its exertion, but, once driven to action, not a moment was lost, not an energy was unemployed. The Lombard had provoked him long, and, beyond doubt, began to imagine that his tardiness of resentment proceeded weakness; for the crafty and the base continually deceive themselves, by attributing the actions of others to motives which would have influenced themselves. But Desiderius soon found, that, like the snow gathered on the mountains which overhung the Lombard kingdom, the spirit of Charlemagne, though long tranquil, was moved at length only to overwhelm everything by which it was opposed.

The general assembly of the Francs, or the field of May, was held at Geneva; and some time was spent in deliberating on the measures necessary to render the first efforts of the war successful. While

these consultations were proceeding, the French monarch, still anxious for peace, once more sent messengers to the King of Lombardy, giving him notice and information of the vast preparations he had made to support Home by force of arms; but offering, even then, on hostages being given for the restitution of the captured cities, to withdraw his troops, and leave his expedition unaccomplished.

Desiderius rejected the last hope of peace; and Charlemagne proceeded to force his way into Lombardy, the first, but the most difficult and most important stop in the war. The strongest barrier which the hand of nature can pile up to separate rival nations, and mark the true limits of distinct countries, lay before him, in the gigantic masses of the Alps. But war was now decided on; and, undeterred by frowning precipices and everlasting snows, multiplied obstacles, difficulties, and dangers, Charlemagne advanced upon his way; and, separating his army into two divisions, he directed one, under the command of his uncle, the Duke Bernard, to cross the mountains by the Mons Jovis or Mont Joux, while he himself led the other into Italy by the passage over Mont Cenis.

To conduct a great force, consisting principally of cavalry, through two of the most difficult and precipitous mountain passes in Europe, was an undertaking which even the mind of Charlemagne, all bold and confident as it was, would not have conceived, had it not been absolutely necessary to conquer such difficulties in the outset, to ensure ultimate success.

His many attempts to obviate the approaching warfare, and the continual rumor of his military preparations, had put the enemy on his guard, and had given time for every measure of defence. All the easier passes of the mountains were already occupied, and even fortified, by the Lombards; and no way remained of forcing an entrance into Italy, but by unequal and most hazardous battle, or by the long and painful march which he determined to accomplish. It would seem, that on this passage of the Alps, great and extraordinary conquerors have taken a pleasure in trying the extent of their powers.

Hannibal, Charlemagne, and Napoleon, have each undertaken, and each succeeded in the enterprise; but of all these, perhaps, the monarch of the Francs had to contend with the greatest difficulties, with the least means of success. The Carthaginian, it is true, was harassed by enemies, and the Corsican was burdened with artillery; but the one could call to his aid all the resources of ancient art, whose miracles of power shame our inferior efforts and the other could command all the expedients of modern science, to support his own energies, and to smooth the obstacles of his way. Charlemagne stood alone in the midst of a barbarous age, when the knowledge of ancient Europe was extinguished, and the improvements of modern Europe were unknown, upheld solely by his own mighty mind in the accomplishment of an undertaking which he himself had conceived.

The design, however, was eminently successful. Notwithstanding the difficulty of procuring provisions, and ail the dangers attendant upon the march of a large force of cavalry over steeps and glaciers, snows and precipices, the army passed in safety, and began to pour down upon Italy. Few troops had been stationed by the Lombards to guard a passage considered almost impracticable; and those few were instantly put to flight, by the first body of Francs who traversed the mountains. The rest of the invading army followed, after a difficult and wearisome march; and the reunion of the two divisions took place at the foot of the descent. From the successful expedition of the Duke Bernard, with one great body of his nephew's troops, the tremendous mountain over which he forced his way received the name, which it retains to the present day, of the Great St Bernard. It had before borne the appellation of Mons Jovis, from a temple to Jupiter, which ornamented the side of the acclivity; but the name of the Heathen deity was soon forgotten in the exploit of the Christian warrior; nor has the same passage, effected in an after age by another mighty conqueror, been able to snatch from the uncle of Charlemagne the glory of the great enterprise which he achieved, or to efface his name from the majestic object with which it is inseparably connected.

The news of this sudden appearance of the Frankish army, in a quarter where they had been so little expected, passed like lightning to Desiderius, who hastened instantly with the main body of his forces to oppose the enemy, before they could quit the narrow defiles in which they were entangled. Collecting all his troops, he took possession of the pass of La Cluse, and made a demonstration of defending it with vigor. But Charlemagne, having fortified his camp in front, detached a considerable force through the mountains, to turn the flank of the Lombards. This movement was instantly perceived by Desiderius; and, struck with sudden terror lest his retreat should be cut off, he abandoned at once his projects of resistance, and, flying to Pavia, left the country open to the Franks.

Strong fortifications and abundant provisions secured to Pavia the means of long defence; while the Franks, naturally impatient, and unaccustomed to the protracted operations of a regular siege, were likely to be foiled by one which promised every difficulty that skill, resolution, and despair, could oppose to their efforts. But the mind of Charlemagne possessed those extraordinary qualities which are only recorded of the very greatest men, and which bend to the will of the individual so gifted, even the natural character of those brought in contact with him. Determined that his conquest of the Lombards

should be more effectual than that of his father, Charlemagne resolved not to abandon his design for vows which might be broken, and submission which would certainly be feigned. The siege of Pavia, therefore, was undertaken with the determination of carrying it on without pause or compromise; and the Francs themselves, yielding their national haste and eagerness to the purpose of their King, evinced a degree of patience new to all their habits.

The defence of Pavia had been undertaken by Desiderius himself; but Verona also, one of the strongest towns of his dominions, he determined to maintain against the enemy, while he left the rest of the Lombard cities very nearly to their fate. The government of Verona he entrusted to his son Adalgisus; and thither also the wife and children of Carloman were sent, for their greater security, as to a place not exposed, like Pavia, to the first attack of the invaders. At the same time, Autcarius, a Frankish noble, who had accompanied Giberga to Lombardy, was invested with a share of that command for which the youth and inexperience of Adalgisus rendered him not fully competent.

The supposition that the resistance of Pavia would long retard the progress of Charlemagne against Verona, proved to be fallacious. From the first, the Frankish monarch seems to have determined to reduce the Lombard capital rather by absolute blockade, than by more active measures and, as a large portion of his troops were thus unemployed, no sooner had he seen the trenches completed round that city, than he led a division of his army against Verona. Astonished at the rapidity of his progress, and cut off from all communication with Desiderius, Adalgisus lost heart, and, instead of attempting to occupy and divide the invading force by a spirited resistance, he abandoned the army committed to his care, and, leaving Verona, fled, first to Pisa, and thence to Constantinople. He was destined never to revisit Lombardy; but his existence at the court of Constantine, the enemy both of the Popes and of Charlemagne, was long a subject of disquietude to the conqueror of Italy.

Verona, abandoned by the prince, surrendered almost immediately, and the widow and children of Carloman fell into the hands of the victor. What was the conduct of Charlemagne to the beings thus cast upon his mercy, has not yet been discovered. The eldest son of the dead Carloman is never again mentioned in history, and a vague and improbable tale is all that has reached us concerning the second. That tale, however, if it be true, shows that the monarch treated his nephew with kindness; and the general character of Charlemagne may well justify our belief so far, whether the whole be true or not. The same darkness is spread over the history of Giberga, which involves that of her children; and the only farther account we have of Autcarius, is a laudatory composition in praise of a person of a somewhat similar name, which, however, is by no means clearly proved to be applicable to the follower of Carloman.

No sooner had Verona fallen, than the victorious monarch hastened back to press the siege of Pavia; and his designs on Italy gradually extending themselves with time, opportunity, and experience, he began to contemplate a longer absence from his native country than he had at first proposed, in order to effect completely what he had so boldly undertaken. His wife and children, therefore, received directions to join him in the camp before Pavia; and their coming gave a new proof to the Lombards of his unchangeable resolution, and afforded to his soldiers a demonstration of the persevering patience with which he intended to carry on the siege.

Although the capital still held out, the other cities of the Lombard kingdom one by one surrendered to detached bodies of the Francs. Few of them offered any resistance, and in general the people seemed not unwilling to amalgamate themselves with a great and conquering nation. Pavia, nevertheless, was defended long with all the energy of valor, and the pertinacity of despair. The abundant stores with which it had been supplied, managed with care and frugality, kept up the spirits of the inhabitants, and preserved the obedience of the garrison. Days, weeks, and months passed by; summer, autumn, and winter fled; and yet the city maintained its resistance, though the whole of the rest of Lombardy had submitted.

At length, as the high solemnity of Easter approached, Charlemagne prepared to visit Rome, leaving to his officers the task of carrying on the siege during his absence. Various motives induced him to undertake the journey; and those extensive views of general policy, that on all occasions showed him the utmost extent of advantage which could be reaped from any measure, taught him to look upon a visit to the ancient capital of the world as a means of extending his power, and deriving the greatest benefit that could accrue from his expedition to Italy.

Lombardy, except the capital, whose resistance could not be effectual, was already conquered ; and the Frankish monarch regarded that country as his own, by the right which, with very few exceptions, had hitherto alone bestowed dominion, and transferred the scepter from one race to another. He was King of Lombardy by force of arms; but at Rome he was to be received as Patrician, and Ravenna looked upon him as Exarch,—titles which had previously been mere names, but of which he now intended to exercise the rights. The people of Rome, by their voluntary act, had

named him Patrician, or military governor; and both his father and himself had been called upon to perform the most arduous duties of that station, without exercising any of the power which the office implied. But Italy was now at the monarch's feet; and Charlemagne, without the least desire to trample on it, prepared to take upon himself the full character of Patrician, and to govern, though his government was of the mildest quality.

The news of his approach flew rapidly to Rome; and the supreme pontiff, at once animated by original feelings of regard and esteem, grateful for services rendered, and mindful of benefits to come, prepared to receive the conqueror of his enemies, in the ancient queen of empires, with all the solemn splendor which suited the man, the occasion, and the scene.

In the meantime, Charlemagne set out from Pavia, accompanied by a considerable army, and an immense train of bishops, priests, and nobles; and, passing through Tuscany, he advanced by rapid journeys upon Rome. Shouts and songs of triumph greeted him on the way; towns, castles, and villages, poured forth to see him pass; the serf, the citizen, and the noble, joined in acclamations which welcomed the conqueror of the Lombards; and dead Italy seemed to revive at the glorious aspect of the victor. Thirty miles from the city, he was met by all those who could still boast of generous blood in Rome, with ensigns and banners; and at a mile's distance from the walls, the whole schools came forth to receive him, bearing in their hands branches of the palm and the olive, and singing, in the sweet Roman tongue, the praises and gratulations of their mighty deliverer. Thither, too, came the standard of the cross, with which it had been customary to meet the Exarchs on their visits to the city; and truly, since the days of her ancient splendor, never had Rome beheld such a sight as entered her gates with the monarch of the Francs.

It was now no savage army come to ravage and to spoil, with hunger and hatred in their looks, and foulness and barbarism in their garments. On the contrary, a long train of the princes and nobles of a warlike and beautiful nation, mingling, in the brilliant robes of peace, with all the great of a people they had delivered, entered the gates of Rome, and, amidst songs of victory and shouts of joy, were led forward, through all the splendid remains of ancient art, the accumulated magnificence of centuries of power and conquest, by a monarch such as the world has seen but once.

Above the ordinary height of man, Charlemagne was a giant in his stature as in his mind; but the graceful and easy proportion of all his limbs spoke the combination of wonderful activity with immense strength, and pleased while it astonished. His countenance was as striking as his figure; and his broad high forehead, his keen and flashing eye, and bland unwrinkled brow, offered a bright picture, wherein the spirit of physiognomy, natural to all men, might trace the expression of a powerful intellect and a benevolent heart.

On so solemn an occasion as his entry into Rome, the general simplicity of his attire was laid aside; and he now appeared blazing in all the splendor of royalty, his robes wrought of purple and gold, his brow encircled with jewels, and his very sandals glittering with precious stones.

As he approached the church of St Peter, and was met by the Exarch's cross, the monarch alighted from his horse, and, with his principal followers, proceeded on foot to the steps of the cathedral. The marks of his reverence for the shrine of the apostle were such as a sovereign might well pay, whose actions and whose power left no fear of respect being construed into submission. In the porch, near the door, he was met by Pope Adrian, attended by all his clergy, clothed in the magnificent vestments of the Roman church; and while loud shouts rent the air of "Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord!" the pontiff held his deliverer to his heart, poured forth his gratitude, and loaded him with blessings.

The meeting was one of great interest, both to the priest and the monarch. I know no reason why, in examining the characters of princes, we should endeavor to set them apart, in their sentiments, from the rest of human beings, and not believe them to be actuated by the same affections as their fellow men. Though Charlemagne was a great conqueror and a clear-sighted politician, an ambitious king and a dauntless warrior, we know that he had a heart full of the kindest and the gentlest feelings; and there is every reason to believe, that all the finer emotions of his bosom were affected by his meeting with the Roman pontiff. That he revered Pope Adrian as a prelate, and loved him as a man, his afterlife sufficiently evinced; and when he met him, for the first time, in the midst of Rome, he must have remembered that, sooner than bring discord and strife into his dominions, the old man before him had dared the enmity of a powerful and vindictive monarch, had seen his country wasted and destroyed, and had exposed himself to be besieged in a vast, but ruined and depopulated city. We may well believe, then, that the feelings of reverence and affection he expressed were the genuine emotions of the young sovereign's heart. Such feelings on his part, while the Pope, on the other hand, acknowledged in him the 6aviour of Rome, and the deliverer of the church, could not fail to create between them a bond of sympathy and regard such as circumstances seldom suffer to exist amongst

the great of the earth. The friendship, thus begun, continued through their mutual lives; and, with the invariable fortune of union between the good and wise, tended immensely to the safety and prosperity of both.

After the arrival of the monarch, several days were spent in celebrating the solemnities of Easter; but neither the Pope nor the King neglected those matters of temporal jurisdiction, which were now tending towards a more clear and decided establishment than Italy had known for many years. Charlemagne was evidently received as sovereign by the Pope himself, and by the whole people of Rome. He was crowned with the diadem of the Patricians, or Exarchs, and exercised, for the first time, the extensive sway with which that office invested him. In whatever manner Pepin had reannexed the Exarchate and Pentapolis to Rome, that act, it is clear, was in no degree such as to exempt those territories, or even Rome itself, from the dominion of the Patrician. On the entrance of Charlemagne into the city, there was no struggle, dispute, or misunderstanding about authority. It was assumed by him at once, and granted by the clergy and the people as the undoubted right of the Patriciate; nor did he ever cease to use the supreme power, first as Patrician, and afterwards as Emperor, from his arrival in Italy to the close of his life and reign. To him all great causes were referred; the Pope himself appeared before him as before his judge; and we find repeated instances of his having extended his jurisdiction to ecclesiastical, as well as civil affairs, throughout the whole of the Roman territory.

Nevertheless, there is every reason to believe that Adrian solicited, and that the monarch granted, considerable territories, to be held by the Church of Rome, though solely conceded as by lord to vassal, and by no means independent of the Patrician. A great variety of forms had by this time been introduced amongst feofs and benefices; and what were the feudal privileges granted on the present occasion, what those reserved, is very difficult to ascertain; for, though the Popes have since asserted that the donation of Charlemagne was written, the original deed has never been seen by any one; and through the whole correspondence of the pontiffs with that monarch, we find no mention made of such an instrument. So far from it, indeed, that, within a few months of the gift, a contest took place between Adrian himself, and Leo, Archbishop of Ravenna, concerning the limits of the district granted by Charlemagne to the Church of Rome, which would have been at once determined by the production of the monarch's charter. This, however, was never done, and the Pope was obliged to apply to the King of the Francs, in order to establish the facts. Such an event seems to determine the question; for it must not be forgotten, that the dispute was not about a small portion of frontier land, which the ambiguity of language might render difficult to define; but about cities and provinces, in regard to which no doubt could have been entertained, if any written deed had existed to establish the papal claims.

The limits of the territory granted remain equally uncertain to the present day. The papal historians declare, that the gift of Charlemagne included, besides the Exarchate and Pentapolis, the whole of Corsica, Parma, Mantua, Reghio, and Bardi, with the Venetian provinces, and a considerable part of the Tyrol, as well as Spoleto and Beneventum. But the Popes themselves, with more moderate wisdom, never, in their letters to the donor, speak of anything beyond the Exarchate and Pentapolis, except the territory of Spoleto; and though it is not improbable that Charlemagne might, as Gibbon asserts, give that to which he had no right—for rights were then but badly defined—it is not at all likely that he should give what he did not possess, which is implied by the more than doubtful account of Anastasius.

Some slight mention appears to have been made about this time, of a prior donation from Pepin to the Holy See; but not in such terms as to call for opposition or confutation, even had Charlemagne been inclined to resist the transfer of the property from the people to the church. That he was not so, is sufficiently evident from his own gift to the Popes, of those provinces which his father had reannexed to the Roman state, with the addition of Spoleto. But, at the same time, it is to be remarked in regard to this famous donation, that even then existed the custom of granting considerable territories to the principal churches and monasteries under the dominion of the sovereign, as a feudal property to be held of the crown; nor can I look upon the gift of Charlemagne in any other light, though various after circumstances seem to prove, that the people of the city of Rome still continued to regard themselves as an independent republic till the hour that the Patrician was saluted Emperor. To hold these territories even as a vassal of the Frankish monarch, was still, in the opinion of the Pope, a great step gained; and we never find that he made any opposition, or offered any remonstrance, to the many acts of sovereignty exercised by Charlemagne within the very provinces bestowed, although those acts were, in several instances, such as were seldom justified by the feudal tenure of any lands in that day.

Satisfied with the assertion of his authority by a temporary exhibition of the Patrician power, Charlemagne seems to have required little immediate return from the pontiff for the services he had rendered to Rome and the church. After regulating some clerical affairs of little interest, he hastened back to Pavia, where his presence at the head of the army had become necessary, for the purpose of

supporting and encouraging his soldiers under the wearisome labors of the longest and most difficult siege which the Francs had ever undertaken. At the same time, many circumstances imperatively required that he should press the Lombard capital to its immediate fall, and turn his steps towards his own paternal dominions.

One of the most urgent of these circumstances was the state of his northeastern frontier, from which continual accounts of the most alarming character reached him in the heart of Italy. It appears, that no sooner had the news of his absence from France spread abroad, than the Saxons hastened to take advantage of so favorable a moment, and to avenge their recent subjection, by ravaging the borders of their conqueror's territory. Flame and the sword desolated the land; and though, on one occasion, a panic, which the monks willingly mistook for a miracle, caused the barbarians suddenly to fly, at the very moment they were advancing to burn the church of St Boniface, at Fridislar, their terror was soon forgotten, and their devastation recommenced.

With these motives for activity stimulating his mind, Charlemagne took vigorous measures to render the blockade of Pavia more severe than ever. No living thing was suffered to enter or to quit the city but the birds of the air; and though Desiderius still resisted with desperate resolution, famine soon began to undermine the courage of the Lombards. The hopelessness of rescue, the subjugation of the whole country round, the weariness of restraint, the known clemency of the victor, and the miseries of a protracted siege, all acted on the hearts of the Pavians, and at length, about the middle of the year, they threw open their gates to the Francs.

To compensate for the obstinate resistance, which they feared the conqueror might construe into crime, the Lombards in the city delivered up Desiderius, his wife, and daughter, to Charlemagne, without any stipulation in their favor; and, indeed, seem themselves to have relied entirely on the mercy of their conqueror. Their reliance was not in vain: no cruelty stained the glory of the triumph. Pavia did not even suffer from plunder; and the treasures found in the palace of the vanquished Desiderius repaid the Frankish soldiers for their long fatigues, though no part went to swell the stores of their own liberal monarch. A medal was struck upon the occasion of the fall of Pavia, but Charlemagne did not permit any painful act of triumph to crush the iron into the flesh of the Lombards. Their institutions were still left to them inviolate; and the monarch of the Francs appeared amongst them less as a conqueror, than as a father.

He instantly, however, took the title of King of Lombardy, and was crowned with the iron circle which the monarchs of that country had assumed after their settlement in Italy; but the choice was still left to the people of the land, in all cases, whether they would be judged by their own, the Roman, or the Frankish law. A few additions, indeed, were made to the Lombard code; but even this was done with a sparing and judicious hand, and was softened with the pretence of supplying the laws which had been lost or forgotten.

The disposition, also, which the Lombards had shown to amalgamate themselves with the Francs, met with every encouragement from the great French monarch, whose desire was ever to win, rather than to compel. He received the oath of homage from the Lombard nobles; and, as if that oath could not be broken, trusted them, in general, with the entire government of their towns and provinces, confided in their faith alone, and strove in everything to smooth the way for the complete union of the two nations, taking care that the humiliation of overthrow should not impede the progress of pacification and concord

These regulations required some time to perfect; but, at length, Charlemagne once more set out for France, and reached it in the middle of August, leaving but few troops in the Lombard kingdom. Pavia, the capital, and a small number of frontier towns, received garrisons, but the people in general had evinced a willingness in their submission; and Charlemagne, too strong to be fearful, was too noble to be suspicious.

Adalgisus, however, was now at the court of Constantinople, whose emperor still looked towards Italy with envy and regret; and it was not at all unlikely, that the peace of Charlemagne's new kingdom might soon be troubled by the intrigues of the Emperor of the East. Desiderius, with his wife and daughter, were carried or sent into France by the conqueror, and, apparently, were obliged to embrace the monastic life; for we find that the dethroned monarch was first committed to the charge of Agilfred, Bishop of Liege, and was afterwards conveyed to the monastery of Corbie, where he lived for some time in the practice of mild virtues and superstitious observances, and died at an unknown period.

Whether the peace that he now enjoyed, compensated for the splendor that he had lost, and the calm contemplations of the cloister were sufficient occupation, after the troublous ambitions of the palace, history does not mention, though it insinuates that he was happy. But still, there can be little

doubt, that the consciousness of having cast away empire for revenge, must have mingled remorse with memory, and forced many a regret upon his mind,—especially when he reflected that his own intrigues had worked his downfall, and learned, from the moral voice of the irretrievable past, that had he been virtuous, he might have continued great.

BOOK IV.

FROM THE CONQUEST OF LOMBARDY TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SPANISH WAR.

774–777 AD

The life of a monarch, at all times one of difficulty and rare, is ever, in barbarous ages, an existence of continual labor and incessant strife. Nor can even a decree of civilization greatly superior to the age in which he lives, raise a king above a constant war with the barbarism around him, nor grand views for the weal of human nature, effect anything for his own peace and tranquility. On the contrary, every general effort to benefit the race of our fellow creatures, must always have to struggle against narrow prejudices and petty interests; and there is unhappily too much reason to believe that very extended views, in royal bosoms, only afford new cause for strife, added to the many which unceasingly assail a throne.

Neither, in an uncultivated state of society, before reason had learned to curb desire, or long experience had shown the fruitlessness of contention, could even predominant military power and the gift of victory ever secure the duration of peace without, indeed, some one man could, by a godlike mind, render conquest universal, and obedience permanent. And yet, peace being, as the great Spaniard beautifully says, the true object of war, so warfare must still, in a barbarous age, be the only means of peace, however vain the treaties obtained may prove, however transitory be the tranquility that follows.

The most pacific disposition, joined to the most benevolent mind, would never have won for Charlemagne the repose of his German frontier; but, in fact, the disposition of that monarch, by the habits of his nation—by the circumstances of his country—by the character of his age—by the education of his youth—by the constitution of his body—by the very qualities of his mind—was warlike. His benevolence showed itself continually in his government, in his laws, in his efforts to soften and to civilize, in his treatment of enemies, in his affection for his friends, in his placability after personal offence, and in his active intercession for the unhappy and the unfortunate. In all these points, the beneficence of his heart rose above the rudeness of his age, trampled on its prejudices, and cast away its passions, but still by nature he was a warrior, and he could not have remained a king unless he had been a conqueror.

The nations around never suffered him to withdraw his hand from the sword; and, as fast as by victory he had crushed one of the hydra heads of war, another was raised to attack him at a different point. Scarcely had he entered Italy, to the succor of Pope Adrian, ere, as already mentioned, the Saxons, whom he had so lately subdued, were again in arms; and, secure in the absence of their conqueror, and the difficult warfare before him, were ravaging at their leisure the transrhenane provinces of France, and burning all that they could not carry away. No sooner, however, had Pavia surrendered, and Italy received his law, than Charlemagne hastened to the scene of danger. Pausing, himself, at Ingelheim; on finding that the enemy had disappeared, he dispatched four armies into the heart of Saxony, to punish the aggression of the people, while he made preparations to attempt their complete subjugation in the ensuing year.

For fifteen months his kingdom had been without his presence, and a great accumulation of internal business had, of course, taken place during his absence. The immense activity of the young monarch, however, left nothing long unconcluded, although all the affairs of his extensive dominions, which were in any degree important, were transacted by himself alone.

To conceive the possibility of such an undertaking, the habits of that great monarch must be considered, and also the extraordinary constitution both of his body and his mind. Gifted with a frame, the corporeal energies of which required little or no relaxation, and which, consequently, never clogged and hampered his intellect by fatigue, Charlemagne could devote an immense portion of his time to business, and, without taking more than a very small portion of sleep, could dedicate the clear thoughts of an untired mind to the regulation of his kingdom, even while other men were buried in repose. He was accustomed, we are told, to wake spontaneously, and rise from his bed four or five times in the course of each night; and so great was his economy of moments, that the brief space he employed in putting on the simple garments with which he was usually clothed, was also occupied in hearing the reports of his Count of the Palace, or the pleadings of various causes, which he decided at those times with as much clear wisdom as if listening to them on the judgment seat.

Some lighter exercise of the mind was nevertheless necessary even to him; but this was principally taken during his repasts, when he caused various works to be read to him, which did not

require the severe attention that he was obliged to bestow on judicial investigations. The subject of these readings was, in general, the history of past times, and works upon theology, amongst which the writings of St Augustin are said to have afforded him the greatest pleasure.

By the constant employment of moments which would otherwise have been wasted to the intellect, an extraordinary mass of business was easily swept away; and, at the end of the very year in which he returned from Italy, a number of acts, diplomas, charters, letters, judgments, and affairs of all kinds, can be traced to Charlemagne himself, the dispatch of which, together with all those that must have escaped research, would be utterly inconceivable, were we ignorant of what were the habits of that great and singular man.

While Charlemagne was thus employed in France, the armies sent against the Saxons penetrated into their territory in four different directions. Three of these hosts met with considerable opposition; but, after contending for some time successfully with the enemy, they returned, to pass the winter in their own country, loaded with spoil and crowned with victory. The fourth army found the land abandoned by the Saxon troops; but a great part of the wealth of the nation had been left behind, and the Frankish soldiers amply, repaid themselves for the ravages which had been committed on their own frontiers, during their absence in Italy.

The Saxons, however, were still unsubdued; and a fortress which Charlemagne had repaired at Eresburg, had been attacked, the garrison defeated, and the walls razed to the ground. The frontiers of Hesse, which had suffered the most from the Saxon inroads during the preceding year, were still open to the enemy; and everything in the state of Germany, called for immediate attention and exertion on the part of the French king. As soon, therefore, as the general assembly of the people could be held, he collected his forces, and entering Saxony at the head of a considerable army, he captured the castle of Sigisburg, restored the fortress of Eresburg, and, marching on to the Weser, forced the passage of that river, which a multitude of the enemy attempted for a time to defend. He thence pursued the Ostphalians, or Eastern Saxons, to whom he was for the time opposed, across the country towards the Oder, on the banks of which river he arrived without impediment.

The extraordinary rapidity of his movements seems to have daunted and surprised the Saxons, even more than his power or skill; and, on his sudden appearance at the Oder, Hasson, chief of the Ostphalians, with the other leaders of his tribe, met him, in order to tender hostages for their submission. The clemency of the conqueror was not yet exhausted. The hostages were once more received; and, turning towards the sea, Charlemagne, in like manner, accepted the promises of the Angrarians, another tribe, which had likewise been in arms against him.

Notwithstanding the bold and daring character of all his military movements, the Frankish monarch had not thus left behind him an immense tract of hostile country, without taking measures to keep open the communication with his own resources; for while he advanced into the very heart of Saxony, he stationed a considerable body of Francs upon the banks of the Weser, to guard the passages of that river, and to secure the means of retreat.

None of the dangers which surrounded him, however, escaped the Saxons; and that part of the nation who, inhabiting the western side of the Weser, were called Westphalians, soon perceived all the advantages which their position in the rear of the monarch's army afforded them. It was evident, that, in the midst of an inimical country, covered with woods, and intersected with rivers, a thousand perils and difficulties would attend his retreat, if the force left to maintain the communication with France were once cut off. To this purpose, then, the first efforts of the Saxons were directed; and, as the Francs on the Weser were in possession of an entrenched camp, stratagem was employed to render that advantage of no avail. In the absence of the monarch, the discipline of the troops who had remained behind was a good deal relaxed; and, with that national want of caution, which may be still traced in their descendants, the Francs of the reserve suffered a considerable body of the enemy to mingle with some of their foraging parties, which were returning towards nightfall. The Saxons thus penetrated into the heart of the camp; and, in the darkness, easily opened a way for the entrance of their companions.

The Francs, suddenly attacked in their sleep, before they were aware of the proximity of an enemy found myriads of hostile swords at their throats; and before they could recover from their first surprise, a great number were sacrificed to their own imprudence. But discipline in that day was of less consequence than in the present times; and in a hand-to-hand fight, such as then raged in the encampment of the Francs, the individual exertions of each man were of almost as much consequence as the union of the whole. Gradually, the Francs forgot their first panic, roused themselves, rallied, resisted, overcame; and before morning, the Saxons were defeated, and in full flight.

Nevertheless, flight did not bring them security; for Charlemagne himself, who never yielded one unnecessary instant to repose, was by this time returning towards his rear guard. Rumors of the attack upon his camp reached him on his march, and gave such speed to his movements, that he arrived on the spot as the Saxons were in the act of flying from the scene of their overthrow. A hundred thousand fresh swords were added to those which already smote the fugitives; and a fearful number of the enemy paid with their lives the penalty of their bold attempt. This defeat entirely dispersed the Westphalians for the time; the rest of the hostile tribes had already given hostages for their future tranquility; the whole land was bowed in apparent submission; and Charlemagne, leaving garrisons at Sigisburg and Eresburg, now led his victorious army back to their native country.

The repose of Germany was only temporary; but, in the meanwhile, the joy which the capture of Pavia and the fall of the Lombard kingdom had occasioned in Rome, began to be obscured by storms in Italy itself, and gathering clouds in other quarters of the political horizon. Scarcely had Adrian, after Charlemagne's return to France, written to his great protector, a letter full of blessings and thanks, than he had cause once more to solicit his presence in Italy, and to address him as a suppliant, rather than congratulate him as a friend. The first disquietude which the Pope was destined to suffer, proceeded from that contest which I have already noticed, with Leo, archbishop of Ravenna, who persisted in detaining the whole of the Pentapolis, and various cities of Aemilia. These he declared he had received as a donation from the monarch of the Francs; and a long and tedious dispute ensued, which could never have taken place, had a written deed existed to authenticate the right of the Holy See. But more serious and general dangers soon began to menace Italy; and two after epistles of Adrian are found full of matter affecting the immediate interest of Charlemagne.

REVOLT OF THE DUKE OF FRIULI

The state in which Lombardy had been left, must here be considered, at the risk of repeating some facts which have been before mentioned. On the fall of that kingdom, Charlemagne, instead of pursuing the course of policy common both in the days which preceded, and those which followed his reign, by dividing great part of the territory he had just acquired, amongst such of his followers as he desired to reward or promote, left the Lombard nobles in full possession of their land, and merely claimed their homage as their new sovereign. This was instantly yielded, with every sign of joy and willingness; for to escape with life, liberty, and fortune, was an event which seldom, at that period, befell a conquered people.

At first, the Lombard lord, feeling no compassion for their former King, who, for his own ambition and revenue, had exposed them all to spoliation and abasement, gladly saw the scepter transferred to a clement and generous prince, and joyfully welcomed the unexpected termination of the war. But conquest had loosened, if not broken, the bonds of society. Charlemagne left them to their own counsels. The steel-clad myriads of the Francs, which had spread terror and dismay amongst them, were withdrawn; fear was forgotten; a distant monarch was despised; ambition sprung up in the heart of every one; and each of the Lombard nobles entertained some project of breaking his vows of homage, and making himself independent.

It was some time before unity of purpose rendered general disaffection formidable. The first attempt was conceived with no extended views, and was the simple effort of a turbulent vassal to free himself from his engagements, and establish a separate state. This took place in the case of Hildebrand, Duke of Spoleto, the homage of whose duchy had been resigned by the King in favor of the Holy See. Possibly, encouraged by the resistance of the Archbishop of Ravenna, that noble learned to despise the rule of the Roman prelate, and hoped to emancipate himself from the oaths which bound him to Charlemagne, now that the monarch had transferred his allegiance to a weaker power. He seems, at first, to have laid no more comprehensive plan, than that of resisting an authority whose temporal force was small, and whose spiritual thunders were then feeble and almost untried.

Greater schemes, however, soon followed. Rodgaud, Duke of Friuli, one of those in whom Charlemagne had placed the greatest confidence, and to whom he had entrusted the greatest power, began to conclude that he also might free himself from the authority of him to whom he had pledged his faith. Although his duchy was powerful and important, including a considerable portion of the Tyrol, and stretching far round the Venetian Gulf, he very well knew that a force which had crushed the Lombard kingdom while entire, could not be successfully opposed by any detached part. But yet he hoped, that—by leaguing together once more, all the disjointed members of the state, and by giving to all, the energy of a common cause, and of individual danger—he might be able to recover the independence of those territories which had been lost by the general apathy, under the reign of Desiderius. Gradually, these views extended and changed. He found that his personal influence was not sufficient to form that bond of union which he desired; he doubted that the activity of his confederates would be equal to his own; and he naturally turned his eyes elsewhere to seek for farther

support and assistance. At length, trusting to chance and his own skill to reap the greatest benefit from the enterprise, the Lombard chief conceived the design of calling back Adalgisus from his exile at Constantinople; and proposed to him the total subjugation of Italy, by the aid of the Eastern empire.

Such negotiations passed rapidly between Lombardy and the Grecian capital. Adalgisus, who had been received with favor, and invested with patrician honors, by the Emperor, welcomed with gladness the hope of recovering the territory of his father; and the Emperor Leo, who had succeeded Constantine Copronymus, joyfully perceived a chance of reuniting under his stray the long divided empire of Rome.

But Leo was neither by mind nor by body fitted for great undertakings. Had his father Constantine been still alive, it is probable that the enterprise would have been accomplished, or at least commenced, before the monarch of the Francs was aware of the conspiracy. The preparations of Leo, on the contrary, were weak and dilatory. The sloth with which he proceeded, gave full time for rumor to use her wings. Pope Adrian, watchful on all occasions, obtained information of the impending danger, and instantly dispatched messengers to France, beseeching aid for himself, and pointing out the perilous situation of the Frankish monarch's new dominions.

The envoys of the pontiff reached France while Charlemagne was still absent, pursuing his successful expedition against the Saxons; and the news of the conspiracy of Rodgaud, and the danger which menaced his Italian territories, met him as he returned towards his own country. Perils, with him, were always encountered as soon as known; and, without loss of time, he crossed the Rhine with a select body of troops, and advanced rapidly towards Italy, hoping to effect his passage before the snows had blocked up the roads. The year, however, had too far proceeded in its course towards winter, for the monarch to make much progress; and he was forced to pause at Shlestadt, in Alsace. This delay was nevertheless productive of no evil consequences. The torpid slowness natural to the Emperor Leo far more than outdid the necessary halt of the King of France; and, at a moment when activity was the great requisite to success, days, weeks, and months were wasted in idleness by the court of Constantinople.

Not so with Charlemagne: the first melting of the snows saw him once more across the mountains, and in full career against his enemies. Pavia had been secured by the troops he had formerly left there; and, traversing the country with immense speed, he left behind him Treviso, though strongly garrisoned for the revolted chiefs, advanced upon Friuli, and attacked the faithless Lombards before they knew that he had passed the Alps. Immediate destruction overtook the conspirators, and the death of Rodgaud, their leader, followed. Whether he was taken in arms, and executed afterwards, or was slain in battle, is by no means clear; but whichever way it occurred, his fate was undeserving of pity. He had broken the oaths which he had voluntarily plighted, and he had abused the confidence of a generous monarch. The clemency of a conqueror—a virtue then rare—he had repaid with ingratitude; and the power and property which had been left him, he had used as weapons against him who had spared them. He had risked all for ambition, was conquered, and died.

In leaving behind him so large a city as Treviso, strongly fortified and garrisoned, while he struck the decisive blow at the chief of his adversaries, Charlemagne seems to have followed a system of warfare, which has appeared new and bold when executed by an extraordinary general even in our own day. But the moment he had disconcerted the plans of Rodgaud, the monarch turned from Friuli, and, with the brilliant celerity which characterized all his exploits, marched directly upon Treviso, where Stabilinus, the uncle of the fallen duke, had shut himself up, resolved to hold out the city to the last. The strength of the place, and the desperation of its defenders promised to render the siege as long as that of Pavia; but an Italian priest, of the name of Peter, who happened to be in the fortress, agreed to betray the gates of the Lombards to the Francs, and before Easter, Treviso also was taken. No severity followed; and although the priest who had delivered up the town was rewarded in a manner which the magnitude of the service he had rendered, more than his own honesty, deserved, no reason exists for believing that Charlemagne punished the revolt of Stabilinus in proportion to the value which he set upon the conquest.

The submission of all the other Lombard nobles was prompt and complete; but the monarch who had once so confidently trusted, and had been so speedily betrayed, now took more rigid precautions. The cities which he had found absolutely in revolt he consigned to Frankish governors, and provided with Frankish troops; b those vassals who share in the conspiracy was not ascertained by any open act of rebellion, he wisely left unpunished, permitting them either to attribute their escape to his ignorance of their crime, or to the clemency of his nature. The garrisons throughout Lombardy were strengthened and increased; and, before the spring could be said to have fully commenced, the whole country was reduced to obedience, restored to tranquility, and secured by every provision for its government and defence.

The rapidity with which he had executed all these great acts, was not more than necessary to the monarch of the Francs; for during the very same year he was called upon for a display of his extraordinary powers of activity, both in resolution and performance, such as Europe has seldom beheld. But small space of time was allowed him for securing his Italian dominions against fresh commotions. At Treviso, the news reached him that the Saxons were again in arms upon his northern frontier; and before he could pass the Alps, which he accomplished with inconceivable rapidity, he found that the fortress of Eresburg had been once more attacked and taken, and that the castle of Sigisburg was besieged.

Not a moment was lost by the sovereign of the Francs; but, traversing his own country with the speed of lightning, he added what reinforcements he could gather to his Italian army, and, to use the words of the annalist of Metz, entered the territory of his pertinacious enemies like a mighty tempest. The garrison of Sigisburg had already repulsed the Saxon force which had attacked it; and the presence of Charlemagne himself, who, before the Saxons were fully aware that he had quitted Italy, was sweeping the whole country, from the Rhine to the Lippe, with the rapidity of the wind, spread terror and consternation through the land.

Once more subdued, the Saxons met him in great numbers, on the banks of the Lippe, supplicating peace and pardon; and again offering hostages, they declared their resolution of embracing the Christian faith. Charlemagne, with unwearied clemency, instantly acceded to their demand; but, determined to take greater measures of security, he added several fortresses to those he had before built, and employed his troops in again restoring the often demolished castle of Eresburg. While thus employed, the Saxons presented themselves in immense numbers, with their wives and children, for the purpose of receiving baptism; and the French monarch, imagining that the greatest step which had yet been taken towards their civilization, and the tranquility of his own dominions, was now gained, left them in peace, and returned to France.

Thus ended the warlike operations of a year of extraordinary activity, during the course of which, Charlemagne had carried on the strife in person, on the shores of the Gulf of Venice and on the banks of the Weser, had crossed the Alps and the Rhine, and had led an immense army more than three thousand miles in different directions. Such exertions, wonderful in themselves, are the more remarkable, when the arms of the Francs at that time are taken into consideration, and when it is remembered, that heavy cavalry, and men loaded with iron, were thus marched over a vast extent of country, at a time when every obstacle impeded the free communication of different parts of the world.

The war dress of Charlemagne himself was wholly composed of steel, consisting of the casque, breast and back plates, together with greaves, gauntlets, and cuissards, formed likewise of iron plates. Nor were inferior warriors less cumbrously defended; for though the arms of the earlier Francs were light, in comparison with this heavy panoply, yet we find that, in the days of Charlemagne, each man in the army, whose means permitted it, was protected by a suit of armor similar to that of the monarch.

INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

Such rapid and continued movements as those in which the Frankish king had been occupied in the field, and the many dangers to be averted, and difficulties to be overcome, which had constantly besieged his mind, might be supposed to employ his whole thoughts, and leave him no time for the more pacific affairs of government. But, during all these ware, though, of course, the absence of the sovereign necessarily left some opportunities of abuse in the administration of justice, and in the civil polity of his realm, the arrears of business were much less than might be imagined.

The general government of the state remained, as I have before observed, in the hands of the monarch, who, without any minister to divide the fatigues, or support the responsibility, devoted every spare moment to its affairs, and soon learned to carry it on in whatever part of the world he happened to be. But the local administration was distributed amongst provincial officers, having the title of Duke, to the care of each of whom twelve counties were entrusted. The Counts placed under these officers, were, in fact, the judges of the land, and had power to summon to their court, anyone within the territory subject to their jurisdiction. Neglect or refusal to obey this summons, was visited with a severe penalty. At the same time, the Counts themselves were forced to render justice, by their station; and any denial or perversion of right, was punished by loss of land and rank. The distant menace of such punishment, however, would have been little effectual in procuring the constant and clear administration of the law, had not ambulatory magistrates been appointed to proceed through the kingdom, to render judgment themselves in particular cases—to take cognizance of the conduct of the Dukes and Counts—and to see justice impartially executed. These officers were called Missi Dominici; and, though I do not find it anywhere expressly stated that their times of visitation were uncertain, and, consequently, their reception by the Counts unpremeditated, yet many reasons exist for believing such to have been the case.

Their interference proved, of course, a great safeguard to the people; but still, as the provision of forage for the troops, as well as the maintenance of bridges, highways, prisons, passage-boats, and, in short, all the internal regulations of the country, both civil and military, were in the first instance entrusted to the Counts and Dukes, peculation and exaction were undoubtedly practiced, notwithstanding the active vigilance of the monarch.

Although the general administration of law was thus provided for, many cases, especially affecting the great vassals of the crown, or affairs of high ecclesiastical property, were reserved for the decision of the King himself, or the Count of his palace. These causes Charlemagne appears never to have neglected on any account; and, in all his wars, the suitors might follow to his tent, and obtain an immediate decision. Thus, in the heart of Saxony, he judged the cause of the Bishop of Treves and the Abbot of Pruim; and in the course of that very year in which he accomplished the two expeditions into Lombardy and Saxony, he heard and determined an extraordinary number of general pleas.

Amongst other affairs brought under his immediate notice about this time, was that of the Pope and the Archbishop of Ravenna, whose dispute, it appears, was not easily concluded; as the prelate of the Exarchate undertook a journey to France for the sole purpose of justifying himself in the eyes of Charlemagne.

Whatever was the decision of the King, in regard to which we have no clear information, it would seem that the award was not very unfavorable to the archbishop, who, after his return to Italy, conducted himself with such overbearing insolence, as to give more offence to Adrian than ever. In consequence, the great amity which had hitherto existed between Charlemagne and the supreme pontiff was diminished for a short time, and the papal epistles breathe a tone of complaint and discontent, very different from the usual tenor of Adrian’s communications with his great protector. Before long, however, either Charlemagne removed the cause of dissatisfaction, or the pontiff perceived the impolicy of alienating such powerful friendship, by fruitless importunity and impotent resentment. The acerbity of Adrian's style soon mellowed again into more genial expressions—his language became once more that of praise and benediction; and Italy remaining in peace and security, left the monarch of the Francs to oppose his whole force to the inveterate enemies who still hovered upon his north-eastern frontier, eager for revenge.

Time for collecting his energies, and opportunity to apply them undivided, was now, indeed, absolutely necessary to Charlemagne; for though, at the end of the last year, he had left the Saxons with a more reasonable prospect of peace than had ever terminated any of his former campaigns, that prospect was soon destined to be obscured.

WITIKIND, HIS ATTEMP TO RAISE SAXONY

The immense tract of country occupied by the Saxons, the warlike habits of the people, and their fierce and indomitable courage, while it made even their temporary subjection by the Francs extraordinary, in reality left little hope of their permanent tranquility. The apparent cause of their easy and continual overthrow by the armies of Charlemagne, was their division into various tribes, and their want of that unity of purpose, which can only be obtained by the action of a general and continuous government. The War-King of today was no longer War-King tomorrow; his military projects ended with his command; and the nation had to adopt new schemes, and habituate itself to a new leader, while no fixed principles in the art of war served to counterbalance the constant change of commanders. Had one man of great and comprehensive genius appeared, who could have held in his hands for a length of time the united energies and resources of the people, he might at any period have found means to oppose to the monarch of the Francs, a more equal and steady resistance than had hitherto been attempted.

Such a man was now rising into light; and, though greatly inferior to Charlemagne in talent, in firmness, in civilization, and in magnanimity, his powers were sufficient to give an entirely new character to the Saxon war. He was a chief of the Westphalians; whether duke of the whole of those who took that name, or only of a tribe, is obscure and unimportant. His name, which has come down with honor in every history of Germany as that of one of the greatest patriots of that time, was Witikind; and to personal courage, warlike abilities, and great powers of exertion, he added, as is proved by his influence on the minds of his countrymen, the force of eloquence and the talent of command.

During the greater part of the wars which had preceded this epoch, we have seen that the campaigns on both sides had been little better than devastating incursions into the territories of the enemy, wherein the Saxons had ever committed the first aggression, and fled before they could be strongly opposed. On the other hand, the Francs ravaged in retaliation, and retired as soon as submission and promises of future peace had been wrung from the enemy. Previous to the accession of

Charlemagne, means of retribution, but not of coercion, had been employed; but he, finding that no reliance was to be placed on empty vows, had acted on a different principle; and at the termination of each campaign, had taken new measures to repress the Saxons, by building fortresses beyond his own border, by which precaution, though as yet he pretended to no dominion over them, he learned the first movements which preceded an incursion upon his territory, and broke the force of the torrent at its source. In return for continual aggression and violated promises, he held out frequent menaces of total and permanent subjection, on the next breach of tranquility; and in his last expedition, after having brought his enemies to his feet, he had commenced the erection of a fortified town within their limits. Far from showing any indignation at this proceeding, the Saxons—who, with the common craft of barbarians, were always profuse to meanness in their acts of submission when conquered—had not only given hostages, but, as before mentioned, had demanded baptism, which they knew would be pleasing to the victor.

Not so, however, Witikind, who, unconscious of any right but liberty, while he robbed and destroyed the property of his neighbors, viewed with insurmountable wrath the least infringement of his own. The measures of defence which Charlemagne was in a manner compelled to take, he looked upon as an ambitious aggression upon the liberties of the Saxons; and no sooner had the winter of AD 777 placed a barrier between his nation and the monarch of the Francs, than he stimulated his countrymen once more to violate their lately renewed engagements.

Before any active efforts could be made, the precursory movements of the Saxons were communicated to Charlemagne, and, with his usual promptitude, he marched directly to the point of danger. The plans of Witikind being thus disconcerted by the rapid energy of the French king, that chief, finding himself without any force to oppose the immense army suddenly led against him, fled into Denmark to seek aid and support from Sigifrid, the Danish monarch then reigning.

In the meantime, the whole Saxon population thronged to Charlemagne, and, protesting their innocence of the plots of Witikind, as well as their perfect submission, demanded eagerly the maintenance of peace. Charlemagne, though probably not deceived by the declaration, once more agreed to withdraw his army, but, at the same time, only did so upon the express condition, that if the Saxons again violated their faith, they should lose both their country and their liberty. I use the words of Eginhard, and shall not attempt to investigate far whether this was a condition which a conqueror had a right to demand, or which was any way obligatory upon the conquered. It must, indeed, be considered more as a threat than a condition; and it appears to me that no measure was unjustifiable that might, in the failure of all other means, procure peace for France from a nation which, for two hundred years, had kept her frontier provinces in a state of constant strife and desolation.

By this time—although, in those days, the wings of Fame were slow and feeble—the renown of the monarch of the Francs had penetrated to all the quarters of the earth; and, even while repressing the turbulent Saxons in the north, the deputies of another nation, and of a different religion, came from the very opposite extreme of Europe to solicit succor and protection.

These were a body of Saracens from Spain and a few words must be said in explanation of the state of the country from which they were sent, as, on their representations, a new war and new conquests were undertaken and completed.

BOOK V.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE SPANISH WAR, TO THE INCORPORATION OF SAXONY WITH THE FRENCH DOMINIONS. FROM 777 TO 780.

A twofold traitor to his religion and his country had, about the year 710, courted the Arabs from Africa into Spain. Whether revenge or ambition was the motive, is a question of little import here; it is sufficient that Count Julian betrayed his country and his God. A divided people and a feeble king on the one hand, and a daring commander with a veteran host on the other, decided the fate of the Gothic throne, and, by the close of the year 714, Spain, with the exception of a few remote districts, was subdued by the Arabs, from the columns of Hercules to the chain of the Pyrenees. The government of the conquered country was entrusted to the lieutenants of the caliphs; and the spirit of war had then so strong an influence on the Arab race, that few of the Spanish governors contented themselves, without adding something to that which their predecessors had acquired.

The Pyrenees were thus soon passed; and, a short time before the close of the Merovingian dynasty in France, a considerable portion of the southern districts of that country was under the Saracen dominion. The celebrated Abdurrahman, seeking to extend his power still farther, fell before the arm of Charles Martel, and the Saracens, retiring from France, contented themselves with their territories in Spain.

For the space of fifty years, the Iberian peninsula remained dependent upon the throne of the caliphs; but domestic dissensions soon began to diminish the vigor of the race of Mahomet. A powerful faction sprang up against the children of Omar, who had for so long possessed the great Oriental throne. Two bloody battles decided the fate of the caliphate; and a cruel system of extermination destroyed the major part of the unfortunate Omaides.

While the house of Abbas, however,—the greatest which ever swayed the scepter of the East,—established itself firmly in the heart of the Mahommedan world, one of the rival race of Omar escaped to Spain, where the party of his family was predominant, and about the same period at which the Merovingian dynasty ended in France, and Pepin assumed the throne of that country, Spain separated from the dominion of the caliphs, and placed herself under a monarch of her own. This state of independence, of course, was not established without a contest; but the officer sent against Abdurrahman, now caliph of Cordova, was defeated and slain, and the power of the new sovereign was confirmed by victory. The subjects over whom he was called to reign, were divided between Jews, Christians, and Mahommedans of the two sects of Abbas and Omar. Clemency and protection were, in general, shown to the Christians, and favor and regard to the Jews; but, according to the common course of human feeling, the very suspicion of being one of the party of Abbassides—the heretical usurpers of the caliphate—was enough to call down every species of severity and intolerance.

Besides those Christians who had submitted to the Arab yoke, and lived contented under the dominion of their conquerors, a portion of the ancient Gothic race still remained unsubdued in the heart of the Asturias, strong in bold, free, and independent hearts, but weak in number and in means. Such were the inhabitants of Spain, when, in the heart of Saxony, the monarch of the Francs was visited by one of the Saracen Emirs of Aragon, praying for protection and redress, and offering to hold the whole of his territories from Charlemagne, rather than from the crown of Cordova.

In all revolutions, such as those which had lately taken place in Spain, the natural tendency of private ambition is to divide the state, rather than to consolidate it. Selfishness, joined with talent, has, in all political convulsions, the greatest room for exertion; and each man who possesses the power, the activity, and the courage to struggle, aims at individual independence, if not at general dominion. In many instances this took place in Spain; and we find a multitude of petty princes rendering themselves wholly or partially free from the domination of the monarchs of Cordova. Whether this desire was the motive of Ibn al Arabi, as the Saracen who visited Charlemagne is termed by the annalists, or whether he was one of the hated Abbassides, whom oppression had driven to revolt, does not appear. His vengeance or his ambition, however, took larger views than that of his fellows, when it led him a thousand miles across a strange and Christian country, to seek support from the conquering monarch of the Francs. To that monarch he held out a prospect of easy victory, extended dominion, and vast advantage; and his petition met with immediate attention.

Charlemagne undertook to invade Spain; and it must be here remarked, that this was the first war in which that great warrior ever engaged, with the sole view to conquest. The war of Aquitaine had been the act of a sovereign to correct and repress a revolted vassal,—that of Saxony, to defend his

frontier, and punish the aggressors on his land,—the invasion of Italy, to fulfill the duties of an office he had long before accepted, and to deliver and protect a devoted friend. But the Saracens had committed no new infringement of the French territory,—no old and dear ally was to be defended by his expedition,—and, making every allowance on the score of Christian zeal, and the desire of protecting the oppressed Goths of Spain, this remains still the most unjustifiable war in which Charlemagne was ever engaged. But the desire for conquest and aggrandizement, like every other passion of human nature—and even more than any other—increases by habit and indulgence. Charlemagne had been educated to war, and pampered by victory; yet, through his life, his moderation is much more conspicuous than his excess.

In order that no long march might fatigue his troops and delay his progress, Charlemagne passed the winter in Aquitaine, collecting all his forces on the frontier he meant to violate. In the spring, as soon as the defiles of the Pyrenees were passable, he led one large division of his army through the mountains into Spain, and advanced rapidly upon Saragossa. At the same time, a considerable force, raised in Burgundy, Austrasia, and even Lombardy, passed the mountains of Roussillon, and made themselves masters of Catalonia. Their progress and success were rapid and extraordinary; and, after taking possession of Barcelona, Huesca, Gerona, and other neighboring towns, they advanced across the country, and joined their monarch at Saragossa.

Though the whole of that part of the country is highly defensible—though the Arabs of that day possessed more military skill and warlike energy than perhaps any European nation—and though the cities of Aragon and Catalonia were both strongly garrisoned and fortified, yet little or no resistance was offered by any place except Pampeluna. From these circumstances, and from a number of active military operations, which were almost immediately after undertaken by the Goths of the Asturias, it is more than probable that the Mahommedan monarch, embarrassed with doubtful friends and internal enemies, wore unprepared with any sufficient means to oppose the formidable army of the invaders. Whether the resistance of Pampeluna itself was at all vigorous, is not distinctly stated in any contemporary account; but it may be inferred that the struggle was severe, from the marks of triumph and precaution which followed its fall. A medal was struck, to commemorate the capture of the city; and the walls Mere razed to the ground, to guard against the consequences of future revolt.

The rest of Navarre and Aragon was soon reduced to submission. Ibn al Arabi and his companions were restored to their dominions, whatever those dominions were, and, giving hostages and tribute, rendered themselves in some degree vassals of the crown of France. The pledges, either offered by Abu Taurus, one of the Saracen Emirs, or exacted from him, were his brother and his son; and it is but reasonable to suppose, that the degree of protection granted, was in proportion to such a high price as the exile of two near and dear relations.

Garrisons were now placed in particular cities, to secure the country which had been won; every measure of precaution and defence was adopted; and what has been called "the Spanish March", comprising a broad band of country, extending along the southern foot of the Pyrenees, was added to the dominion of Charlemagne.

It is not easy to say, whether the acquisition and preservation of this territory by the Frankish monarch was designed from the first by cautious policy, or merely originated in the spirit of conquest. In a political point of view, however, it was infinitely well judged. The passages of the Pyrenees, which had ever been a refuge for the turbulent and treacherous Gascons, were thus secured. A barrier was placed between them and their old allies, the Saracens of Spain. The keys of the southern frontier of France, which had been heretofore in the hands of the Arabs, were thenceforth entrusted to Charlemagne's own subjects; and while the complete and final reduction of the whole of Aquitaine to law and submission, was ultimately ensured, his Pyrenean provinces, from the Gulf of Lyons to the Bay of Biscay, were secured from invasion.

Although the conquest of the Spanish March had been easy and nearly unopposed, Charlemagne was not suffered ultimately to fix his power in so important a district without a struggle. The time he was forced to employ in perfecting the various arrangements for incorporating the acquired territory with the rest of France, and in providing for its government, both civil and ecclesiastical, gave room for preparation on the part of the Saracens. A large army was collected, and poured down into Aragon. The Francs were attacked near Saragossa, but after a battle of several hours, in which many thousands of the Mahommedans were slain, victory declared in favor of the French monarch; and his new dominions in Spain were secured. After this success, Charlemagne proceeded calmly to complete that regular organization in the state of the province, which he always endeavored to introduce into every country he conquered. But before long, the news from his northern frontier became of such a nature as to call him back from the scene before him, with all the rapidity which never failed to attend his movements on every occasion of importance.

Dangers of the most pressing kind were represented as threatening the provinces on the Rhine; and the monarch's march was immediately directed towards the Pyrenees. Dividing his forces into two bodies, he advanced in person, at the head of the first division, and, for the sake of greater speed in his own progress, left all the baggage with the rear guard, which was strong in men, and commanded by some of the most renowned chieftains of his army. The names of Eggiard and Anselm have come down to us, together with that of Rolando, or Orlando, the nephew of Charlemagne, as the commanders of the second division, which had to suffer much from unforeseen hostility.

It must be remembered that Lupo Duke of Gascony, on delivering up his rebellious uncle Hunald, had been suffered to retain his duchy, which, from its position among the Pyrenean mountains, fully as much as its tenure, was but slightly dependent upon the crown of France. Lupo was ambitious as well as treacherous, and was filled with the same turbulent and rebellious spirit which had animated his ancestors. The sovereignty of the French monarch was alone tolerable so long as it was distant and unexercised; and tranquility was only to be expected while powerful armies enforced obedience, or suspended authority left the shadow of independence. To a man of such a character the acquisition of a large territory on the southern side of the mountains by Charlemagne was anything but agreeable. He saw himself surrounded on all sides by the dominions of a monarch against whom he eagerly sought an opportunity of revolt; and, with the mad miscalculation of his own powers which had ruined every other member of his family, he prepared to offer an outrage to his sovereign which could only be productive of temporary advantage to himself, and could never be forgiven by the king. It is probable that he had only suffered Charlemagne to enter Spain without molestation because he had no power of opposing him. But when he found that the ravages of the Saxons called the monarch imperatively to the north, and that the rear-guard of his army, loaded with baggage and treasure, was separated from the rest of the troops, he resolved upon an undertaking for which punishment seemed remote, and in which success was probable, and rapine sure.

The Pyrenees, extending in a continuous line from the Bay of Biscay to the borders of the Mediterranean, rise in a long straight ridge, the superior points of which are but a few yards lower than the summit of Mont Blanc. In the highest part of the chain there are occasional apertures; and from the main body of the mountains long masses of inferior hills are projected into the plain country on either side, decreasing in height as they proceed, till they become imperceptibly blended with the level ground around. Between these steep natural buttresses, narrow valleys, sometimes spreading out into basins, sometimes straitened into defiles of a few yards in width, wind on towards the only passes from one country to another. The roads, skirting along the bases of the hills—which, to the present day, are frequently involved in immense and trackless woods—have always beneath them a mountain torrent, above which they are raised, as on a terrace, upon the top of high and rugged precipices. A thousand difficulties beset the way on every side, and nature has surrounded the path with every means of ambush and concealment.

Mounted on heavy horses, and loaded with a complete armor of iron, the soldiers of Charlemagne returned from their victorious expedition into Spain, and entered the gorges of the Pyrenees, without ever dreaming that an enemy beset their footsteps.

The monarch himself, with the first division of his host, was suffered to pass unmolested; but when the second body of the Francs, following leisurely at a considerable distance, had entered the wild and narrow valley called the Roscida Vallis (now Roncesvalles), the woods and mountains around them suddenly bristled into life, and they were attacked on all sides by the perfidious Gascons, whose light arms, distant arrows, and knowledge of the country, gave them every advantage over their opponents.

In tumult and confusion, the Francs were driven down into the bottom of the pass, embarrassed both by their arms and baggage. The Gascons pressed them on every point, and slaughtered them like a herd of deer, singling them out with their arrows from above, and rolling down the rocks upon their heads. Never wanting in courage, the Francs fought to the last man, and died unconquered. Rolando and his companions, after a thousand deeds of valor, were slain with the rest; and the Gascons, satiated with carnage, and rich in plunder, dispersed amongst the mountains, leaving Charlemagne to seek for immediate vengeance in vain.

The battle must have been fierce and long, and the struggle great, though unequal; for, during the lapse of many centuries, tradition has hung about the spot, and the memory of Rolando and his companions is consecrated in a thousand shapes throughout the country. Part of his armor has there given name to a flower; the stroke of his sword is shown upon the mountains; the tales and superstitions of the district are replete with his exploits and with his fame; and even had not Ariosto, on the slight basis which history affords, raised up the splendid structure of an immortal poem, and

dedicated it to the name of Rolando, that name would still have been repeated through all the valleys of the Pyrenees, and ornamented with all the fictions of a thousand years.

The news of this disaster soon reached Charlemagne, and he immediately paused on his march, to seek vengeance for the death of his followers. But the Gascons had dispersed amidst the impenetrable fastnesses of their mountains; no present enemy was to be found; the Saxons were ravaging the territories of France; and the monarch, with the joy of all his Spanish triumphs clouded, was obliged to continue his journey towards the north. Other circumstances, however, clearly establish that the perfidious Duke of the Gascons was afterwards taken, and forfeited his life as a punishment for his treason, although it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain at what precise period this retribution was accomplished.

It was some consolation to the French monarch to find, that the evil consequences which this signal defeat of a part of his army might have produced, did not follow. Notwithstanding the death of so great a number of their conquerors, the Saracen inhabitants of Navarre and Catalonia did not attempt to throw off the yoke which had been imposed upon them. The Spanish March remained for the time in tranquility, and Charlemagne pursued his journey towards the north.

The events which called him from the scene of his late conquests, were such as admitted no unnecessary delay. His absence during the winter in Aquitaine, and his march into Spain, had removed from the Saxons, the terror of his immediate neighborhood, and had given both time for preparation, and opportunity of revolt. Such an occasion was not lost by a nation whose habit was to wander, whose delight was war, and whose occupation was pillage. Witikind returned from Denmark almost immediately after Charlemagne's departure; and soon, by his eloquence, roused the whole mass of his countrymen to throw off the indifference with which they had beheld the precautions taken by the monarch against their future irruptions. The visit of the Saxon chief to the savage courts of the north, had not tended at all to civilize his mind, or to open his eyes to the general principles of equity. Still forgetting the aggressions his own nation had committed, to him the forts built by the French king appeared as fetters on the Saxon people. The act of repelling or chastising their irruptions, he viewed as ambitious encroachment, or triumphant insult; and, animated himself by a wild spirit of liberty and a desire of vengeance, he found his purpose seconded amongst his countrymen by the predatory habits of ages, and the warlike character of barbarism.

In a short time the whole of the Westphalians were in arms; and, while Charlemagne was still in Spain, they were ravaging all the German provinces of France, even to the very banks of the Rhine. Often as they had invaded the Frankish territory, and little as they were accustomed to show mercy, their present irruption left all their former ones far behind in cruelty and depredation. Nothing was spared,—neither age, nor sex, nor condition. The child was murdered at the breast, the priest at the altar, the peasant by his hearth. Fire and death accompanied them on their way, and ruin and desolation spread out behind their footsteps. Finding that they could not pass the Rhine in safety, they ravaged the whole territory from Cologne to Coblenz. The monks fled from their monasteries, the citizens quitted the towns; nothing resisted their approach, nothing survived their passage; and all was confusion and destruction, rapine, massacre, and flame.

Such were the tidings that every day met the ear of Charlemagne, as he advanced from the south of France towards the north; and, finding that he could not lead forward his heavier forces with all the celerity that the occasion instantly demanded, he dispatched his lighter troops from Auxerre, with orders to make all speed, and, if possible, to overtake the Saxons on the territory of France, that their aggression might be punished where it had been committed. The troops chosen for this purpose, were all either of the eastern tribes of Francs or of the German tributaries, whose lands and dwelling-places were the first on every occasion to fall a prey to the Saxon invasions. Every personal inducement to speed, therefore, was added to the injunction of the monarch; but ere their arrival, the enemy, sated with blood and gorged with plunder, were once more returning to their native country.

Thus the Frankish army, notwithstanding the rapidity with which it always moved, did not succeed in coming up with the retreating Saxons, till they had traversed the greater part of Hesse; but at the moment the plunderers were crossing the river Adern, they found themselves assailed by the forces of Charlemagne. The very act of pursuing gave impetus to the Francs; while national hatred, and individual revenge, added the energy of passion to the vigor of constitutional courage. At the same time, the Saxons were already retreating, an act which too often degenerates into flight. They had accomplished their object; were loaded with spoil; the sloth of satiety hung upon their actions; their own country was before their steps, and escape was too near for resistance to be vigorous.

Thus, while they were embarrassed with the passage of the river, the Frankish cohorts poured in upon them. A feeble resistance but added to the slaughter; and very few survived to carry to their own country the tidings of their successful irruption, their retreat, and their defeat.

To fight and conquer in two far separated countries, within the space of a few months, was common to the Francs under the command of Charlemagne; but a long campaign in Spain, and a march of nearly twelve hundred miles, had so far exhausted the year, that no farther movement could be made against the Saxons till the return of spring.

The other events which may be traced to this year, now call our attention to the civil government of Charlemagne, —an object, when considered in reference to the age in which he lived, far more interesting and extraordinary than all his great military operations. During the active scenes in which he had been lately engaged—the continual movement and incessant occupation in which he had existed—no part of his vast territories was neglected; and his eyes were alternately turned with careful attention to Italy, to Germany, and to France.

Ascending the throne in a barbarous period, when internal policy was perfectly in its infancy, and the whole mechanism of society rude and irregular, Charlemagne could not be expected to change, by the simple power of his own mind, the constitution of his whole race, rekindle in an instant the extinguished light of past ages, or hurry into maturity the whole fruits of coming years. The performance of such a task was not within the grasp of human faculties; but what he did do, when joined with the circumstances in which he was placed—surrounded on every side by darkness, superstition, and prejudices, and having to vanquish them all—shows him as great a conqueror in the moral as in the physical world; and raises him to the highest pitch of human grandeur, by evincing that he not only overcame the barbarians of his time, but also overcame the barbarism itself.

Whatever were the warlike undertakings in which the monarch was engaged, and whatever were the immense demands upon his time and attention, no evil to his fellow creatures which was brought before him, ever passed without notice and correction,— no effort to purify and improve the state of society was forgotten. We find instances to justify this assertion in every part of his reign; but at the present period, a great occasion for exertion and remonstrance presented itself, and was not neglected, although that remonstrance was necessarily directed against an authority for which he strove to inculcate respect, and towards which he always set the example of due reverence.

While in the midst of his preparations for the war in Spain, information was by some means conveyed to him, that the odious traffic in slaves was permitted in Rome; and not a few complaints reached him, about the same time, concerning the irregularities of the Italian clergy. To both these points his attention was immediately directed, and a strong remonstrance was addressed by him to Pope Adrian, pressing the reformation of the abuses which were said for exist. Adrian immediately replied, and, in the most positive terms, assured Charlemagne that no such trade in slaves was carried on between the Romans and the Saracens, as had been asserted. The Lombards, he said, it was true, were in the custom of selling slaves by means of the Greeks who frequented their ports,—a custom which he had in vain attempted to prevent, The lives, also, of the priests under his own inspection he boldly defended, and declared that their accuser had calumniated them basely by the charge he had brought against them.

Whether this explanation proved satisfactory to the monarch or not, does not appear; but the terms of Charlemagne's letter sufficiently evince, that he still considered Rome as under his sovereign dominion; and the reply of Pope Adrian equally proves his submission to the jurisdiction of the Patrician. Various other matters of civil polity occupied the attention of the monarch of the Francs about this time and he had an opportunity of displaying his clemency and moderation in a manner which changed a doubtful vassal into a firm and attached friend. Not long after the return of Charlemagne from Spain, Hildebrand, Duke of Spoleto, who had been one of the first in the conspiracy of the Duke of Friuli, but who had remained at once unpunished and unpardoned, trusting to the character of the sovereign, visited his court in France, and, with magnificent presents, renewed the homage he had cast off. His rebellion, which had never proceeded to open warfare, was immediately forgotten in this voluntary act of confidence. His gifts were accepted, but returned by others in full proportion and, after being entertained with splendor at the court of the monarch, he was dismissed to his own land a grateful and faithful subject.

Before joining the forces, which were in active preparation, for renewing the war against the Saxons, Charlemagne also issued a new capitulary, containing a variety of important laws on various subjects, some regulating the proceedings of the church, some affecting the duties of the various judges, and some regarding the people in general. The absence of all classification is the great want observable in these laws, and is the strongest symptom of the barbarism of the age. Various efforts, however, to overcome that barbarism are likewise to be noticed. Though considerable power is still entrusted to the clergy, several rules are laid down, for the purpose of enforcing regularity in their lives. The privilege of screening offenders found worthy of death, which has been so often claimed by

the church, is formally rejected by the voice of the monarch; while a law against the exportation of arms, shows how much Charlemagne was obliged to look upon his nation as a military people.

As soon as the season permitted, Charles was once more at the head of his army; and, entering Saxony, he passed by the spot where the idol Irminsul had once stood, but which was now covered by a growing town, and advancing towards the Lippe, prepared to take signal vengeance of his incorrigible enemies. At first the Saxons displayed a strong disposition to trust to the force of arms, rather than once more appeal to the clemency they had so often abused; and at a place called Bucholtz, the situation of which is now unknown, their army was drawn up, to oppose the farther progress of the French monarch. The sight of the multitude of their enemies, however, shook their courage as the battle was about to close, and while only a few had fallen on either side, the Saxons fled precipitately, leaving the path open to Charlemagne. This flight was but a prelude to submission; and, proceeding rapidly through the country, the French sovereign, according to his custom, abandoned his more hostile intentions on the prayers and promises of his enemies. More unconditional submission, however, was demanded of the Saxons after their last aggression, and Charlemagne began to treat them as a conquered people, after having in vain attempted to put a stop to their irruptions while they retained their independence. About this time, the general division of the whole country into bishoprics, abbacies, and presbyteries, took place. Such of the clergy of France as zeal or ambition prompted to accept the dangerous trust, were appointed to the new cures thus created; and Charlemagne only left the country to return the next year and complete the arrangements which he had begun for incorporating Saxony with the Frankish monarchy.

The greater part of the annals of that day were composed by monks and ministers of the church, who, of course, attempted to magnify the affection of the Frankish king towards the body of which they were members, with the purpose of holding out both an example and an incitement to others. Nevertheless, it is evident, that Charlemagne was inspired by a sincere love for the Christian religion, and an eager wish to spread its pacific doctrines amidst his barbarous and intractable neighbors. Nor was it, as has been often falsely said, by the sword that he sought to convert. With the sword he overcame his enemies, and punished the pertinacious assailants who had so often ravaged his dominions and slaughtered his subjects. But the very desire of sparing the sword, made him the more eager in the propagation of that religion, which he hoped would remove the causes that compelled its use; and the work of conversion he entrusted, not to soldiers, but to the ministers of the Gospel. If he did, indeed, mingle on any occasion the means of worldly policy with the purer methods of religious persuasion, it was in the shape of gifts, presents, and menaces,—inducements more within the comprehension of the barbarians whom he sought to civilize, than any that could be afforded by reason and argumentation.

Though personally successful to a great degree, and seeing his power and reputation increasing in every manner, Charlemagne was visited in his dominions by many of those calamities which, from time to time, in the course of nature, affect whole countries and nations. Tremendous earthquakes shook his Lombard kingdom, during the year of which I speak, cast down many of the finest buildings, and spread death and ruin through the land. A pestilence devastated the country and the cities and a severe scarcity added to the horrors of the time. Terror and dismay reigned through the whole of France; and prayers and alms were the resources of the king and the peasant, the warrior and the churchman, in order to turn away the Almighty wrath, and obtain mercy from on high.

Thus passed the winter of the year 779-80, and early in the spring he returned to Saxony, and completed the subjection of the country. He had warned the Saxons, in 777, that in case of any new outrage, he would exercise the full power which he possessed, and deprive them of their independence; and he was now proceeding in the execution of that threat. It is to be remarked, however, that the total subjugation of Saxony, as far as we can discover from the contemporary writers, was by no means (as has been since represented) a blow struck at once, in the pride of victory, and the spirit of aggrandizement, conceived long before, and pursued through a series of unrelenting wars. On the contrary, it was slow and gradual, as Charlemagne found himself compelled to take progressive measures against his savage neighbors,— measures suggested by the great principle of self-defence, and executed with calm and clement reluctance.

I may be permitted to collect into one view the facts connected with this warfare, as they are spread through the preceding pages, when it will be found, that had he been so inclined, a thousand opportunities of taking possession of Saxony presented themselves, which he never showed any inclination to use, farther than his own security rendered necessary. In his first campaign against the Saxons, though he destroyed the idols that he found on his march, he granted peace to the nation as soon as they demanded it, merely taking twelve hostages, and raising a fort at Eresburg, to guard against their future incursions. On their next irruption, he left another body of French troops at Sigisburg, and required a more comprehensive oath before he withdrew his forces. During this time he

had never desisted from his endeavor to civilize the Saxons, by sending missionaries among them; and his desire of converting them to Christianity appeared so evident, as to become a means of fraud in the hands of the barbarians themselves. The next cause of warfare was the Saxon attack upon the garrisons he had placed in the two castles; and being once more conquered, the assailants again supplicated peace, and many, to obtain it, demanded to be baptized. Charlemagne added a third fortress to those he had before constructed, and once more retired from the country. Finding that he had scarcely passed the frontier when his enemies actively prepared to attack him again, the monarch of the Francs frustrated all their schemes, by marching into the heart of the land before their plans were mature. Witikind, the instigator of the war, fled; and the nation completely submitted, generally seeking baptism as the strongest proof of their pacific intentions. Charlemagne trusted them once more; but he gave them full warning, that if they again violated the treaties they had entered into with him, he would not only inflict the temporary chastisement of a hostile invasion, but would use the right of conquest, which he had hitherto disregarded, and deprive them of that independence which they so constantly abused to his detriment. No sooner had he entered Spain, than the treacherous people, who crouched to the earth at his presence, took instant advantage of his absence, to destroy his provinces and massacre his subjects. The indignant monarch returned, and, marching through Saxony as a victor, he now annexed that country to his former dominions as a conquered province.

The next year he advanced at once to the junction of the Elbe and the Oder; and, having spent some time in taking precautionary measures against any invasion by the neighboring nations of the north, he proceeded to enact a variety of laws for the regulation of the barbarous people he had subdued; which laws have been made the subject of extravagant praise for a few points of superior excellence, and of ridiculous censure for severity, susceptible of great extenuation, if not justification. The same want of classification is observable in their construction, which affects most of the capitularies of the age; and a tinge of barbarism spreads over them all; but I doubt much, whether barbarous laws are not necessary to a barbarous nation; and whether Charlemagne, believing such to be the case, did not, like the great Greek legislator, frame for the people he had conquered, not the best laws which the mind of man could devise, but the best which could be adapted to the circumstances of the country. Charlemagne had found by long and painful experience, that the only principle which could restrain the Saxons was fear and, accordingly, the code which he addresses to them is that of terror. Death is awarded for a thousand crimes, but especially for offering human sacrifices, and for refusing, or abandoning, or insulting the Christian religion.

The Saxons during the last two or three campaigns had almost universally received baptism; but in many instances, they returned to the most hateful rites of idolatry, which was always the sure precursor of outrage and irruption. Both from political and religious motives, it had become the great object of the French monarch to force this the most obdurate race of pagans in Europe, to listen to the voice of Christian teachers, which nothing but the fear of death could induce them to do: and for that purpose he used the terror of extreme punishment, as a means of enforcing attention to the doctrines of peace. But, at the same time, there cannot be a doubt, that he had no intention the severity of the law should have effect; for it was enacted by the self-same code, that the unbaptized who received baptism, and the relapsed who returned and underwent a religious penance, escaped the infliction of the punishment. By this means he forced the Saxons to hear, at least, the doctrines of the Christian church, and to become accustomed to its forms,—the first great step, without which conversion could never be obtained. By this means, also, he at once put a stop to the human sacrifices which continually disgraced the land; and he offered to all the power of escaping punishment, and gaining security.

It is true, as a general principle, that laws should never he enacted unless they are intended to be enforced; but this was an individual instance, where the object was but temporary. If he could compel the Saxons to hear the truths, and habituate them to the influence, of the Christian faith, Charlemagne never for a moment doubted that their sincere conversion must follow. That conversion once obtained, and the laws were not cruel, for they were ineffectual. In the meantime, however, their operation would be great before the Saxons discovered that they were not rigidly enforced. At all events, it is evident that Charlemagne believed that his object would be gained by terror, long ere the rude pagans, for whom he legislated, perceived that punishment was remote. For this great purpose, he framed the laws to which I refer, and made use of the only influence which he knew to be strong with the Saxons,—the influence of fear; while, at the same time, the natural benevolence of his own heart induced him to guard severity by mercy j and to add a law, which, while it offered the means of escape from the harshness of the others, tended to the same object.

Such considerations shield the Saxon code from the bitter censures which have been directed against it by some writers; but, at the same time, the lavish praises which it has received from others are equally inapplicable; for, though it was intended in mercy, and directed with wisdom, it was arbitrary in character, and in principle unjust.

No sooner was the regulation of Saxony completed, than the monarch turned his eves in another direction, and prepared to avert a storm that was approaching from a different quarter. Though constitutionally fond of war, and now habituated to conquest, Charlemagne, in general, took every means to prevent the necessity of having recourse to arms. Sometimes, it is true, he suffered himself to be dazzled with the prospect of brilliant expeditions; and, as in the case of the invasion of Spain, the prayers of others for protection and assistance, by offering a fair excuse to his natural inclination, occasionally overcame the better spirit of generous moderation which taught him to refrain. But wherever the probable war was likely to be one in which, as a sovereign, he was to act against a rebellious vassal,—one, in short, of revolt and punishment,—Charlemagne, if the danger could be foreseen, ever endeavored to stop it in its progress, before folly had been hurried into crime, and while pardon was compatible with justice.

Such views now called him into Italy; and as soon as the state of Saxony appeared finally settled, he took his departure for his Lombard dominions.

BOOK VI.

FROM THE INCORPORATION OF SAXONY, TO THE HOMAGE OF THE DUKE OF BAVARIA.

FROM 780 TO 782.

Although the scepter of Lombardy had been snatched from the hand of Desiderius, and though he himself remained in the ecclesiastical seclusion from which he was never destined to be withdrawn, many members of his family still existed at large, spread over various parts of Europe; and the desire of vengeance, naturally fostered by affection for a fallen relation, and humiliated pride, was only restrained by the terror of the conqueror's arms. Adalgisus, the son of the dethroned monarch, continued to reside at Constantinople; and though, at the time, no efficient aid was granted to him by the imperial court, yet a favorable opportunity only seemed wanting to a renewal of the attempt to recover possession of Italy.

One of the daughters of Desiderius had married Arichis, Duke of Beneventum, and viewed, with unabated and unextinguishable hatred, the dominion of the Francs, in a land which had once been the portion of her family. At the same time, the high qualities and warlike character of her husband, rendered revolt probable, and success not unhopeful.

A second daughter of the dethroned King of Lombardy shared the ducal seat of Tassilo of Bavaria, whom I have before had occasion to mention as a relation and vassal of Charlemagne, and upon whose proud spirit the weight of homage lay an uneasy load, which he endeavored to make light by neglect, while he only waited occasion to throw it off forever.

The mission of Saint Sturmius, in the early part of the French monarch's reign, had effected a reconciliation between the King and his cousin, upon whose head the open violation of his vows to Pepin had brought down the more terrible anger of Charlemagne. After that period, the immense power and the continual activity of his liege lord, had withheld Tassilo from making an attempt, to which triumphant success could alone secure impunity. It would appear, however, that about the present time, instigated by the revengeful spirit of his wife, and by his own proud desire of independent sovereignty, he engaged with Arichis, Duke of Beneventum, and with Adalgisus, their brother-in-law, for the purpose of wresting Italy from the grasp of Charlemagne, and of establishing an armed union sufficient to resist the power of their mighty opponent.

These schemes were carried on in darkness and secrecy, for the conspirators well knew that the watchful eyes of Charlemagne could only be blinded by the most cautious prudence; but, at the same time, long, slow, and careful preparation was necessary, to afford the slightest prospect of success. With hostile purposes laboring at the heart, and great and powerful designs advancing towards consummation, it is very difficult so to guard every action, that some suspicious circumstances will not betray, to an attentive observer, the plans which occupy the breast. Neither Tassilo nor Arichis were capable of such perfect dissimulation, as entirely to cover their schemes from the view of the French monarch. The first continued to absent himself from the court of the sovereign; and the proceedings of the latter, which were more bold and open, were from time to time communicated to Charlemagne by the wakeful attention of Pope Adrian.

At the period of the pestilence referred to in the last book, the Frankish monarch, according to the spirit of the age, had, with sincere faith, vowed a pilgrimage to some of the holy shrines in Italy, the execution of which vow, now concealed the political object he proposed to obtain at the same time. This objet, and the effort which he made to conceal it, were of a very different character from the usual policy of courts. His presence in Italy had become absolutely necessary; but he sought not to march with armies to chastise rebels, while there was a possibility of reclaiming them by milder means; and he determined to use all his own influence, both as a sovereign and relation, and to employ all the growing power of the church of Rome, in order to recall Tassilo of Bavaria to his duty, before he suffered his full knowledge of the incipient rebellion to appear.

This purpose, as well as that of overawing the Duke of Beneventum by his presence, and of guarding the kingdom of Italy from the civil commotions by which it was threatened, acted, beyond doubt, as a strong inducement to lead Charlemagne towards Lombardy. But there were also other motives, which were equally powerful with a monarch, whose native feelings of piety were strong and sincere, and whose devotion, though tempered and elevated by a vast and vigorous understanding, found no course open but through the common superstitions of the day. To offer up his prayers at spots which the church had pronounced holy, and to see his children baptized by the living

representative of the Apostle, were probably amongst the motives, rather than the pretences, of Charlemagne's journey into Italy. Nor did the desire of seeing the royal consecration—which, in his own case, had been practised, to give weight to his right of succession—repeated in the persons of his sons, Louis and Carloman, add slightly to the inducements.

STATE OF ITALY

Leaving Pepin, his natural son, and Charles, the heir of the French throne, at Worms, Charlemagne set off for Pavia, late in the year 780, accompanied by his Queen and the rest of his children. On his arrival in Italy, the monarch found that country in a state of turbulence and agitation, which offed little prospect of any permanent tranquility. The disorganisation which had taken place after the fall of the Roman empire still operated in its consequences. The instability of all institutions, which a countless succession of invasions and subjections had induced, was now followed by a frantic thirst for change, and an impatience of all regularity. The jarring elements of a mixed population, consisting of thousand different tribes and nations, assimilated ill together; and, in society, a chronological gradation of conquerors and vanquished gave a gradual increase of hatred from the Roman to the Frank. The nobles were each waiting in gloomy expectation for some new revolution, which might call them into activity, and give them independence. The people, suffering under all, were careless of whose yoke they bore. The inhabitants of the Tyrol had resisted, and both blinded and cast out the bishop, whom the pope had sent to claim the feoffs which Charlemagne had granted to the see of Rome; Terracin, Naples, and Calabria were more or less attached to the Eastern empire; the Duke of Beneventum was secretly leagued with the enemies of the Franks, the Greeks infested the outskirts of the land; and the Saracens commanded the seas.

Such was the state of the country when Charlemagne arrived in Italy. The loss of their separate existence as a people, was undoubtedly one cause of discontent amongst its mixed population; but the monarch of the Francs had already determined to divide Italy from his hereditary dominions, and to raise it into a distinct kingdom, as the portion of one of his sons. In this determination, it is probable that he was influenced nearly as much by the habits of his nation, and by the prejudices of education, as by the desire of soothing the pride of the Italians, in rendering their country once more a separate state.

When the territory they possessed had been much smaller, the kings of France had been invariably in the custom of allotting it, with capricious irregularity, amongst their children. This had been always practised at the death, and sometimes during the life of the monarch, though, in the latter case, we do not easily discern under what limitations the power so intrusted by the father was exercised by the son. Now that countries and kingdoms had been added, in the short space of twelve years, to the vast dominions he had received from his progenitor, the idea naturally presented itself to the mind of Charlemagne, of apportioning to his children different districts of that immense and increasing empire, which already required energies almost superhuman to rule and consolidate as a whole. The division that he proposed on the present occasion was destined to convey the sovereignty of Italy to his second son, Carloman, while Aquitaine became the portion of Louis, at that time the youngest of his family; and the rest of the monarch’s hereditary dominions was reserved to form a kingdom for the eldest of his legitimate children, Charles. Saxony, at the same time, remained unappropriated, and might be left to provide for those future claims which the sovereign's age, and the fecundity of his wife, rendered likely to arise.

All the children of Charlemagne were still in their youth, and, therefore, the motives of their consecration could only be, in the first place, the solemn ratification of his design, in order to guard against contention at a future period; and, in the next place, the desire of satisfying both the Italians and the people of Aquitaine by the certain prospect of regaining, in a great degree, their territorial independence.

While thus busily employed in endeavoring to render his dominion as easy as possible, even to the prejudices of the people who had fallen under his sway, Charlemagne took every means to guard against external enemies. One of his principal cares in Italy was to secure that kingdom from the attempts of the Greeks; and so formidable was the aspect which his power assumed, that the policy of the court of Constantinople began to change towards him. Various circumstances, however, had occurred in the East to alter entirely the views of the imperial government.

CHANGES IN THE STATE AND POLICY OF GREECE

Leo IV, a monarch feeble in body and in mind, had befriended Adalgisus, the son of the dethroned Lombard, and had loaded him with promises, which he found easy to utter, but laborious to execute. Still, he had undoubtedly designed to serve him; and, at all events, the recent memory of dominion in Italy, did not suffer the Emperor to see the increasing power of Charlemagne in that

country, without jealous, though impotent, hatred. Such feelings had influenced the policy of the empire during the whole reign of Leo, but his death, which occurred in September, AD 780, immediately changed the aspect of the eastern world. By the choice, or with the consent, of his father Constantine, Leo had espoused a beautiful Athenian girl, of the name of Irene,—a name equally famous for talents and for crimes. Charms of person and art of manner, together with much original and much acquired talent, completely ruled a feeble and dying monarch; and Leo, at the gates of the tomb, left to his young and beautiful wife the sole care of his child, Constantine VI, and the government of that vast, but decayed empire, which was all that remained of the world of the Caesars.

Before ambition had time to nourish crime, or opposition could call it into energy, Irene displayed nothing but genius for empire, and powers fitted for command. There were, however, various weaknesses in her character, which sometimes strangely opposed, and sometimes as strangely blended with, her policy. Amongst these weaknesses was superstition; and this principle acted with others in rendering her views, both in regard to Italy and to France, very different from those either of her husband or of his predecessor. The Athenians, her countrymen, had always been amongst the most strenuous supporters of that worship of images, the proscription of which by Leo III and Constantine V had been the cause of the revolt of Italy from the dominion of the East. Irene herself was one of the most devoted adorers of the saintly statues; and, consequently, beheld in the conduct of the Popes who had anathematized their contemners, nothing but a generous indignation and a holy zeal. During the life of her husband, forced to conceal her full sentiments, she had contrived at least to moderate the iconoclastic spirit which Leo IV had derived from his ancestors; and immediately that the reins of government had fallen into her own hands, she showed the most evident intention of restoring the worship of images, and of retaliating their persecutions upon the heads of the iconoclasts. Thus the great cause of separation between the East and the West was removed; and, both powerful and politic, Irene no longer treated the people of Italy as rebellious subjects. She regarded the monarch of the Francs, also, in a very different light from her predecessors; and sought his friendship rather than his enmity, especially while her reign was continually threatened by the factions of her husband's brothers.

Italy, it must be remarked, was not so wholly separated yet from the empire of the East, as to preclude the possibility of a reunion. No new emperor of the West had been chosen: the monarch of the Francs was but Patrician of Rome, an office which had existed under the Emperors; and whether Irene contemplated or not the chance of winning back, by the restoration of image worship, and an alliance with Charlemagne, the territories which the iconoclasts had lost, and which Pepin had maintained in their independence, her conduct was that which alone could do away the violence and folly of an hundred years.

Such was the aspect which the East assumed, shortly after the journey of Charlemagne to Italy; and one of the first acts of Irene's administration, after the death of her husband, was to court the friendship of the French monarch. Early in the spring, Charlemagne quitted Pavia, where he had passed the winter; and proceeded to Rome, in order to confer with the pontiff, on the measures necessary for the purpose of recalling the Duke of Bavaria to his duty. Peace and persuasion were the counsel of the Pope; and peace and persuasion were equally the means desired by Charlemagne. It was, therefore, determined that legates from the Holy See should he sent, together with ambassadors from the monarch, representing mildly, yet forcibly, the folly of rebellion, and the necessity of tranquility and submission; and endeavoring to induce the Bavarian prince to renew, by some voluntary act, the homage which his conduct had rendered doubtful. The persons trusted with this important mission executed it well. Tassilo found his designs discovered, but being unprepared for resistance, and assured of the clemency of the monarch, he yielded at once to the remonstrances of the envoys, and promised to present himself speedily at the court of his cousin; which promise he accomplished before the end of the year; and, on the same occasion, repeated his vows of homage, and gave hostages for his future conduct.

In the meanwhile Carloman, the second son of the French king, was rebaptized by the hands of Pope Adrian; and, in memory of the first great protector of the Holy See, his name was changed from Carloman to Pepin. He was then solemnly consecrated with his brother Louis, the last as King of Aquitaine, the first as King of Italy. Although Charlemagne, in thus creating his son King of Italy, evidently looked upon the whole Peninsula as submitted to his sway, yet the title of the kingdom of Lombardy was not totally abandoned by those whose interest led them to shrink from a recognition of this extended power. We find, indeed, that though in general the historians of Charlemagne henceforth speak alone of the kingdom of Italy, yet the Popes, in their letters to that monarch, address him as King of Lombardy; in which difference of style, perhaps, may be seen a part of that same system of gradual encroachment by which the pontiffs accumulated titles, to be supported by the manufacture of deeds. Charlemagne himself still maintained his sovereignty over the whole of Italy, with the exception of the

small part which adhered to the Greeks. He transferred that sovereignty to his son, who ruled it also for many years; but the Popes, determined step by step to establish the independence of their dominion, still called the monarch King of Lombardy; and though in actions they yielded implicitly to his sway, in words, which were to descend to after times,they did not acknowledge him as monarch of the whole Italian peninsula. An after pontiff, it is true, invested him with the imperial title in gratitude for personal favors; but the sway of an emperor left the vassal a king, while the yoke of a king pressed the vassal into a very inferior grade so that the position of the Popes, as vassals of the Frankish monarch, was was elevated rather Uian depressed by his advancement to empire.

The creation of a separate Italian kingdom by Charlemagne in favor of his second son placed, of course, a great barrier against the designs of Irene, if the empress did indeed contemplate the reunion of Italy to the crown of the East. But her plans in regard to an alliance with the King of the Franks could not now be changed on that account, for, previous to the partition of Charlemagne's dominions, her ambassadors were already on the way to demand Rotruda, the eldest daughter of that monarch, in marriage for her son Constantine VI.

Constantine and Mamulus, two officers of her household, were charged with a mission, which, as Rotrada had not yet arrived at a marriageable age might produce beneficial effects at the time, and could bring about no conseouences that might not be averted in the course or the years intervening between the treaty and the marriage if a change of circumstances should require a change of policy. The Greek ambassadors reached Rome early in the spring, and found Charlemagne in that city. The proposal of an union between his daughter and the young Emperor of the East, was then formally made to the French monarch, who willingly concluded an alliance which promised peace upon his eastern frontier during the time required for confirming his sway over his new dominions in the north.

Rotruda was in consequence solemnly pledged to the bed of Constantine; and after the interchange of those mutual oaths of amity, which, by their constant infraction, have rendered treaties contemptible, the eunuch Elisaus was left with the young bride, to instruct her in the language and the customs of her future court; and the ambassadors returned to Constantinople to bear the consent of Charlemagne to the Empress Irene.

The visit of the Frankish monarch to Italy had been successful in restoring tranquility to that part of his dominions. The discovery of the schemes of the conspirators, and the return of the Duke of Bavaria to his duty, had effectually disconcerted the plans of Arichis of Beneventum; while the death of the Emperor Leo, and the alliance between the court of Constantinople and the monarch of the Francs, crushed the hopes of Adalgisus, and tore another limb from the conspiracy which had been formed against the power of Charlemagne. At the same time that the treaties now existing with the Isaurian dynasty of the East removed a fertile source of irritation from Italy, the inhabitants of that country were gratified and tranquilized with the idea of becoming a separate kingdom, instead of being joined as a conquered province to a superior country; and a great number of the nobles, won by the confidence and clemency of Charlemagne, forgot the bitterness of subjugation, and attached themselves sincerely to their conqueror.

With these prospects, the monarch of the Francs prepared to return to his native country. On his homeward journey, an event of apparently less importance than those in which he had lately mingled, awaited him at Parma, which event, however, tended, more than any other, by its consequences, to the development of some of the brighter and nobler points of his character. This was the visit of a single private individual from a distant, and then unimportant island, whose previous history, and state at the time, must be considered, in order to comprehend how Charlemagne could derive great benefit, and his best schemes receive accomplishment, from his connection with an English priest.

STATE OF GREAT BRITAIN

In the decline of the Roman empire, the necessities of the state had demanded imperatively the concentration of all her small remains of power; and the legions which had gone forth to acquire or maintain sovereignty on the distant borders of her immense dominion, were one by one recalled, to defend the hearths of Rome itself. Amongst the provinces conquered and abandoned, was Britain; and whether, after Constantine had usurped the purple, and withdrawn his troops from the British shores to support his usurpation, the Britons themselves at once threw off the Roman yoke for ever—or whether Victorinus again ruled the country for the Emperor,—it is evident, that early in the fifth century, these islands were left to the government of the inhabitants themselves, a wild, unskilful race, who added to the rudeness of a barbarous, the vices of a conquered, people. A period of darkness and bloodshed succeeded; and a thousand savage kings employed the arms which the Romans had left them, in murdering each other.

Scarcely forty years after the departure of the Romans had elapsed, when the Saxon savages of the north, who had begun already to infest the shores of France, first landed in England. Too few to effect a conquest, the soldiers of Hengist and Horsa, who commanded the three vessels which brought them thither, readily engaged with their chiefs in the service of some of the British kings, and were employed in repelling the invasions of the Irish and the Picts. Fresh reinforcements were demanded and obtained from Saxony; and tired of being the defenders of the Britons, the Saxons soon found a pretext for becoming their enemies. Partly by alliance, and partly by aggression, Hengist established himself as an independent sovereign in Kent; and the Saxon dominion began to extend itself in England.

The successful expedition of a small body of their countrymen, soon brought fresh swarms of Saxons to the British shore. Ella and Cerdic followed with more extensive armies than their predecessors; and, after deluging the land with blood, obtained possession of a great part of the country. A number of British kings struggled bravely against the invasion; and Arthur, a chief of sufficient importance and success to have his actions immortalized in fable and doubted by history, beyond all question greatly retarded the progress of the Saxons by his valor, though he facilitated it by his barbarous contentions with his own countrymen.

A multitude of obscure battles, uncertain in their event, and the long and severe struggle of a divided and decreasing nation, against a continual influx of invaders, ended in the establishment of eight distinct kingdoms, of which Mercia, extending in a broad band from the Humber to the Severn, was the last in date, but one of the first in importance. The Britons, confined to Wales and a part of Cornwall, retained their language and their customs; while the Saxons, acquiring the taste for territorial possession, abandoned their predatory excursions, and only exercised their barbarous cupidity, in aggrieving and pillaging each other.

This state of things continued for some years. The natural rudeness of the inhabitants of Britain augmenting by a constant existence of strife, till about the year 596, Pope Gregory the Great was instigated, by the sight of some English slaves at Rome, to conceive and attempt the conversion of the Pagan islanders. The celebrated Augustin was sent with a band of missionaries, to effect this noble purpose. The marriage of Ethelbert, King of Kent, to a Christian princess, of the Merovingian race, favored the object of the messengers of Christianity. They were received, were suffered to teach, obtained converts; and the first principles of civilization were given to the barbarous conquerors of England.

At the same time that Christianity was introduced into Britain, a slight tincture of literature was also afforded; and the first Saxon compositions on record, are attributed to the period of the conversion of Kent. The kingdom of Northumbria was brought over to the faith with more difficulty; but the very cause of that difficulty,—the investigating and intellectual character of the King, Edwin, and perhaps of the whole people,—was also the cause of the rapid progress of religious impressions, and of their permanence, when once adopted. Such literature as the church of Rome possessed, now spread fast in Northumberland; and, at length, in the person of Alfred, called the Wise, a great protector of the milder arts appeared. He had been educated by Wilfrid, one of the most learned priests of the day; and, with a clear and philosophical intellect, appreciated and applied the knowledge he obtained. The love of letters extended amongst his subjects; and the cloisters of Northumberland became the repositories of ancient learning. Security and leisure, the two great foster parents of science, were to be obtained alone in monastic life; and several of the Saxon kings of Northumbria, abandoning the scenes of bloodshed and turbulence which surrounded the throne, found peace and happiness in the studious seclusion of the monastery.

Amongst the people at large, civil wars and disturbances of all kinds greatly retarded the spirit of literature in Northumbria, after the reign of Alfred the Wise; but the same spirit remained concentrating all its powers in the cloister; and while France, under the declining race of her Merovingian kings, was every day losing the remains of Roman learning, the priests of England retained the elements of knowledge, and the love of science.

CHARLEMAGNE VISITED BY ALCUIN

Three greatt epochs of darkness are distinctly marked in the history of France. The first immediately succeeded the conquest of Gaul by the barbarians, when the arts of the Romans received their most severe blow. The second preceded the fall of the Merovingian and the rise of the Carolingiandynasty, when wars and civil contentions had worn away all that barbaric conquest had left. The third followed considerably after the period of which I now write, and took place just before the accession of the Capetian line, when the folly of Charlemagne's descendants, the invasions of the Normans, and the complete anarchy of the times, destroyed all which the great monarch had succeeded in restoring.

The second of these epochs still existed in full force at the accession of Charlemagne himself; and in his grand and general views for the consolidation of his power, his magnificent intellect, and his benevolent heart, immediately led him to conceive the project of raising his empire above the surrounding world, by superior civilization, and of binding all its component parts together by a community of taste, of knowledge, and of cultivation. To obtain his object, however, was difficult, even in the outset; for, where could he seek for people qualified to instruct the ignorant nations over which he was extending his sway? The Italians were now almost as uncivilized as the Francs; and Greece, where literature still lingered, was infectious with vices, and jealous of communicating her better stores. Barbarism spread around the monarch on every side; and, at the first view, it appeared as if it would be necessary, not so much to revive, as to create, a literature for France.

On his return towards his native country, however, after having calmed and regulated his Italian dominions, Charlemagne was visited at Parma by an English priest, named Alcuin, who had come to Rome, charged by the Archbishop of York to receive for him the pall which was occasionally sent from the Apostolic See to various bishoprics, as a symbol of the archiepiscopal dignity. The renown of the monarch had drawn the priest to Parma; but the eloquence and learning of the Saxon had as powerful an effect on the mind of Charlemagne. He now found that the cloisters of England contained men able and willing to co-operate in his great design of civilizing and instructing the nations under his dominion; and Alcuin was accordingly invited at once, to visit France, and to combine with the monarch in framing a plan for reviving the light of past ages, and dispelling the darkness of the present.

Such an occupation was, of all others, that which best suited the talents and inclination of the Saxon priest. Passionately fond of knowledge, though the learning which he himself possessed was tinctured with the sophistical rhetoric of the lower empire, and in a degree obscured by the gloomy superstitions of the Roman church, Alcuin was zealous in his desire to extend his information to others, and ardent in his aspirations for a more polished and humane state of society. Nevertheless, charged as he was at the time with a mission of a totally different character, and subjected by the rule of the church to the will of a superior, he could not at once meet the wishes of the French sovereign, and all that he could promise was, to visit France if he could obtain permission. The desire of so great a monarch, however, was not likely to be rejected by the Archbishop of York; and, after having distinguished the object of his favor by every mark of honor and regard, Charlemagne returned to France, satisfied with having taken the first step towards improving the state of society, and mitigating the rudeness of the age.

After his arrival in his native country, he held a general diet at Worms, at which Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria, having received assurance of personal safety, appeared as a vassal of the French crown. His oaths of fidelity and homage were renewed; and, having been entertained for some time with splendor and hospitality by his sovereign, he gave twelve hostages for his very doubtful faith, and returned to his own territories.

The whole empire now slept in peace; and Charlemagne closed the year without any warlike movement,—an event which occurred but seldom during his long protracted reign.

BOOK VII.

FROM THE SUBMISSION OF THE DUKE OF BAVARIA TO THE BAPTISM OF WITIKIND, AND THE SUPPRESSION OF THE REVOLT OF BRITANNY.

FROM 782 TO 785.

The winter after the monarch's return from Italy, in ad 781, passed by in peace; nor, indeed, had he cause to apprehend war from any other quarter than from Saxony, whose treacherous and versatile inhabitants could never be relied upon, whatever promises they had made of obedience, whatever pledges they had given of tranquility. The monarch of the Francs had taken every measure which could be devised to ensure the permanence of his control,after the last expedition which he had been forced to undertake against them. The construction of fortresses, and the presence of armies, had not been the only methods he had employed. The introduction of the Christian religion was, as I have pointed out before, both an object and a means in the complete subdual of the people; and this he had left no effort unexerted to effect. He caused a number of churches to be built, and sent missionaries and prelates to superintend the religious instruction of the people, while he took care that neither pomp nor splendor should be wanting, to win the cooperating power of imagination, which, amongst a savage nation, is easily gained by that which addresses the external senses. Nor had the endeavor to conciliate, by every means of kindness and confidence, been neglected; and, that the Saxons might feel as little as possible the weight of a foreign domination, he had chosen the Dukes who were to reign over the different provinces t of Saxony from amongst the people themselves

The Saxons had submitted with apparent willingness, had been baptized, and had attended the court and camp of the French monarch with every appearance of satisfaction and contentment. Aware, however, of the uncertain nature of the barbarian character, Charlemagne did not choose to leave a land which had cost him so much labor to reduce to subjection, for any great length of time, without his presence; and in the spring of the year which followed his journey to Italy, he advanced into Saxony, and, encamping at the source of the Lippe, applied himself to establish as firmly as possible the basis of his newly acquired power

During his stay, he was visited by the ambassadors of several distant nations, amongst whom were missives from Sigifrid, King of Denmark, and from the Chagan of the Avars, or inhabitants of Hungaria. Both these monarchs solicited the amity of the Francs and their king; but, at the same time, Sigifrid had on all occasions afforded a refuge to Witikind, the great instigator of the Saxon irruptions, so that Charlemagne had just cause to doubt the sincerity of his friendly expressions. That great monarch, however, seems ever to have disdained to persecute a fugitive enemy. Adalgisus himself remained secure at the court of Irene, whose son was the betrothed husband of the French king's daughter; and, in the present instance, Charlemagne, without noticing the asylum granted to the Saxon chief, received the ambassadors of Sigifrid with the same pacific assurances which they bore from their sovereign.

After dismissing the envoys with honor, and completing his arrangements for the internal government of Saxony, the French monarch returned to France. But scarcely had he quitted Germany when a Slavonian tribe, called Sorabes, inhabiting a district between the Elbe and the Sale, upon the immediate frontiers of Saxony, took advantage of the monarch's absence, the confusion of a lately conquered country, and the invariable indifference, if not hatred, of a subdued people, to pour in upon the Saxons, ravaging also a part of Thuringia, which had long been dependent on France.

The invading force was so small, that the personal presence of Charlemagne did not seem called for, and he despatched Adalgisus, his chamberlain, Geilo, his constable, and Worado, count of his palace, with orders to march the united army of Francs and Saxons, which was probably not far from the spot, to check the progress, and punish the aggression of the Sclavonians.

In the meantime, issuing once more from his retreat in Denmark, Witikind had again appeared amongst the Saxons. The same energy of character, and the same powerful eloquence which he had before displayed, produced the same effect. The Saxons rose in every direction, expelled the ministers of the Christian religion, and, feeling now that the patience of their conqueror must be at length completely exhausted, they prepared for a war of a more fierce and resolute character than any of those they had hitherto sustained against the Francs.

The officers commanding the army, which was proceeding against the Slavonians, had no sooner entered Saxony, than they found the whole country in revolt; and wisely judging that the success of the insurrection in that province was likely to be far more fatal than the petty irruption of the Sorabes, they instantly determined to turn their arms against Witikind and his followers.

Whether the Saxons, who had composed part of their original force, voluntarily quitted them to join the party of the revolt, or whether, judging them unworthy of reliance, the generals left them behind, does not clearly appear; but it is certain, that only the oriental Francs marched towards the spot, where the insurgent Saxons were mustering. The army of the Francs was thus greatly weakened; but, at the same time, Theoderic, a cousin of Charlemagne, holding a provincial command on the banks of the Rhine, collected in haste all the troops of his government, and proceeded with prompt vigour to suppress the rising of the Saxons, before it had reached a still more dangerous height. The information which had caused his movement into Saxony, guided him towards the spot where his presence was necessary; and, marching on with all speed, he soon came up with the forces of Adalgisus and his companions, advancing with the same purpose as his own. The two armies united composed a very formidable host, and hurrying on together, they approached a mountain called Sonnethal, or Sinthal, near the banks of the Weser, on the northern side of which hill Witikind was encamped with the Saxons, whom he had induced to break their vows.

As soon as the news of his position was obtained, it was determined between Theoderic and the commanders of the other army, that a simultaneous attack should be made on both sides of the insurgent's camp. For this purpose, Adalgisus, Geilo, and Worado, were directed to cross the river with their forces, while Theoderic, during the time required for their march round the mountain, constructed an entrenched camp on the southern side, in order to secure a retreat in case of defeat. At an appointed hour the attack was to commence; and the united army of the Francs, with the advantages of discipline, experience, and well concerted operations, would undoubtedly have completely overthrown the crude forces of the Saxons, had not that unhappy spirit of jealousy, which has in all ages ruined so many noble enterprizes, mingled with the counsels of the Frankish chiefs.

Theoderic, the relation and friend of Charlemagne, was already renowned as a general; and the commanders of the other army were fearful that, if they admitted him to share in their attack upon Witikind, the glory of the victory which they felt sure of winning, would be solely attributed to him. Having received a separate command from their sovereign, they were not absolutely obliged to obey the orders of the duke; and, consequently, instead of waiting for the appointed time, they determined immediately after separating from Theoderic, to attack the Saxons at once. They accordingly advanced directly towards the enemy’s camp; and despising an adversary whom they had so often beheld fly from the presence of Charlemagne, they felt confident of conquest, and took no precautions to ensure success.

Witikind had drawn up his army to receive them; and the Saxons had no choice but death or victory. So often had they ravaged the territories of France—been conquered and pardoned so often had they submitted, and again revolted; so often had they bound themselves by treaties and vows, and violated the most solemn and sacred engagements; so often had they abused the confidence, and mocked the religion of their conquerors, that they could hope for no safety but in triumph. They fought with courage, and were led with skill.

In the Frankish army, on the contrary, the misconduct of the leaders was, of course, followed by the misconduct of the troops. They attacked with insolent confidence, and careless confusion. Each spurred on his horse irregularly against the enemy as fast as he could come up; but, instead of finding fugitives to pursue, and plunder to be taken, they met with warriors, resistance, and death. Pouring in upon the centre of the Saxons which had the advantage of the ground, the Francs left the flanks of their army exposed. Witikind saw their mistake, their confusion, and their danger; and immediately caused the wings of the Saxon army to wheel upon his imprudent enemies. The French, disordered, with desperation, but fought in vain. The havoc was tremendous, and the battle of Sinthal was a massacre as well as a defeat. Two of the generals, whose crime and folly had thus exposed the army committed to their guidance, fell with their soldiers. The third, Worado, or Wolrad, fought his way out, and survived; but, besides the generals, four counts, and twenty of the noblest and most distinguished warriors of the Francs, remained dead upon the plain; while a few fugitives, flying over the mountains to the camp of Theoderic, brought to that general the first news of his companions' treachery and punishment.

CHARLEMAGNE’S UNUSUAL SEVERITY

The tidings of the defeat of Sinthal soon traveled into France, and Charlemagne himself, at the head of a large army, immediately passed the Rhine, and advanced, with the speed of lightning, towards the scene of the revolt. By this unhappy battle the glory of his arms had been tarnished, but the consequences which he anticipated were still more dreadful than the fact. For nine years he had been labouring to deliver France from the continual scourge of the Saxon irruptions. Fear had been the only engine which repressed them for a moment; and now, after so long a period of successful warfare, during which he had accomplished the security of his own dominions only by the subjection of theirs, all that he had done was entirely rendered void by one great defeat, which, restoring confidence to the

people he had formerly subdued, held out a long prospect of wars and insurrections for the future. This expedition he resolved should now be one of chastisement, as well as repression. When conquered, and at his mercy, the Saxons had bound themselves, by the most solemn vows, never to bear arms against him again, and on the security of those vows he had shown them clemency; but now, that every engagement was broken, and infidelity had been encouraged by victory, he determined to punish as well as to conquer, and to wage the same exterminating warfare against his faithless and pertinacious enemies, that they had on all occasions waged against him.

His very name, however, was sufficient to carry dismay into the hearts of the Saxons. The courage which had animated them fled, their victorious army dispersed at his approach, like a morning mist before the sun; and their triumphant chief, abandoned by his followers, was obliged to seek safety in flight. At the same time, the nation flocked to meet the French monarch, glossing their infidelity with all the excuses which terror and cunning can suggest, and offering once more the treacherous vows with which he had been so often deceived.

Indignant at their baseness, and desirous of striking such terror into their hearts as would do away the consequences of their late victory, and make the impression of their punishment more deep than that of their success, Charlemagne unhappily forgot the clemency which was one of the most beautiful traits of his character. He pardoned the nation, it is true, and sheathed the fiery sword, which he had drawn with the purpose of wasting the whole land; but he demanded that those who had taken an armed and active share in the insurrection, should be given up to his vengeance. This was pusillanimously conceded by the rest of the Saxon people, and, as a terrible example for the future, the French monarch ordered four thousand five hundred of the most criminalt to be executed in one day.

There was, beyond doubt, much to palliate this tremendous act of severity. The dreadful evils which the Saxons had incessantly inflicted on France, their unceasing treachery, the broken vows and ruthless disregard of all engagements, of the very men who suffered, were all motives which may be admitted to qualify the awful sternness of the deed; but still humanity revolts from so terrible an act of punishment; and though Charlemagne was far more justified than many who have been less censured for similar acts, yet the death of the Saxons has left a stain upon his name, which has been magnified by the partialities, and distorted by the theories, of men equally unable to appreciate his virtues or his faults. As in the case of almost all severe measures, the effect he intended to produce, was not at all accomplished. Witikind had again fled into the north at the approach of Charlemagne; and, though the monarch of the Francs did not absent himself far or long from the confines of Saxony, before the next spring, the whole country was once more in revolt. The successes of the former year had given fresh hopes and expectations to the Saxons; and the death of their countrymen was far from impressing them with that terror, which the Frankish monarch had expected. Accustomed themselves to sacrifice their prisoners, the minds of the Saxons were perfectly made up to undergo the same destiny after a defeat; and, whereas a much lighter infliction, if it had taken some new and strange form, would probably have spread consternation through the whole country, a fate, however horrible, to the contemplation of which their minds were habituated, inspired but little fear, and produced a small effect. The memory of a battle gained against the Francs, however—an event which centuries had not seen—was not easily obliterated; and the consequences of the impulse thus given to the national hopes, was the raising of two armies, such as had never taken the field against Charlemagne before.

BATTLES OF DETHMOLD AND THE HASE

The monarch was early informed of the gathering storm, and speedily prepared to meet it; but a domestic grief, the death of Hildegarde, his Queen, which took place in April, retarded his movements against the enemy. Various other cares also occupied him till the middle of May; but about that time he quitted Thionville, where he had passed the winter, and advanced rapidly upon Dethmold, where the army of Witikind had taken up its position. We have no means of calculating the number of either force; but it is probable, from the expression of Eginhard, who calls the Saxon host “an innumerable multitude”, as well as from the fact of their having stood, for the first time, the charge of Charlemagne, that the troops of the insurgents were numerically superior to those of the monarch. Charlemagne had no advantage but that of attack. He had come from a long and weary march, in a summer, the heat of which was so uncommonly intense, that several instances are mentioned of persons having died from its effects. The Saxons had chosen their own position; they were led by one of their greatest chiefs, were animated by the memory of victory under his command, and were stimulated by vengeance, superstition, and despair: nevertheless, the French monarch hesitated not a moment, but attacked them at once on their own ground; and, after a short, but terrible conflict, succeeded in almost annihilating their army.

Few are said to have escaped alive of all the Saxon host; but, of course, such a struggle could not take place, without great loss also on the part of the Francs. A hostile country, and another powerful

army, were before the steps of Charlemagne; and his forces were too much weakened by the battle which he had just won, to admit of his advance, without much risk of his retreat being cut off. Retiring, therefore, upon Paderborn, he awaited the arrival of fresh troops, which were in preparation throughout France; and, immediately after their coming, he once more marched forward, to encounter the second army of the Saxons, which occupied the banks of the Hase, in Westphalia. Scarcely a month had elapsed after his former victory, when he achieved another, that completely destroyed the hopes of being able to contend with the Frankish monarch in general conflicts, with which the success of Witikind in the former year had inspired his countrymen. The army which opposed the passage of the river, was as totally defeated as that which had encountered Charlemagne near Dethmold; with this difference, however, in the event, that in the first battle fought, the greater part of the Saxons died where they stood, and in the second, a considerable number surrendered.

No severity of any kind seems to have been practised by Charlemagne towards his prisoners; and on the part of the Saxons, all thought of opposing the monarch himself, appears to have been abandoned, though the whole country continued still in revolt. The next two years were consumed in a desultory warfare, equally destructive to both parties; though, as the Saxons were the weaker of the two, the same extent of loss was more detrimental to them than to their enemies.

Witikind and Albion, who had commanded the two great armies of the insurgents, though conquered, were not subdued and while Charlemagne, determined to crush the revolt at any cost, marched through one part of the country, punishing insurrection and compelling submission, the rest of the land rose up behind his steps, and did away all that he had effected in his passage.

During those two years, only one event of importance chequered the monotonous character of the war. This was a victory gained on the banks of the Lippe by Charles, the eldest legitimate son of the French monarch. In order to overawe Westphalia, while he himself marched in a different direction, Charlemagne left a part of his army under the command of the Prince, then but twelve years old. The Saxons, hoping to strike a deep blow at the monarch in the person of his son, hastened to attack the young commander; but their efforts still proved unsuccessful. Both armies consisted entirely of cavalry, and, after a severe conflict, in which a great number of Saxons fell, victory remained with the Francs, and Charles returned to Worms, crowned with the earliest laurels that the annals of the world record. Whatever was the Prince's share in the victory—for it is not probable that Charlemagne committed such great interests solely to the inexperience of twelve years—the fact of Charles having, even nominally, commanded, shows at what an early period the Frankish youth were inured to arms, and may aid conjecture in regard to the cause of that people's long preponderance as a military nation.

At length, in the year 785, after having passed the winter in the heart of Saxony, and spent the most severe season of the year in traversing the land from side to side, and repressing revolt wherever it appeared, Charlemagne found the whole country once more completely subdued, Witikind and Albion had fled, and were now wandering on the other side of the Elbe, endeavouring to excite the people of that already devastated country to fresh, though fruitless revolt. But the French monarch now determined to try, by persuasion and kindness, to win the hearts of his two most constant and intractable opponents.

His first step was, through the intervention of some of their countrymen, to represent to them the inutility of farther resistance, and to invite them to his presence, with promises of security and favor. Neither of the Saxon chiefs, however, prone as their own nation was to the breach of all promises, would confide in the mere word of the French monarch; and Charlemagne offered hostages for their safety, if, by appearing at his court, they would but afford themselves an opportunity of comparing civilization and Christianity with the state of society and religion to which they had shown themselves so pertinaciously attached. With this proposal Amalvin, a Franc of distinction, was despatched across the Elbe, and the first direct communication being opened between Witikind and Charlemagne, the negotiations were easily concluded.

WITIKIND AND ALBION BAPTIZED

The French monarch, animated but by one view in the whole transaction, granted the Saxon chieftains whatever assurances of safety they demanded; and Witikind at length, satisfied of his sincerity, traversed the country, and visited his great conqueror at Bardingaw in Saxony. This visit, although its duration was but short, excited a strong desire in the bosom of the rude Saxon chieftain to see more of the splendid court and civilized people, whose monarch, he had too many reasons to know, was as irresistibly great in war as he now found him generous in peace. Such an inclination was doubtless encouraged by Charlemagne himself; and, after his return to France, he again received Witikind and Albion at Attigny, on the Aine. From that moment, a great change took place in the opinions of his two opponents. What means of conversion were used, and whether the minds of the Saxons were brought to conviction by the reasoning of Christian prelates, or whether their

imaginations were dazzled, and their sight deceived by the pomps and pious frauds of the Romish church, we can only vaguely discover from very doubtful legends. The chronicles state the meager fact, that Witikind and Albion, after having opposed the Christian faith in their native land for many years, were solemnly baptized at the Palace of Attigny, where Charlemagne himself appeared as the sponsor for his conquered enemies. Doubtless, no art was left unemployed by the zealous advocates of the church to win the Saxon chiefs to the renunciation of paganism; but all that is positively stated in regard to Charlemagne himself is, that, after having honored them highly during their stay, he dismissed them to their own land, loaded with costly presents. The whole of Saxony now at once embraced the Christian religion; the churches which had been burnt were rebuilt, and others were constructed. The priests who had fled returned to their altars, and universal thanksgivings were ordered by the Catholic church, for the establishment of the faith of Christ, amongst the obstinate idolaters of the north. This state of things did not, it is true, prove of any long duration; but we here find a sort of epoch in the Saxon war, to which it seemed as well to conduct the reader, without pausing to notice in their chronological order, a number of domestic events, of more or less importance, which, during these years of active warfare, occurred in the life of Charlemagne

Two of these events are worthy of particular notice, from the influence they may be supposed to have had upon his after life. Soon after the death of Hildegarde his queen, Bertha, the mother of the French monarch, also took her destined place in the inevitable tomb.

THE THURINGIAN CONSPIRACY

Kings are surrounded by so many temptations to forgetfulness, that their griefs are generally of short duration. But Bertha was regretted long and deeply, by Charlemagne; and, if virtue, rectitude, talents, and active benevolence, be qualities which should attach, Bertha was well deserving of the tears which her son bestowed upon her loss. His sorrow, also, was justified, by a long retrospect of affection; for we learn, that the harmony existing between Charlemagne and his mother, was never known to be interrupted, except on the one occasion of the divorce of Desideria. That cloud itself had soon passed away; the evil consequences which she had anticipated, were averted by his extraordinary powers; and Bertha lived to see her son the greatest monarch of his age and race.

The sovereign of the Francs was, by natural temperament, soon led to supply the place which the death of Hildegarde had left vacant; and in the choice of another wife, he fixed upon Fastrada, the daughter of Rodolph, a Frankish noble of high repute. We are led to conclude, that the personal beauty of the new Queen, was not accompanied by great powers of mind, or by fine qualities of the heart; and her conduct soon produced consequences the most painful that could affect a monarch from the actions of his wife. These were murmurs amongst the people, and ultimately the revolt of a part of his subjects.

All accounts represent Fastrada as oppressive and merciless; but what was the precise nature of the cruelty she is accused of exercising, and how a monarch of such firmness of mind as Charlemagne, could intrust a dangerous portion of authority to the hands of a woman, are points on which history is silent, and in regard to which, all inferences must be derived from collateral evidence.

It appears, however, that towards the end of the year 785, one of the Eastern Francs of noble birth, called Hartrad, conceived the design of exciting the part of the country in which he lived, to insurrection; and determined by stratagem to get possession of the person of the King, and murder him, or to throw off the yoke of France, and declare his province independent.

Either from discontent at the conduct of the Queen, general ambition, or that love of change so universal in the minds of the weak, a number of other Counts joined in the conspiracy, which soon began to assume a formidable aspect. For some time Charlemagne had known that treasonable efforts were in meditation against his government; but the information he had received was either so vague, or the schemes of the conspirators so immature, that he suffered them to proceed till the commencement of the ensuing year, keeping nevertheless a strict watch upon their movements. At length, the chief of the discontented nobles, Count Hartrad—on the coming of a royal messenger, charged to demand that his daughter, who had been long betrothed to one of the Western Francs, should be given to her husband—took occasion to throw off the authority of the King, and to call together the abettors of his treason.

His summons was instantly obeyed; but when the conspirators appeared in arms, it was found that, as usual on such occasions, they had sadly miscalculated their strength; and that their forces were still so scanty, as to render perseverance in their design, utter madness. The consequence of this conviction was their immediate dispersion in order to seek places of concealment. But they had now too openly proclaimed their treason for justice to remain inactive any longer. A considerable number were arrested in the different spots where they had taken refuge, and were afterwards tried at Worms

before an extraordinary court, to which a number of the bishops had been summoned. On the present occasion this commixture of Christian prelates with the lay judges of the land, did not seem to temper greatly the severity of the punishment awarded. None of the conspirators, it is true, were put to death; but such as were proved most guilty, were condemned to that fearful infliction, the loss of sight, a sentence then common. Others were degraded from their rank, and the whole were doomed to permanent or temporary exile.

REVOLT OF BRITANNY

Another war, within the actual limits of France, demanded the attention of Charlemagne, immediately after the revolt of Hartrad; and it may bfe necessary, for a moment, to look to the state of Britanny, in which it took place, in order clearly to understand its cause and object. On the first invasion of Gaul by the Franks, no resistance of so determined a nature was offered to their progress, by any of the various tribes or nations who adhered to the Roman government of that province, as by the Armoricans,—a people inhabiting one of the western districts of France, but the extent of whose territory at that time, it would be difficult to define. The struggle was kept up between them and the barbarians, long after it had been yielded by the rest of the inhabitants of Gaul; and their courage and vigor, though obtaining no support from the country in whose defence they fought, at least served to win the admiration and respect of their adversaries. At length, abandoned by Rome, and assailed on all sides by enemies, the Armoricans chose rather to enter into a general league with the Francs, than still contend for a falling state, which had already cast them off.

What were the precise terms of this league, and how far the Armoricans were absolutely amalgamated with the Francs, cannot be discussed in this place, but it is more than probable, that long before the accession of Charlemagne, a complete assimilation of the two nations had taken place.

However that may be, in a part of the territories formerly inhabited by the Armoricans, a, new people had established themselves, some time previous to the period of which I speak. These fresh settlers consisted of fugitives from England, where the invading Saxons had compelled each native Briton to choose between domestic servitude, eternal strife, and foreign exile. Those who preferred the latter, soon colonized a large part of the sea coast of France, extended their territories, consolidated their power; and having, both by their own strength and the dissensions of the Merovingian monarchy, extorted the privilege of governing themselves, they maintained their own laws and language, and existed a separate people within the French dominions. A tribute alone marked their dependence; but even this they often neglected or refused; and though Charlemagne had taken precautions to prevent their encroachments on the neighboring country, they yet judged so ill of his authority, that they chose his reign as the time for making a great effort to assert their immunity from their customary mark of vassalage.

Although Charlemagne, conscious of his own power, viewed their efforts to shake off his sway with contempt, yet it was contempt in no degree mingled with that blind arrogance, which neglects the means of safety, in the confidence of strength. The revolt of Britanny, however, was not a matter of sufficient importance to call for the personal presence of the monarch; and, while he himself devoted his attention to the internal regulations of the state, and the punishment of the Thuringian conspirators, he directed Audulphus, his seneschal, to lead an army into the refractory province, and reduce it to subjection. This was easily and rapidly accomplished. The Bretons were in no state to maintain the independence which they claimed; and, after the capture of all their fortresses by the Francs, they threw themselves on the clemency of the monarch, which was never appealed to in vain. Audulphus returned in triumph to the court, bearing with him the trophies of his victorious expedition. The Bretons gave hostages for their future obedience; and several of their nobles even presented themselves at the diet which was then sitting at Worms.

BOOK VIII

FROM THE PACIFICATION OF SAXONY,

TO THE DEFEAT OF ADALGISUS AND THE GREEKS IN ITALY.

785 TO 788.

Through the whole of Charlemagne's northern dominions, peace was now fully established; but the storm which his presence had for a time averted from Italy again threatened to break upon it with redoubled force. Sufficient time had elapsed for the weak Duke of Bavaria, under the influence of a violent and vindictive wife, to forget the engagements he had entered into, and the oaths he had taken. The Duke of Beneventum, also, who had espoused another daughter of the dethroned King of Lombardy, was, like Tassilo, instigated both by his wife's revengeful spirit, and his own ambition, still to pursue his schemes of casting off the almost nominal dependence which he owed to the crown of France. Irene, too, the Empress of the East, had by this time adopted views adverse to those of Charlemagne. She had tasted fully the sweets of power; the passion for dominion had developed itself in her heart; and the nascent desires of rule which began to manifest themselves in her son, led her to dread the speedy loss of that authority so dear to her own bosom, if she suffered the youthful Constantine to strengthen himself by such an alliance as that which she had formerly proposed with the French monarch.

It is not proved, indeed, that the Empress supported the Duke of Beneventum in his schemes of ambition, or that she pampered the pride of Tassilo of Bavaria into treason and revolt, but it is clear that she kept up a correspondence with both. Nor does it seem unlikely, although the actual rupture of the alliance between France and Constantinople is attributable to Charlemagne himself, that Irene was in the highest degree unwilling to complete it, and that her intrigues hurried it to its termination. It is sufficient, however, here to say, that the marriage proposed was entirely broken off within a short period of the time of which I now write, and that, long before its absolute relinquishment, Irene showed the most decided signs of hostility towards the court of France.

Whatever part the Empress acted in these transactions, it is evident that a very extensive conspiracy existed in Italy, embracing almost every portion of that country and the Tyrol, and extending itself to Bavaria. At the same time, its ramifications spread to nations over which Charlemagne had no control; for the Bavarian Duke, well aware of the vast power of him whose authority he sought to cast off, and whose wrath he was about to encounter, had negotiated with many of the barbarous hordes in the vicinity of his dominions. From them he had obtained promises of aid and support in the moment of strife; and, had time been given for accomplishing the preparations meditated by all the conspirators and their allies, an united force would have been created, which the whole genius, skill, and vigor of Charlemagne could scarcely have found means to overcome.

The watchful care, however, of the French monarch left no part of his vast dominions unobserved, and his active energy encountered and crushed the evils by which he was threatened while they were yet immature. The designs both of the Duke of Bavaria and the Duke of Beneventum became known to him while regulating the internal policy of Saxony, and receiving the hostages of the revolted Bretons. His determination to place himself in the midst of the scene of danger was immediately taken; and, late in the year 786, he departed from Worms, and marched directly upon Italy.

His first halt was at Florence, where he arrived at Christmas, and, after a brief pause, with a view to refresh his troops, he proceeded thence to Rome. He was joyfully received by Pope Adrian, who was bound to him, on every account, by friendship and by a similarity of mind, as well as by the remembrance of benefits and the existence of mutual interests. The coming of the great king was therefore always a subject of rejoicing at the court of the prelate, and never more so than at a moment when the muttering voice of the great Italian volcano threatened the country every hour with convulsion and ruin.

Charlemagne lost not a moment ere he turned his whole attention to the regulation and pacification of Italy. His first care was to deliberate with Adrian and with his own nobles upon the state of Beneventum, and upon the necessity of its subjugation,—a step without which the tranquillization of Italy seemed remote, if not impossible. But motives such as seldom actuate monarchs and conquerors induced him to pause, and guard against himself, lest any causes but stern and absolute necessity should influence him in hurrying on towards the certain evils of warfare. Even supposing that neither siege nor battle were to follow, yet the dreadful ravages which his army would unavoidably commit on a hostile occupation of the country, weighed heavily upon the monarch's mind, and cost him much hesitation ere he determined to pursue his march towards Beneventum.

The halt of the Frankish forces, and the deliberations which ensued at Rome, gave full time for the news of Charlemagne's approach to reach the Beneventine Duke, who, aware of his own designs, and totally unprepared to resist so powerful an army as that which threatened his territories, saw nothing but destruction before him. To appease the monarch of the Francs, without absolutely abandoning his former plans, Arichis immediately despatched his eldest son, Romuald, to Rome, charged with many presents, and fair speeches; and directed to supplicate Charlemagne to desist from his hostile advance. He was also commanded to promise, on the part of his father, entire obedience to the will of Charlemagne, and that great king gladly welcomed his coming, till he discovered that the young Prince of Beneventum had no specific act of homage to offer—no inviolable engagement to propose.

Perceiving instantly that the object of Arichis was to gain time, and to turn him from his course till Beneventum could be prepared for resistance, Charlemagne detained Romuald in his camp, and, instead of pausing to deliberate any farther, advanced rapidly towards the Beneventine territory. Arichis now found that the Frankish monarch was not to be deceived; and, having rather hastened than retarded his own fate by his duplicity, he quitted his capital and fled precipitately to Salernum, which, in addition to strong fortifications, possessed the great advantage of offering the means of escape by sea. Sincere submission, or still farther flight, were now the only expedients left for his choice, and he immediately determined upon the former. His second son Grimwald was accordingly dispatched towards the monarch, with proposals no longer intended to amuse, but to satisfy. By these Arichis offered to yield both his sons as hostages, and to give any other security for his future good faith that the sovereign himself would point out, at the same time supplicating, in the humblest terms, that the Frankish army might be stayed in its rapid and destructive march.

This new embassy met the monarch at Capua; and, influenced rather by the humane desire of sparing the Beneventines, than by any confidence in the promises of Arichis, Charlemagne accepted the submission of the Duke. Twelve hostages were given by the people of the dukedom in pledge of their own fidelity; and the second son of Arichis, named Grimwald, was alone detained by the French king, who afterwards carried the youth back with him into France, and educated him by the noble lessons of his own society and his own example. The eldest son, Romuald, he generously sent back to his father; but he exacted, as a mark of his undisputed authority, that the Dukes of Beneventum should, in future, bear upon some part of the coin of their dukedom the name of their sovereign lord.

Charlemagne, it would appear, remained a considerable time at Capua, awaiting the return of messengers whom he despatched to Beneventum for the purpose of receiving the oath of fidelity prescribed both to Arichis and his people. During this halt he received the ambassadors sent by the Empress Irene to treat with the French court in regard to the proposed marriage of her son. What were really the instructions given to these envoys, we do not know, but neither party were any longer desirous of an alliance the aspect of which had been entirely changed by the lapse of six or seven years. Charlemagne, however, as before mentioned, took the odium of the refusal upon himself. The ambassadors were coldly entertained; and, after asking the opinion of his council on the subject of their mission, the monarch dismissed them, filled either with real or apparent dissatisfaction.

As soon as these affairs were ended, and the tranquillity of Beneventum was secured, Charlemagne retraced his steps to Rome, and proceeded to investigate all the various branches into which the plot of Arichis had spread itself throughout Italy. During these transactions, he left the news of his proceedings to reach Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria, and work their proper effect upon his weak and versatile mind, before he took measures to punish that vassal's renewed breach of faith. The tidings of the complete subjection of Arichis, his brother-in-law, and ally, were thus carried to the court of the Bavarian prince, long before his means of resistance were in any degree prepared; and, at the same time, he had good reason to fear that the inquiries which the monarch was, even then, engaged in making into the darker points of the conspiracy, would soon bring his criminality to light more glaringly than ever.

Confident in an alliance with the Huns or Avars, together with various other northern nations, and only requiring time to mature his endeavours, Tassilo determined upon exactly the same step by which Arichis had endeavored to blind the eyes of Charlemagne. He, accordingly, at once sent messengers to Rome, in order to deceive his cousin by a pretence of contrition for his past offences, and to delay him by long negotiations, which he believed, from the distance between Rome and Bavaria, might be easily protracted till the necessity of temporizing was done away by the power of resistance.

In order to give additional efficacy to his own representations, his envoys were commanded to pray the intercession of the Pope between the offended sovereign and the contrite vassal, and Adrian, believing his professions to be sincere, willingly undertook the dignified and appropriate office of

mediator. He exerted himself with zeal; and, although the designs which Tassilo had entertained were laid open more and more, yet the monarch's real attachment towards the Roman pontiff, and deference for his opinion, soon mitigated the anger which his subject's renewed treachery had justly excited. Charlemagne accordingly declared, that he was ready to receive any security which the ambassadors might have to propose for their master's future fidelity. But, on communicating to them the success of his intervention, the Pope learned, with surprise and indignation, that the envoys had nothing to offer without sending to Bavaria for farther instructions.

Some more efforts were made to deceive and gain time, but the object of the Duke and his treacherous duplicity were now evident, both to the pontiff and the monarch; and, while Adrian lanched the thunders of the church at him who had dared to use its most sacred attribute for the purpose of deception, Charlemagne hastened, with the speed of light, to chastise his rebellious vassal, and guard his peaceful dominions.

CHARLEMAGNE MARCHES AGAINST BAVARIA

Carrying with him a considerable number of the Lombard nobles, who had been convicted of conspiring against the state, he left his son, Pepin, in Italy, with a tranquillized territory, and a considerable army, which he was directed to lead towards Bavaria by the way of Trente. The monarch then hurried his own march towards France, dispersed the Lombards whom he had brought from Italy, through a country where they could work no evil, and called a diet of the nation at Worms, to consult for the public safety, and raise the necessary forces for the maintenance of the royal authority. In this assembly, he displayed to his people all that he had done during his absence; and, explaining to them the danger of his situation and of their own, easily obtained all thesupplies he could desire.

Two armies were instantly raised, and as speedily in motion. The one, composed of the transrhenane Francs, mingled with several bodies of Saxons, was thrown forward immediately to Phoringen, upon the Danube; while Charlemagne himself, followed by the Francs of Gaul, advanced into the territories of Augsburg, and reached the banks of the Lech, which then marked the frontier of the feudal duchy of Bavaria. It is more than probable, that indignation, as well as caution, had given wings to the movements of Charlemagne, and had hurried him forward to the boundary of his unworthy cousin's territory. There, however, the same generous compassion, which had withheld him from entering the country of the Duke of Beneventum, again caused him to pause, and give time for fear, rather than punishment, to produce submission.

The Duke of Bavaria found himself, not only detected, but surprised. He had endeavored in vain to deceive a great and magnanimous mind; he had again raised his hand against a forgiving relation, and a clement lord; and now, before he could believe that his treachery was fully known, he found himself surrounded with armies, irresistible by numbers, courage, and skill, and long inured to victory and success.

At the same time, Tassilo discovered that he could in no degree depend upon his own people for support; as his nobles, more faithful than himself, remembering the oaths of homage they had taken to Pepin and his children, showed no disposition to join in the Duke's schemes of rebellion. His allies were afar; and one course alone was left,—submission

With his proud heart burning at the degradation which his treachery had called upon him, Tassilo appeared at the camp of his cousin as a suppliant and offered every pledge for his future conduct. The clemency of Charlemagne was still unwearied: “he was gentle by nature” to use the expressive words of Eginhard; and he once more extended his forgiveness to his criminal relation, though the tranquility of his dominions obliged him to demand sufficient hostages for the observance of his vassal’s renewed engagements. Twelve of these were given by Tassilo, together with his son Theodon, a hostage of much more consequence than any of the others, not alone on account of his superior birth, but also, because, inheriting all his mother's hatred towards the Francs, he had been a sharer in all his father's treasons.

Trusting to these pledges, Charlemagne now withdrew his armies, and retired to Ingelheim, where he spent the winter in striving to cultivate and improve the moral situation of his people. This constant and rapid change of occupation and endeavor, is one of the most singular points in the character and history of Charlemagne. The moment that his great and comprehensive mind was withdrawn from one object of import, it was directed, without pause, to some other mighty undertaking. The affairs of peace and war, of policy and literature, the grandest schemes for consolidating his power, and extending his dominions, and the noblest efforts towards civilizing his subjects, and dispelling the darkness of the world, seem alternately, yet with scarce a moment's interval, to have occupied the attention of the French monarch, in the midst of a barbarous nation, and a barbarous age.

CHARLEMAGNE'S EFFORTS FOR THE REVIVAL OF LETTERS

In pursuance of the purpose he had disclosed to Alcuin, Charlemagne, during the short time he had lately spent at Rome, had collected a number of grammarians and arithmeticians, the poor remains of the orators and philosophers of the past, and engaged them to accompany him from Italy to France, "where", to use the words of the Monk of Augouleme, "the study of the liberal arts did not at that time exist".

As soon as he had terminated his expedition against Tassilo of Bavaria, the monarch applied the whole energies of his mind to promote the cultivation of literature in his dominions; and spreading the teachers he had collected in Italy through the various provinces of France, he offered the means of instruction to all his people. The sole sources of knowledge which had existed previous to the present period, were the few schools held by some of the bishops in their houses, and by some of the abbots in their monasteries. These, however, had been hitherto exclusively devoted to ecclesiastics; and at the time to which I now refer, the first effort was made to extend the benefits of such establishments to the whole community. The monarch dictated an encyclical letter to all the clergy of France, calling upon them to aid in spreading knowledge and information, and he himself began to establish schools in various parts of his dominions, at which the laity as well as the clergy might procure instruction. His example was speedily followed by the church: the ecclesiastical seminaries were either opened to the rest of the people, or other establishments were founded for their instruction, in the various dioceses of the empire; the excellence of knowledge was inculcated from the pulpit, and the chair; its pursuit rewarded by favor and advancement; the natural inappetence of ignorance was counterbalanced by every stimulant that could be devised, and both the desire of information, and the means of procuring it, became general throughout France.

In the cultivation of his hereditary dominions, the monarch did not neglect the improvement of those territories which he had acquired since his accession; and nothing was forgotten which could contribute to the instruction of the northern people whom he had conquered, and who in every point of civilization were far behind the Francs themselves. However, as the principles of a mild religion were still but little known amongst them, the first object of Charlemagne was to plant in their hearts that primary germ of all amelioration; and the propagation of Christianity amongst the Frisons and other people of Saxony, met with its full attention from the unwearied zeal of the French monarch. Bishops and preachers were appointed to every part of the country; and eloquence and piety were sure to be singled out, for the dangerous but glorious distinction, of turning the dark pagans of the north to the light of a purer faith.

Such were the occupations which filled the hours of Charlemagne during the brief period which he was permitted to devote to the arts of peace. That period, however, soon drew towards a close; for neither active vigilance could overawe, nor invariable clemency disarm, the hatred of some of his enemies; and even in the midst of his most pacific employments, continual intelligence reached him of the meditated treason, both of Arichis of Beneventum, and of Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria. Neither of those perverse vassals remembered the oaths of fidelity which danger and necessity had extorted, as any thing else than as acts of degradation and incitements to enmity; and both prepared to seize the first opportunity of revolt. Arichis, finding himself unable to stand singly in opposition to so great an adversary, took advantage of the position of his territories upon the Italian coast, to negotiate in private with the Greek empire. Upon condition of receiving dignity and assistance himself from the Empress and her son, he promised to seat Adalgisus on the throne of Lombardy; and to open the way for Greece towards the conquest of the rest of Italy.

The hope of regaining that country by means of an alliance with Charlemagne, if ever it did exist in the bosom of Irene, had now passed away, while the desire of recovering that portion of her predecessor's empire remained as strong as ever, heightened by the wish to snatch it from one who had insulted the imperial court by the refusal of his daughter. A thirst for revenge was certainly felt by the young Emperor, whose hopes and passions had been excited early towards the bride that was afterwards denied him; and the breaking of the marriage might be perfectly consistent with Irene's views, and yet the rejection of her alliance by the Francs be regarded by her as an insult, which she was bound to resent. At all events, such was the tone of offended dignity which she assumed; and willingly listening to the proposals of Arichis, she sent ambassadors to assure him of aid and protection, and to concert with him the means of accomplishing their mutual designs.

CHARLEMAGNE BESTOWS THE DUKEDOM ON GRIMWALD

Man's most cunning policy, however, serves but to work out the unseen purposes of Heaven; and when the shrewdest schemer of the earth has plotted a device, which no human power can oppose, Fate causes his foot to stumble over some minute circumstance, and lays him and all his projects prostrate in the dust. On their arrival in Italy, the missives of the Empress found the Duke of

Beneventum and his eldest son both dead; while the inhabitants of the duchy, divided into different factions, threatened to overthrow all the schemes which had been adopted by their former lord. After long discussions, the great majority of the people agreed to petition Charlemagne to establish in the ducal seat, Grimwald, the second son of Arichis, who some time before had been delivered as a hostage to the monarch of the Francs; and, in consequence of this determination, while the ambassadors of Irene were honourably conducted to Naples, messengers were dispatched to France by the Beneventines, in order to ascertain the pleasure of the King.

In the meanwhile, Pope Adrian had watched, with a jealous eye, all the proceedings which have just been detailed, and had sent envoy after envoy to Charlemagne, in order to warn him of the negotiations with Greece. His suspicion of the Beneventine dukes did not end with the life of Arichis; and fearful that the machinations of that prince might be renewed under the reign of Grimwald, he opposed, with every argument in his power, the nomination of the young Lombard to the dukedom of Beneventum. He assured Charlemagne, by letter, that the people of that state had bound themselves by promises to the ambassadors of the Empress, to pursue steadily the schemes of Arichis, if they obtained Grimwald for their governor. He informed him also, that the Greek commander of Sicily was still at Gaeta, carrying on his intrigues with the Beneventines, who, on their part, were using every exertion to induce the rest of Italy to revolt; and he added a thousand incentives to suspicion, many of which, probably, originated in his own fears. In short, the terror of the pontiff made him doubt even the judgment of Charlemagne; and his hatred of the whole Lombard race, urged his opposition to Grimwald to the bounds of indecent vehemence.

Some time had now passed, however, since that young prince had begun to accompany the army and court of the French monarch; and, while Grimwald himself, by the sight of splendid actions, and the continual example of great and generous qualities, acquired a guiding principle for his own conduct, and a sincere love and admiration for his magnanimous sovereign, the King of the Francs had an opportunity of seeing and judging the behavior of his hostage, and of appreciating the fine but undeveloped, properties of his understanding and his heart. This examination had been sufficient to fix the determination of Charlemagne. In spite of the remonstrances and warnings of the Pope, he instantly named Grimwald to the dukedom which his father had held; and sent him back to his dominions, where he was received with universal joy.

Adrian, on reflection, found that perhaps he had carried his opposition to an unjustifiable extent; and began to fear, that the unwise and fruitless endeavor he had made, to bias the judgment of the French monarch, might weaken his influence for the future. He accordingly attempted to palliate his conduct, and explain away his more violent assertions, as soon as he found that Charlemagne had decided against him. But the behavior of Grimwald himself, was the strongest reproof which the intemperate zeal of the Roman pontiff could meet with. Far from entering into the views of the Greek court, the young Duke instantly evinced his determination of keeping the most inviolate faith with his sovereign and benefactor.

Notwithstanding this change in the policy of Beneventum, Irene's schemes still continued; and Charlemagne soon learned, that armies were preparing in the East, for the invasion of his Italian territories. But other dangers surrounded him at the same time, from the persevering treason of the fellow conspirator of Arichis, on whom his menaces had produced no farther effect than temporary alarm, while his clemency had been totally thrown away. Scarcely a day passed, that the court at Ingelheim did not receive news of warlike preparations making in Bavaria; and the Bavarian nobles themselves, strongly attached to Charlemagne, gave him private intimation, that Tassilo was calling from Panonia—so long the source of barbarian torrents—new tribes of plunderers, to ravage the fertile countries of the south, and occupy the arms of his sovereign, while he effectually threw off the homage he had so often deceitfully rendered. Even at the court of Charlemagne himself, the son of the Duke of Bavaria, though a hostage for his faith, joined in the intrigue while his father, imagining that the efforts of the Eastern empire would soon call the King into Italy, hurried his hostile preparations, to take advantage of the monarch's absence.

Charlemagne now found, that no time was to be lost and, while in person he remained on the Rhine, to repel or avert the storm which threatened to burst upon him from Hungary and Bavaria, he despatched an army into Italy, under the command of an officer, named Winegisus, in order to co-operate with the Dukes of Spoleto and Beneventum, in the defence of the Italian peninsula. The Duke of Spoleto was still the same Hildebrand who had taken so considerable a share in the conspiracy of the Duke of Friuli, but who had afterwards, as mentioned in the forgoing pages, obtained pardon and favor, and had, by twelve years of faithful service, obliterated the memory of his fault, and merited the confidence of his sovereign. Of the young Duke of Beneventum I have already spoken; and it is probable, that the very suspicions which the Pope had lately cast upon him, made him the more eager, on the present occasion, to distinguish himself in the service of his sovereign.

ARREST AND CONDEMNATION OF THE DUKE OF BAVARIA

Having taken these precautions in regard to Italy, Charlemagne resolved to cut short at once the proceedings of the Duke of Bavaria, and to bring the conspiracy to an issue. For this purpose he concealed studiously all knowledge of Tassilo's renewed treason, but summoned him, in the common feudal form, to appear as his vassal at the usual assembly of the nation, which was this year held at Ingelheim. The embarrassment into which such a summons threw the Duke of Bavaria was very great. Condemned by his own conscience, yet unprepared to resist the command of his sovereign, if he obeyed, he exposed himself to punishment—if he refused, he proclaimed his crime. Trusting, however, to the secrecy of his negotiations with the Huns or Avars, he determined to assume the boldness of innocence, and to present himself at the court of the monarch. Accordingly, on the meeting of the diet, he appeared with a splendid train of vassals and retainers, but he appeared only to meet the reward of his crimes. He was instantly arrested, and accused of various acts of treason before the assembly of which he had come to form a part. The tribunal, consisting of his peers, was one in every respect competent to take cognizance of his crime; and his trial, as well as that of his wife and children, was proceeded in without delay. Witnesses from their own country flocked in, to bear testimony against them. That, since the last pardon which the King had granted him, Tassilo had again conspired to throw off his allegiance, was proved by a mass of evidence, which he could in no degree invalidate, while the implication of his whole family in his treason was made equally manifest. Sentence of death as a traitor was immediately passed upon the Duke himself by the unanimous voice of the assembled nobles; and all present clamored for the instant execution of a man whom they looked upon as a disgrace to their order and their nation.

The awful fate thus suddenly and unexpectedly presented to him, overcame pride and firmness, dignity and courage, in the breast of the unhappy Duke of Bavaria; and, casting himself at the feet of the monarch whose clemency he had so often abused, he petitioned for life in the most abject terms. Charlemagne, ever averse, when he consulted his own heart, to that cruel anomaly, judicial bloodshed, once more interfered to mitigate the sentence, though every principle of justice required him not to pardon the criminal. That ceremony which, amongst the Francs, was the invariable sign of loss of temporal rank, and eternal seclusion from the world, was performed upon Tassilo and his son. Their heads were shaved, as a mark of degradation; and both princes being confined to a cloister, found it, we are told, as calm a retreat in after years, as it then appeared a happy asylum from the immediate sight of an ignominious death. Luitberga, the wife of Tassilo, and the daughter of Desiderius,—whose persisting animosity had met ready instruments in the idle pride and wild ambition of the Duke —after having witnessed the downfall of her father, and aided in the overthrow of her husband and her son, was compelled to assume the veil, and, left in the leisure of reclusion, to weep over her faults, or madden over her failure, as wisdom or passion might dictate. The rest of the Bavarians who had joined in the conspiracy of the Duke were punished with exile; and the country, deprived of its separate form of government, was divided into counties, under magistrates appointed by the French monarch.

While these events took place in France, and while the final regulations of Bavaria required the presence, and occupied the time of Charlemagne, his generals in Italy had to encounter the army of the Eastern empire. Before the disposition of Grimwald could be known at Constantinople, Adalgisus, the son of the former King of Lombardy, had set sail with John, one of the officers of the Empress, accompanied by a considerable fleet. Having been joined on the passage by Theodore, governor of Sicily, they landed with their united armies on the Italian coast. Scarcely had they touched the shore, however, ere the young Duke of Beneventum, much to their surprise, appeared in arms to oppose their farther progress; and, having effected his junction with Hildebrand, Duke of Spoleto, and with Winegisus, and the army of the Francs, Grimwald advanced at once to encounter the Greek forces. All parties were eager for battle, Adalgisus and Theodore being as desirous of fighting before Charlemagne could arrive, as that monarch's generals were of distinguishing themselves during his absence. In consequence, no sooner did the two armies appear within sight of each other than the engagement began. The strife was severe and long, but at length victory declared herself in favor of the Francs, and the Greeks were obliged to fly to their ships, leaving four thousand men dead upon the field of battle, and a thousand prisoners in the hands of the enemy.

Theophanes implies that John, the general who accompanied Adalgisus, was killed after the battle was over. That he fell on this occasion is evident; but I know no other writer that alludes to the barbarous cruelty with which the Greek charges the generals of the Francs; and it may be doubted whether national and party spirit did not take advantage of some vague report to found a calumnious assertion.

This was the last effort of Adalgisus to recover the throne of his father; and so entirely did he disappear, after the period of this expedition, from the busy stage of the world, that many of the

Frankish annalists represent him as dying in the battle by which he strove to win back the Lombard crown.

Thus ended, also, the war between Charlemagne and Irene—a war which sufficiently proved the weakness of the Greek empire. Irene, busied in the intrigues of internal policy, forgot her hostility to Charlemagne in her struggles with her own son; while the monarch of the Francs suffered the remains of the Greek power to exist in Sicily and Calabria, either from pity, contempt, or some political motive which has not come down clearly to the present times. The consequences, however, of the treasonable machinations of Tassilo and Arichis were not yet fully developed. They had allied themselves, as before mentioned, with other powers besides that of Greece, and had roused a people in Europe which had slumbered for many years after a long period of devastation. This nation, even after his fall, remembered its treaty with the Duke of Bavaria; and the rapidity with which it proceeded to perform its engagements, showed that the hand of justice had but struck him in time.

BOOK IX.

FROM THE CONDEMNATION OF THE DUKE OF BAVARIA,

TO THE DECREES OF THE COUNCIL OF FRANKFORT.

788 TO 794

The people who now prepared to attack the empire of Charlemagne, though called by most of the writers by the name of Huns, were not the same nation, which, under Attila, had menaced the existence of the Romans, and ravaged the territories both of the East and West. They sprang, however, in all probability, from the same origin, occupied nearly the same country, and comprised the remnant of many of those tribes which had once been united under the famous scourge of God.

When Attila, after his last successful invasion of the Roman state, retired before the bribes of the weak Valentinian, the eloquence of Leo the Great, and the diseases which affected his army, he met, in the bed of luxury, the death which he had escaped in a thousand battle fields. The various hordes which, consolidated under the dominion of the Huns, had fought and triumphed together, having been bound to each other by the talents of Attila alone, were separated the moment that his spirit had fled. The desire of dominion being no longer directed by one powerful mind against other nations, spread disunion amongst themselves; and the swords which had so long conquered their enemies, were now turned by the savage tribes against each other. The great battle of Netad, where they contended for sovereignty over each other, destroyed many, and dispersed the rest of the Hunnish confederates; and, scattered in different bodies over the north, they were insensibly amalgamated with other people. That tribe which remained perhaps the most distinct, turned its steps under the command of Irnac, one of the sons of Attila, towards the Lesser Scythia, where it was encountered, and probably afterwards subdued, by the other hordes, which wandered continually through the wide pasture grounds of the north; so that it, as well as the rest, becomes speedily lost to history. At the same time, the Gepids, who claimed, and perhaps had won, the hattle of Netad, took possession of Upper Hungary and Transylvania, and soon after possessed themselves of part of Panonia and Noricum, all of which territories were destined to be wrested from them by a new influx from the source which had given rise to themselves.

It is not my purpose to inquire here, which of the Tartar nations that poured, during many years, a barbarian torrent upon the West, gave origin to the tribe afterwards calling themselves Avars, nor to investigate whether the people which acquired that name in Europe, really formed a part of the original Avars, whose possessions extended to the most eastern point of Asia, or whether they belonged to the primary stock of the Huns themselves. Suffice it, that shortly after the dispersion of the hordes of Attila, a warlike and powerful people, calling themselves Avars, first approached the northern part of Europe, driven from their native country by the growing power of the Turks. At that time, the feeble empire of the East was in the habit of employing various barbarian nations in her wars; and the Avars sought and obtained service under the Emperor Justinian, who, in the weak craft of his dotage, loaded them with presents, in order that their arms might be turned against various other tribes, more inimical to the imperial crown. Success crowned their efforts, and increased their reputation and power; and, advancing on their way, they conquered almost the whole of European Scythia, and incorporated with themselves several of the scattered tribes which had formed the Hunnish confederation.

At length, finding themselves strong, and the Eastern empire weak, they boldly threatened the nation they had proposed to serve; but the firmness of Justin, and the wisdom of his precautions, rendered them humbler in their expectations; and turning their arms against the northwest of Europe, they first attacked the Frankish monarchy on the confines of Germany. Defeated by Sigibert, King of Austrasia, they again tried the fortune of battle; and though the Frankish annalists claim victory for their monarch, he was obliged to purchase the absence and friendship of the invaders. They then leagued with Alboin, King of the Lombards, for the destruction of the Gepids, who were, by that time, the only remaining tribe of great importance, which had formed part of the empire of Attila. On this occasion, the Avars, with the most profound dissimulation, obtained from the necessity of the Lombards, a treaty, by virtue of which, all the country, and one-half of the spoils of the conquered people, were to be theirs, in the event of success.

The Lombard arms proved successful in battle against the Gepidae, whose country was immediately overrun by the Avars. What remained of the vanquished nation was incorporated with their conquerors, and the whole territory they had inhabited became the property of the wandering Scythians. Thus Hungary, now so called, was possessed by the Avars, who, joining with themselves a multitude of Hunnish tribes, accumulated the immense spoils which both they themselves and their equally barbarous predecessors had torn from the other nations of Europe.

From this period, the Avars, under their monarchs, called Chagans, pursued a long system of aggression and negotiation towards the empire of the East, which always ended to the advantage of the barbarians. They extended their limits towards Lombardy; and touched upon the very verge of Bavaria; and in the height of their power, they leagued with Chosroes the Persian, and advanced to the gates of Constantinople. Various changes afterwards took place in their state; and a fixed residence, the accumulation of an immensity of plunder, habits of luxury, and the desire of repose, gradually took from the Avars, or modern Huns, the first fierce necessity of warfare, which expulsion from their own country had occasioned, and which, while it lasted, produced strength and conquest. Much of their eastern frontier was now lost, almost without a struggle on their part, by the rise of other barbarous nations, especially the various tribes of Bulgarians, and we do not find them making any great military exertion, either to defend themselves, or to aggrandize their territory, till the year 662, when, at the instigation of Grimwald, King of Lombardy, they ravaged the dukedom of Friuli. From that time history is nearly silent concerning them, till, at the period of which I now write, we find Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria, calling them to his aid in his ambitious, but impotent, struggles against his sovereign.

Before the arrest and condemnation of that unhappy prince, his negotiations with the Huns had been carried to a conclusion; and two armies of Scythians were already prepared; the one to pour into Lombardy, and divert the forces of Charlemagne to that quarter, and the other to enter Bavaria, and support the rebellion of the Duke. Whether the discovery of his treason, and the condemnation of Tassilo, were known in Hungary or not, when the Panonian armies began their march, we are not told; but, notwithstanding his fall, the Huns kept their engagements to the letter; and early in the year invaded both Friuli and Bavaria.

Their irruption into the first named province, was instantly repelled by the vigor and conduct of the Frankish governors and in a sharp conflict which took place on the occasion, the arms of the Christians were completely victorious. In Bavaria, where they probably calculated on more certain success, from their alliance with the Duke, they were equally unsuccessful. Tassilo no longer held the reins of government; and the inhabitants of the country, whose attachment to the monarch of the Francs have had occasion to notice, instantly prepared to resist the invaders. Two envoys from Charlemagne, also, named Grahamannus and Audacrus, were present with a small body of troops; and directed the movements of the Bavarian forces. The two armies encountered each other in the open country, near Ips, on the Danube, and the Huns were here defeated and driven back, with even greater loss than they had suffered in Friuli.

They must have become aware, by this time, that the original object of their expedition was now unattainable; and that the fate of their ally, the Duke of Bavaria, was sealed. But personal revenge supplied a motive for farther exertions, and a fresh army was immediately raised by the Avars, to avenge the loss of their countrymen, and wipe away the disgrace of defeat. Once more passing the Danube, the forces of the Huns entered Bavaria, but were encountered anew by the Francs and Bavarians; and, after a more severe and total defeat than before, were forced to fly in confusion, leaving an immense number of their companions dead upon the field of battle, and still more swallowed up in the waters of the Danube.

CHARLEMAGNE DEVOTES HIMSELF TO THE CIVILIZATION OF HIS TERRITORIES

To this active warfare between the Francs and the Huns, succeeded one of those cold suspensions of hostility, which augur anything but peace. On the one part, the Avars were alarmed and astonished at the event of the war—so different from that which a thousand traditions of success had taught them to expect—and ceased their irruptions in order to collect their forces, and measure the strength of their adversary. On the other hand, Charlemagne also paused, to consolidate his dominions, and to guard and regulate that territory, which the revolt and fall of his vassal Tassilo had brought more immediately under his own superintendence.

Accordingly, as soon as he found that his presence in the centre of his dominions was no longer necessary for the protection of the whole, he proceeded through Bavaria in person, fixing the government as he intended it to remain for the future, and fortifying the frontier against any new aggression. When this necessary duty was completed, the monarch returned to Aix-la-Chapelle, where he spent the winter in regulating the affairs of the church, and the internal police of his kingdom. We cannot, of course, trace the whole of the monarch's efforts for the perfect establishment of order and tranquillity, in realms which for centuries had been torn by anarchy and strife. Nor can we always discover the motives for various laws, originating in a state of society, with the general situation of which we may be fully acquainted, and yet be ignorant of many of the inferior details. It is but fair, however, under such circumstances, to look upon those laws with a favourable eye; and where it is necessary to have recourse to indirect conclusions to consider the general character of Charlemagne's

designs, and to suppose the same motives which we discover in the rest of his actions, to have influenced those where no other cause is apparent.

The regulation of the church, and the preservation of its purity, both in doctrinal points and in the lives of its servants, was always a great object with a monarch, one of whose chief engines of civilization was the Christian religion; and the principal acts which we find attributed to him in the present year, have chiefly this tendency. Such was the composition, by his command, of a book of homilies by the famous Lombard historian, called Paul the Deacon, and the order for these homilies to be read in all the churches. A general council was also held at Aix-la-Chapelle, for the purpose of reforming abuses in the Gallican church; and a capitulary was issued, in which, as well as various regulations respecting the clergy, are to be found many useful and many curious laws. Amongst the last, are prohibitions against divination, either by dipping into the Evangelists, and applying the first passage met with as a prophecy,—a mode then common,—or by any other method; against the practice of baptizing bells; and against the custom of keeping hounds, falcons, or jesters by bishops, abbots, or abbesses. The more peaceful occupations of Charlemagne, however, were never suffered to continue very long, and, indeed, could seldom be protracted beyond that season of the year, when the severity of the weather, and the scantiness of forage, kept his armies from the field. A new cause of warfare soon called the attention of the monarch, both from the internal regulations in which he was engaged, and from the unconcluded hostilities which he had been carrying on against the Huns.

The more immediate aggression of a Slavonian tribe, called Weletabes, or Wiltzes, inhabiting the northern part of Germany, near Brandenburgh and Pomerania, from the Elbe to the Baltic, induced the French King to march at once against them. This aggression, it is true, was rather directed against the allies and tributaries of the Francs, than against the Francs themselves; but it is not unworthy of observation, that, with wise zeal, Charlemagne strove to make his friendship valuable to the nations round about, by the promptitude and certainty of his efforts to protect them, and on all occasions showed more active vigor in defending a friend or an ally, than even in repelling an irruption upon his own territory, or avenging an insult to his own crown. Many personal causes, in the present instance, contributed to render it imperatively necessary for Charlemagne to act vigorously against the Weletabes. Their contempt of his power had been displayed in a quarter where his authority had not yet been confirmed by time. The Saxons were the daily witnesses of their incursions upon the Abrodites, and other tribes dependent upon France; and the French monarch soon found, that the insolence of a petty people whom he contemned, might, if unpunished, produce the insurrection of a country from which he had much to apprehend.

In the spring of 789, he accordingly made every preparation for an early and active campaign. He called together a considerable army of Francs, mingled with these more trustworthy forces, a large band of Saxons, and commanded the Frisons to ascend the Elbe in their small vessels, while the Abrodites, and other nations who had suffered from the aggressions of the people he was about to punish, made great efforts to second his design with all their power. As soon as these arrangements were completed, Charlemagne passed the Rhine at Cologne, and, traversing the whole of Saxony, reached the banks of the Elbe. Here, however, he paused. The country before him was wild and unexplored, the inhabitants warlike and active, while in the rear of his army lay a nation—extending over a space of several hundred miles—whose subjection was forced, whose hatred he had little reason to doubt, and whose perfidy was known by long experience.

The loss of a battle, scarcity of provisions, or a thousand other emergencies, might compel him to retreat with precipitation; and no deep political sagacity was required to show, that the Saxons would rise on the slightest misfortune which might befal him, and endeavor to obstruct, or prevent entirely, the repassage of the Elbe. To guard against this danger, Charlemagne paused on the banks of the river, and employed his army during several days in constructing two bridges across it, one of which he fortified strongly at either extremity with a fort of wood and earth, which, being sufficiently garrisoned, secured a retreat in case of discomfiture. The monarch then advanced into the heart of the enemy's territory, and a long and desultory warfare succeeded, in which no general battle was fought, and the subjection of the country effected, rather by persevering efforts than by any one decisive blow.

The chiefs of the various tribes composing the nation of the Weletabes, yielded to the superior discipline of the Francs, and, one after another, sacrificed their independence, by taking the oath of homage prescribed by the victor. Hostages of their faith were demanded and given, and, whether from soon learning to appreciate the benefits of a civilized government, or from having at once felt the impossibility of successful resistance, the Weletabes adhered firmly to their vow, and never attempted to shake off the yoke which had been imposed upon them, till moved by the influence of a greater power.

Having thus terminated with ease an expedition which had appeared fraught with dangers and dificulties, Charlemagne repassed the Elbe, and returned to Worms, where he entered the year 790, celebrated as a year of peace. It is probable, however, that the twelve months which succeeded would not have passed so tranquilly if the Chagan of the Huns, or Avars, had not made the first advances towards a termination of the differences between France and Hungary, by sending ambassadors to the court of the French monarch, with the ostensible purpose of settling the respective boundaries of the two kingdoms on the Bavarian frontier. Whether the object of the Chagan was solely to amuse the King of France, till Hungary was again prepared for warfare, or whether the enchantments of self-interest on both sides, blinded the eyes of the two monarchs to simple justice, and created those unreasonable exactions which too often obstruct the arrangement of the simplest claims, cannot now be told, from the want of all minute information in the writings of contemporaries. The general facts, however, are clear. The ambassadors of the Chagan did not accomplish the purpose of their mission, if it was really a peaceful one, and retired from the court of the French monarch without any definitive determination of the points which they had been sent to discuss. After their departure, Charlemagne, in return, despatched messengers to the court of Hungary, but this mission proved not more fruitful than the other, and soon terminated, leaving all parties more disposed to hostility than ever.

While these transactions were taking place, Charlemagne, as if to enjoy to the full the year of tranquility which he had snatched like a flower from amidst the thorns of war, visited various parts of his dominions, and inspected personally several of the buildings which were proceeding by his command throughout the empire. His first visit of the kind was to a new palace which he was raising at Seltz, and round which the infant stream of the Sale murmured amidst some of the most beautiful scenery in Germany. The church and monastery of St Ritharius also, were this year completed, under his especial care and direction; and we are told, that skilful artificers in wood and stone, in glass and marble, were sent by the monarch for the decoration of the building, while an immense number of extremely strong vehicles were dispatched to Rome, for the purpose of procuring materials from the ruins of the glorious past. Descriptions of the construction of a great many ecclesiastical buildings, begun about this time, have come down to us; and on no part of his general scheme for improving his dominions, does Charlemagne seem to have bestowed more pains, than on the cultivation of architectural science. Although, of that science, Rome now possessed scarcely any vestige, she still offered the choicest models and materials that France could procure; and the various journeys, both of Charlemagne himself, and of the workmen he at different times sent to Italy, greatly contributed to the improvement of art in his native country.

The advance of society in Gaul had been very great since the fall of the Merovingian dynasty; and the year of peace which now intervened, was in no degree lost to the people of Charlemagne. They had, indeed, much need of some pause in the gratification of their natural propensity to war, in order to permit the growth of those milder arts, which the monarch was so anxious to cultivate, notwithstanding the warlike character of his own mind. It is not, however, to be supposed, although each year had been almost uniformly passed by the Francs in hostile expeditions, that the useful branches of knowledge had hitherto made little advance during the reign of Charlemagne. On the contrary, we find, that their progress had been rapid and continual.

Unfortunately the state of commerce and industry at that remote period can only be learned from the vague mention of facts and events, to be found occasionally in the midst of an immense extent of desultory and irrelevant writing. Nevertheless, it is evident, even from these casual notices, that France had been rendered by this time the most cultivated country in Europe, (with the exception of the Eastern empire,) as far, at least, as regarded trade and manufacture. The stores of ancient learning, and the remains of ancient magnificence, were still the ruined inheritance of prodigal Rome; but even prior to the year of which I now write, we find Rome herself applying to the monarch of the Francs for skilful workmen and overseers, to superintend those architectural labors for which Italy had been once renowned, and demanding those materials for the construction and reparation of her buildings which the commerce of France could alone supply. Various collateral proofs of the extent of this commerce are derived from the letters and annals of the day, amongst which proofs one of the most convincing is, the fact of the great facility with which pondercous and unwieldy objects were transported for considerable distances. Thus we learn that entire marble columns, and immense stone crosses, were sent overland through the whole extent of France on many occasions, and were uniformly carried in vehicles of French construction. A regular system of port duties also was established, the collector-general of which we find distinctly mentioned; and it would appear, from the same authority, that the right of trading to France was considered of great importance to the neighbouring countries, —so much so, indeed, that Charlemagne is reported to have threatened to prohibit the commerce between England and France as the severest punishment he could inflict on Offa, sovereign of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia, who had given him cause for anger. These facts, as well as the laws concerning mercantile transactions, in which various articles of luxury are expressly mentioned as in common use, and as ordinary matters of

traffic, tend to show that art had reached a greater height amongst the Francs at this time, than has been generally supposed. The vases and cups of gold and silver, carved and embossed with a thousand complicated figures—the silver tables, richly chased, representing cities and countries—the bracelets, rings, and ornamented belts—together with the praises bestowed on the workmanship,—prove that the arts of luxury, which always follow far behind those of necessity, were known, cultivated, and esteemed at this period.

In addition to this, the fact of tablecloths of fine linen having been then in use, shows the perfection to which a branch of industry had been carried that always speaks a considerable degree of refinement in the nation by which it is practised. The skilful manufacture of iron, also, and the strict and severe laws which forbade the exportation of arms, aflford another instance of the superiority of the Francs at that time to the nations round about them; and a thousand other circumstances might be adduced to show, that—however much literature and taste were still inferior to what they appeared in some of the ages which preceded, and in some which followed—yet the necessary and the convenient arts were carried to a height which we do not usually attribute to the eighth century. The advantages to be derived by states from the promotion of industry, and the cultivation of every species of knowledge, was never lost to the sight of Charlemagne; and he snatched each interval of repose, to secure all those facilities to commerce and manufacture, by which alone they can be brought to flourish and increase.

To afford to all the efforts of labor, by clear and comprehensive laws, both instant protection and adequate return, was one great purpose of his legislation; and we find a large proportion of all his capitularies dedicated to the object of guarding merchants from unjust exactions, as well as that of enforcing the performance of bargains, and ensuring justice in all mercantile transactions.

From his capitularies, also, we derive many small points of information, which, though seemingly unimportant, and sometimes even ridiculous, tend greatly to show the state of society in France at that time; and while the general scope and tendency of these laws offer the best representation of the monarch's mind, the minute particulars often furnish a more curious and interesting portrait of the manners of his country, and his age, than circumstances of far greater apparent importance could supply.

Where there exist many facilities for a traveler to procure refreshment and repose, we may generally conclude that the traffic of the country is great, and the state of civilization considerable. In this point of view, the fact that, in the reign of Charlemagne, taverns, where both meat and drink were to be procured, existed throughout France, is not insignificant; and the number of laws in regard to watching the bridges, and the highways, and guarding against those who were likely either to injure individuals, or to destroy public works, presents a singular picture of the struggle between the premature civilization of the sovereign's mind, and the lingering barbarism of his people.

The principal domestic occurrence attributed to this year of Charlemagne's life, is the provision of a distinct jurisdiction for his eldest son. Some time previous to this period, he had apportioned to the two younger brothers, Pepin and Louis, separate territories, the government of which, under his own eye, educated them to the use of authority, and accustomed them to the responsibility of command. His eldest son, Charles, had remained at his father's court unportioned; and, though the dominions to which he was to succeed, were sufficiently vast to gratify even an ambitious mind, yet Charlemagne this year bestowed upon him the duchy of Maine, one of the richest and most beautiful provinces of France, as a foretaste of the sovereignty which he was afterwards to enjoy.

The conflagration of his palace at Worms, and the continual news of warlike preparation on the part of the Huns, were the only events which disturbed Charlemagne's tranquillity during the year 790. But the first of these evils was not so complete as to oblige him to change his residence; and against the latter, he took those prompt measures of precaution, which he always employed with success, in averting or repelling attack. Finding that the Chagan of the Avars still continued to claim a part of Bavaria, and that the subjects of that prince made frequent predatory excursions upon the frontiers of the country, the monarch of the Francs, as winter approached, despatched a considerable force towards the scene of contention.

INVASION Of HUNGARY

Whether he had at this time absolutely determined to carry the war into Hungary itself, or whether the measure was merely, as I have said, one of precaution, in order to guard his territory from attack, till the negotiations which were still pending should be terminated, does not clearly appear. It is probable, however, that, towards Charlemagne, the Avars, or Huns, made use of the same mixture of cunning and insolence, which they had displayed successfully in their conduct towards the empire of the East, on their first entrance into Europe; and it is evident that the discussions were protracted for a great length of time, and were not broken off till the end of the year. But Charlemagne was not to be

turned from his purpose; and the moment the spring arrived, he was once more at the head of his armies, prepared to pursue the war with more than usual vigor. He well knew the great resources of the country he was about to invade, its natural and its artificial defences, and the courage and resolution of its inhabitants; and, though he both contemned the arrogance, which we find from all historians that the Avars displayed, and felt that confidence of victory which is often both a presage, and a means, of success, he prepared for a war of a more serious character, than any which he had hitherto undertaken, and had recourse to measures and precautions, which he had previously neglected to employ.

These precautions were to be taken for the security of the territories which he left behind him, as well as for the conquest of those which he invaded. The paths of conquerors are always on volcanoes, and each step may be shaken by an earthquake; for, in most instances, it requires a longer space of time than the life of one man, so far to amalgamate a subdued people with their victors, as to render any one footfall of ambition secure, in the whole march of hostile aggrandizement. Many have been the means employed, to assimilate nations more rapidly; and the most rational, as well as the most successful, has been that practised by Charlemagne, of endeavoring to overcome national prejudices and the bitter memory of subjection, by a community of interest, and a participation of endeavor and reward. This plan had produced the most happy consequences in regard to the Lombards, who, fighting side by side with the Francs, had become identified with them in victory and glory; and Charlemagne hoped, by the same measures, to bend the Saxons in the same degree.

A large body of that people was accordingly incorporated with his army, and destined to march against the Huns, probably with the double view of employing a number of fierce and active men, at a distance from their own country, and in a situation where they could not revolt, and of habituating them to the customs, the religion, and the discipline of the Francs. His whole forces were then disposed in three great divisions; and, having taken measures to ensure a regular supply of all things necessary for the expedition, he marched towards the frontier of the enemy. The plan of his campaign was one well calculated to secure success. The army which had been previously sent forward to Bavaria, together with the troops raised in that country, were commanded to descend the Danube in boats, which contained also abundant military stores and provisions. He himself marched forward with a large force, on the southern side of the river; and his generals, Theoderic and Meginfried, led the third division, composed of Saxons and Oriental Francs, along the northern bank of the stream. Although these dispositions would, in all probability, have determined the event of the opening war, Charlemagne omitted nothing which might procure a speedy and fortunate issue to his enterprise; and, before entering Hungary, he despatched messengers to his son, Pepin, King of Italy, requiring him to march with the Duke of Friuli and the Lombard forces, upon the frontier of the Avars, and co-operate with the other troops, which he was leading against that nation from the West. Much of the success of an invasion, of course, depends upon the nature of the invaded country; and the territory of the Huns was defended in so peculiar a manner, that it may be well to consider for a moment the difficulties which opposed the progress of the French monarch. A more distinct account of the Hungarian dominions in that day, has come down to us, than the old annalists often furnish on any subject. But that account is so extraordinary in itself, that each writer who has since touched upon the history of Charlemagne, has endeavored to explain, according to his own ideas, the description furnished by the Monk of St Gall, from the words of an eye witness. Some have magnified, and some have softened, the particulars of this account; but the fact, of the country of the Avars having been guarded by fortifications of a very ingenious and perfectly singular nature, is admitted by all. The whole country, we are told, was surrounded by nine circles of double palisading, formed of trunks of trees, twenty feet in height. The interstice of the double palisade was twenty feet in width, which was filled with stone and compact lime, while the top of the whole, covered with vegetable earth, was planted with living shrubs. At the distance of twenty Teutonic, or forty Italian, miles from the first circle, or hegin, as it is called, was a second internal one, fortified in the same manner, and thus the country presented fortress after fortress, from the outer palisade to the small inner circle, or ring, as the writers of that day term it, within which the accumulated wealth of ages was guarded by the Avars. The space between the various ramparts was filled by a woody country, so thronged with towns and villages, that a trumpet could be heard from the one to the other; and the means of egress from the inner to the external circles, or from the extreme boundary to the neighbouring countries, consisted alone in very narrow sally ports, practised in various parts of the palisades.

Such is the description given by a person who wrote within a century of the events he narrates; who received his account from one of the officers of the monarch; and who addresses his work to an immediate descendant of Charlemagne. But, when we remember, that other parts of his work are full of errors and absurdities, and find that, amongst the annalists of the time, his statement is confirmed by little but vague allusions to extensive fortifications, and the still more vague traditions of after years, we shall feel inclined to reject the particulars as hyperbolical, if not totally false, while we admit the general fact, of the country having been carefully secured by strong artificial defences of a singular kind.

In addition to these obstacles to the progress of a conqueror, the people of Hungary were known to be a hardy, bold, and persevering race, so that it required the exertion of all his vast resources to ensure the success of Charlemagne's enterprise. The preparations necessary for carrying on the war upon the extensive scale which these circumstances demanded, delayed the French monarch so long, that the month of September had commenced before he reached the banks of the river Ens, which at that time formed the boundary of Bavaria. From that moment, however, no time was lost ere he proceeded to put in execution the plan he had formed for his campaign. He immediately entered the country of the Avars; and no resistance in the open field seems to have preceded fis attack of the fortresses which lay in his way. Three of these were immediately taken by the monarch, sword in hand, and he then marched onward with his usual rapid advance, laying waste he country, till he reached the banks of the Raab, which he crossed, and, following the course of that river, only halted at its junction with the Danube.

Here Charlemagne encamped for some days, and received the news of the success of his son Pepin, who, with the Duke of Friuli, had entered the territories of the Huns, and, encountering their army almost immediately, had totally defeated them, with immense slaughter. Every promise of success, therefore, had hitherto attended the expedition of the French monarch; but at this time one of the most terrible scourges which could afflict an army, almost entirely composed of cavalry, fell upon that of Charlemagne : A pestilential disease broke out amongst the horses with such violence, that before the sovereign could effect his retreat into Bavaria, nine-tenths of those which he had brought with him had perished.

Notwithstanding this disaster, the retreat of the Francs was not followed by any of those terrible consequences which might have taken place, had the Avars awoke from the panic, into which the rapid motions and immense forces of the French monarch had thrown them, in time to take advantage of the opportunity which accident produced in their favor. The Francs were suffered to retire unmolested, and carried with them an immense quantity of booty, as well as an innumerable multitude of prisoners. Thus far successful, it would seem that Charlemagne, at the time of his return, was fully determined to pursue the war he had commenced, to the utter subversion of the power of the Huns; but circumstance, that mighty disappointer of the best laid designs, intervened, and the monarch of the Francs never more set his foot within the confines of Panonia as a warrior.

In accordance with his intention, however, of re-entering Hungary early in the spring, he proceeded no farther on his return towards France than Ratisbon, where he employed the winter in constructing a bridge of boats across the Danube, and in examining a new heresy which had arisen in the church. As this investigation tended not alone to the refutation of an idle schismatic, but brought on discussions attended with more important historical consequences, we must pause upon the subject longer than would have been otherwise necessary.

THE FELICIAN HERESY

Some short time before the precise period of which I write, Felix, who had been established Bishop of Urgel, a city within the limits of the Spanish march, had declared his belief, that Christ was merely the Son of God by adoption, and maintained his nature to have been human. This doctrine was first promulgated by him in a letter addressed to the Bishop of Toledo; but, not contented with the simple assertion of his own opinions, he endeavored to propagate them by various writings; and was, in consequence, brought before Charlemagne at Ratisbon. A council was immediately called by the King, consisting of such French prelates as happened to be in the neighborhood at the time. By these, the opinions of Felix were condemned as heretical, and he himself was sent to Rome for the judgment of Pope Adrian, to whom he confessed his error, and from whose hands he received absolution.

His doctrine, however, had gained ground : many of the Spanish bishops had embraced the Felician heresy; and it was found necessary to hold a more full and general synod at Frankfort, to consider the subject with greater solemnity and deliberation. In this assembly, Alcuin pleaded against the errors of Felix; and a solemn condemnation of the opinions of that prelate was again pronounced, and generally promulgated, together with Charlemagne's profession of faith. Disputations on points of doctrine almost always lead to the examination of new subjects, and the excitation of new disputes. It is probable, that had the Felician heresy never been examined, the council of Frankfort might never have been held; but, as it was, after deciding upon the first question, the assembled bishops proceeded to discuss the famous Nicene Council, (the second of Nice,) by the authority of which, the Empress Irene had restored the worship of images.

Either sufficient folly, superstition, or civilization, was wanting in the Frankish assembly, to adopt the pure idolatry of the Greek church; and the Council of Nice was, consequently, declared by the Council of Frankfort to be useless and invalid, and its decrees were unanimously rejected. On this last occasion two legates were present on the part of the Pope, who had previously disavowed the

messengers which had appeared in his name at the Council of Nice. Nevertheless, it can hardly be supposed, that the Roman pontiffs, whose separation from Greece had for its motive and justification the abolition of idol worship at Constantinople, would willingly countenance the rejection of the same idolatry in France.

No sooner had the Council of Frankfort decided upon this question, than the priests and learned men, who were gathered together by the patronage of Charlemagne for very different purposes, united to compose a long and studious refutation of the doctrines of the Nicene Council. The book, or rather books, thus produced, (called the Libri Carolini), though somewhat scurrilous, and not very argumentative, received the sanction of Charlemagne, were honored with his name, and were sent, together with an epistle, to the Roman pontifft by the hands of Angelbert, one of the ministers of the monarch.

The Pope replied to the French sovereign's letter, but not to his book; and, quietly allowing the subject to drop, left time and superstition to do their work, and lead the Francs from the toleration of images as useful memorials of faith, to their adoration as visible intercessors. Not long after this period appeared the false decretals, on which so much of the assumed authority of the Roman church has been founded; and it is not at all improbable, that the manufacture of these antedated decrees was first suggested to the policy of the Lateran by the bold tone of the Council of Frankfort. Undoubtedly, to put down such synods, or rather to command them, was the great object of those decretals; and it appears certain, that they were published between 794 and 800. Thus it is probable that Adrian attempted, without answering the arguments of the Gallic scribes, to annihilate such assemblies as that which had prompted them to write.

BOOK X.

FROM THE CONSPIRACY OF PEPIN THE HUNCHBACK,

TO THE FINAL SUBJUGATION OF THE SAXONS.

792 TO 804.

When Charlemagne first undertook to revenge the aggression which the Huns had committed in their irruptions into Bavaria, internal tranquility and external peace, offered the fairest opportunity for the endeavor, and the clearest prospect of success. But, before he could enter upon a second campaign, unexpected dangers assailed him on all sides. The first, and the most imminent of these dangers, as it menaced his own person, as well as the security of his dominions, arose in a conspiracy formed by several of his nobles, who had again occasion to complain of the cruelty of the Queen Fastrada. How that cruelty was exercised is not stated on this occasion, any more than on that of the conspiracy of Hartrad in 785; but it is easy to conceive many ways in which a harsh and imperious woman might bring the government of her husband into hatred with his people, though it is difficult to comprehend how such a monarch as Charlemagne permitted his power to be abused by any one to whom it was partially delegated.

It is probable that the conspiracy was long in embryo, and that both real grievances, and restless ambition, added day by day to the numbers implicated. At length the discontent extended to a sufficient number of nobles to render success probable, and nothing farther was required but a chief to give dignity to the enterprise, and to direct the efforts of the conspirators. That chief was unfortunately too soon found, and found in the family of the monarch himself. In very early years, as I have before mentioned, Charlemagne had connected himself with a woman of inferior rank, named Himiltruda, but solely by the ties of illicit love. By her he had one son, named Pepin, who grew up with a shrewd keen mind, an irritable temper, and great personal deformity. Whether from any doubts in regard to paternity, or from some other cause, cannot be told, but Charlemagne so little regarded this child as one of his family, that he gave the same name which he bore to one of his legitimate sons. He educated him, however, and kept him at his court; but it is easy to conceive that, in a bad and irritable mind, the grief which his inferior share of love and authority must have produced, might easily be perverted to hatred towards his father, and malignant envy towards his more happy brothers.

The conspirators who had planned the subversion of their sovereign's throne, found it no difficult matter to bring Pepin the Hunchback, as he was called, to abet their schemes; and, as very frequently happens, the additional criminality of the child who revolted against his father, brought an aggravation of crime to all. To the plot for rising against their sovereign's authority, was added the design of taking his life, and that of all his legitimate sons. What share of private benefit was to accrue to each of the inferior conspirators is not known; but Pepin was to be raised to the throne of France, upon the dead bodies of his father and his brethren.

Pepin feigned an illness, in order to absent himself from the court; and the last arrangements were concluded for the proposed revolt and massacre; but it so happened that a certain monk, named Fardulphus, who had been brought by Charlemagne from Lombardy, shortly after the fall of Pavia, overheard by accident the unnatural resolution of the son, and the bloody designs of the conspirators; and instantly hastened to give information of their purpose.

His account was clear and distinct. The whole of the traitors were arrested and brought to trial; their crime was fully proved; and death was the sentence of all. The sword and the cord were the punishments inflicted on the conspirators in general. One only was spared, in whose case the ties of blood, and perhaps the belief that he had been made an instrument by more designing men, outweighed the cruel justice which demanded impartiality of infliction. Pepin was condemned to eternal seclusion in a monastery; and if we may credit the description of him given by the monk of St Gall, he carried to the cloister the same bitter and disappointed malignity, which had led him to conspire against his father and his king. The sentence on Pepin and his accomplices was, of course, pronounced by a more impartial tribunal than the palace judgment seat of the offended monarch. The general assembly of the Prankish people was called, to take cognizance of the detected conspiracy, and, for the second time, awarded the extreme penalty of the law, for the crime of high treason.

Since the death of Charles Martel, a great change had taken place in the functions of this assembly, the constitution of which, during the first years of the French monarchy, probably varied with everything else, according to the character and power of the sovereign, and the circumstances of the times. Charles Martel, confident in his own superior vigor of mind and body, despising the clergy, who were then in almost as degraded a state as the kings, and fearful of fixing his authority on the support of

the nobles, which had often proved the most unstable of all foundations, dispensed as much as possible with all assemblies of the people; and if he did not formally abolish them, suffered them to fall into desuetude. Pepin, on the contrary, with the object of a crown before his eyes, made use of the ancient meetings of the nation to obtain his purpose; but, jealous of the authority, which he had only shared with a view to confirm, he circumscribed afterwards the powers of the assemblies, and suffered them only to deliberate upon church discipline and general policy. Charlemagne, seated in the hearts of his people,—a nobler throne than the bucklers which raised his father to the acme of his fortune,—trusted the nation that trusted him; and, striving to wield the mighty sceptre of his own genius solely for the benefit of his subjects, neither feared nor encountered opposition to measures, which were conceived in the spirit of disinterested beneficence, and framed with wisdom far superior to his age.

Under his administration, the diets, or general assemblies of the people, constituted as before of all the nobles, both secular and ecclesiastical, exercised immense power. They formed the great council of state, destined to advise with the monarch on all questions of peace or war; and, indeed, on the whole conduct, of his empire. They framed the laws, and enacted the imposts for the following year; acted as the principal court of appeal for the whole people; and possessed all the prerogatives of the highest judicial as well as legislative body.

At these meetings in general, the ambassadors from foreign powers were received; and after the many conquests of Charlemagne, when the national assembly contained representatives from almost every continental country—from the shores of the Baltic to the British Channel, from beyond the Pyrenees to the depths of Panonia—the splendor and singularity of the scene was such as to call forth many a glowing description from the pens of admiring contemporaries. At these assemblies, also, were presented those peculiar tributes, or fines, which vassals were required to pay by the tenure of their lands, and which were called annua, or dona annualia. Here, too, were received the general dues, collected throughout the kingdom, and the tribute, by which conquered nations acknowledged their dependence, while they retained their separate form of government.

In the first ages of the French monarchy, these assemblies were held, usually, only once in the year; but in the beginning of the second race of kings, (though at what period is not precisely known,) two meetings took place annually. The first of these, however, still remained the most important : regulating every thing for the ensuing year that foresight could accomplish; while the second took heed of all which by accident, or from press of business, had been neglected in the first.

Such was the vast machine which Charlemagne employed, in the beneficent purpose of governing his people, for their own advantage. But, notwithstanding the great power which he ascribed to these assemblies, we find that he himself, without their concurrence, often made war or peace; and added laws to those which they had enacted. Thus, while he called the nation, for its own benefit, to participate in the exercise of the authority which his predecessors had assumed, he relinquished no particle of real power himself; and, indeed, the whole of his reign evinces, that if the monarch had confidence in his people, the people had confidence in their monarch; and that, showing his reliance on the nation by consulting them whenever it was possible, he was despotic through the affections of his subjects.

Nevertheless, although the diet served the king as a great and general council on all subjects of universal interest, and in regard to all permanent institutions, there were many sudden emergencies and minor details, on which it could not be consulted; and which, in after ages, have been generally submitted by sovereigns to particular advisers, forming their privy council.

On these occasions, Charlemagne either acted by his own judgment, or by the advice of some of the most prudent of his officers and attendants, who happened to be with him at the time. These he called to a private consultation, whether the question was warlike or political; but there does not appear to have existed any permanent and regular council, to assist the King in matters of general administration.

In regard to the dispensation of justice, however, a regular court was established in the royal palace, at which the King himself frequently presided. The principal officers of this court were called Counts of the Palace, or, in other words, Palace Judges. Of their functions in general, I have given a more detailed account before; and shall only repeat, that to them was a general appeal from all other courts throughout the country, though the right of judging in the first instance also belonged to them, if occasion required such a proceeding. Under the first race of French monarchs, one of these cotints sufficed, and the duties were either small, or were neglected; but in the reign of Charlemagne,—who considered promptitude of decision as an essential part of justice—these officers were considerably multiplied. So much was this the case, that continual access could be had to judgment; and, to use the words of Mably, the business of a courtier was then not to offer flattery, but to administer the law. In aid of these counts, were a number of counsellors, called Scabini Palatii; and, with their assistance, the

palatines held continual sittings in the royal residence, where causes of erery kind were argued and decided, so that redress could never be retarded, nor offences remain long unpunished.

To this court, however, such conspiracies as those of Tassilo, Hartrad, and Pepin, were not submitted, although it would seem that their reference to a general assembly of the nation depended more on the impartial feeling of the monarch, than on the acknowledged incompetency of his palace court. It never appears that the national assembly was less severe in its judgment against traitors, than the most bigoted advocates of authority could have been; for, in all cases, we find that the indignant clamor with which the people doomed to death those who conspired against their King, showed at once how little the nation in general sympathized with the treason of individuals. Mercy, however, has always been one of the peculiar prerogatives of royalty; and Pepin, as well as Tassilo, though condemned by his countrymen, was pardoned by the voice of Charlemagne himself.

The service of the Lombard priest, who, by the loyal promptitude of his information, had saved the state, was not forgotten by the gratitude of the monarch. A year passed away, indeed, before it received its reward; but, at the end of that time, the abbacy of St Denis became vacant; and Fardulphus, so lately a poor and unknown clerk, was raised to one of the richest dignities in the Gallic church.

REVOLT OF SAXONY

To a mind like that of Charlemagne, the conspiracy of his subjects and the treason of his son, were in themselves profoundly painful; but other griefs and disappointments now fell thick upon the monarch of the Francs; and it seemed as if the whole labor of his life were to be done away at once, and to commence anew. Whether the secret negotiations of Pepin and his confederates had extended to Saxony or not, cannot be discovered, but scarcely had Charlemagne encountered the sad news of his son's treachery, and undergone the bitter task of judging his crime, ere he received intelligence that the people on whom he had spent so much time, and labor, and blood, to subdue and civilize, had suddenly broken the oaths they had taken, driven forth the teachers he had sent them, destroyed the churches he had built, and spilt the blood of his officers, wherever they could be found.

After the repeated defeats which they had received, while singly opposed to the monarch of the Francs, the Saxons had not ventured upon so bold an insurrection, as that which they now undertook, without having assured themselves of support. For this purpose, they had entered into a general league with all the Pagan nations round about; and having allied themselves with the Huns, whom they had been led to subdue, they no longer feared to renew the struggle, which, they imagined, disunion and want of allies had hitherto alone rendered ineffectual. The first symptom of their revolt was, as usual, a general return to paganism, and their first effort, an attack upon the troops which Theoderic, the cousin of Charlemagne, was leading back from the campaign against the Huns. A great part of the forces under his command consisted of Saxons and Frisons, and were consequently enemies, rather than fellow-soldiers. The rest, comprising several thousand Francs, taken by surprise, and overpowered by numbers, were cut to pieces to a man.

Such was the first news which reached Charlemagne after the discovery of Pepin's conspiracy; and scarcely had it been received, when another unexpected attack was announced to him. When the French monarch, as I have shown in the history of the campaign against the Avars, commanded his son Pepin, King of Italy, to lead his armies into Hungary, that young prince was already embroiled in hostilities with Grimwald, Duke of Beneventum, concerning the cities of Salernum, Acherontia, and Consia, which Grimwald, on receiving the investiture of the duchy, had promised to dismantle, but which he still held fortified and garrisoned. The young King of Italy, laying aside the affairs of his own government, instantly hastened, as before stated, to obey his father's commands, entered Hungary, defeated the Avars, and worked an important cooperation with the troops of Charlemagne. In return for this prompt and effectual obedience, Charlemagne, early in the winter, despatched his son Louis, King of Aquitaine, with all the forces he could muster, to the aid of his brother in Italy. The King of Aquitaine, in hastening to share the glory of the war against Grimwald, had probably left the frontiers of his province somewhat exposed, so that the Saracens of Spain judged it a convenient opportunity to avenge the aggression which had been made upon their territory, and to recover a part of the ground which had been lost.

FRANCE INVADED BY THE SARACENS

An active and warlike prince then possessed the principal Mahomedan power in Spain; and placing at the head of his army Abdelmelec, an officer of a mind similar to his own, he ordered him to break in upon the Spanish march of Charlemagne, on the side of Gerona. This was accordingly done, and, with the usual rapidity of Saracen conquest, the Moors were at the gates of Narbonne before any force was ready to oppose them. The suburbst of that city were plundered and burnt, and the whole country round laid waste. The invaders then again turned towards Carcasson, and were marching on in their desolating course, when they were encountered by the army of Wilhelm, Duke of Toulouse, one of

the Counts of the March, who, with inferior forces, instantly resolved to give them battle. But, in this instance, the Francs met with an enemy equal to themselves in courage and skill, and superior in numbers. The forces of the Counts of the March were totally defeated; an immense number were slain; Wilhelm himself only escaped by a rapid flight; and the Saracens returned to Spain, loaded with booty and captives.

The breach of a great barrier he had taken immense pains to establish between Christian France and Mahomedan Spain—the total revolt of a country which he had spent half his life to subdue—the conspiracy of his own son against his existence,— such were the misfortunes that, almost at once, assailed the monarch of the Francs. But a glorious record of the greatness of his mind has been preserved by one who was an eye witness to his private life; and it may be boldly stated, on the authority of Eginhard, that, while Charlemagne never showed a sign of exultation in all his mighty successes, he never suffered a reverse to impair his confidence, or disturb his serenity.

Louis and Pepin, immediately on hearing of the conspiracy against the life of their father, hastened to his support and consolation; but finding the evil past, Pepin returned at once to Italy, with directions for carrying on the war against the Beneventines, while Louis, after a short stay, proceeded to Aquitaine, in order to guard against any new irruption of the Saracens. No great operations took place in either of these wars for some time. That with the Beneventines proceeded with some degree of activity; but, while Pepin ravaged the territories of Grimwald, famine and pestilence wielded a more fatal sword in the heart of his own camp. The Saracen invasion, on the other hand, was not renewed; and Charlemagne was left free to carry on the war against the Huns and the Saxons.

His first effort was against the latter people; for the Avars had suffered too much from their recent defeats, to attempt a renewal of active hostilities for some time. Nevertheless, it may be necessary, before proceeding to conduct the Saxon war to its conclusion, to notice an undertaking of great magnitude, the expediency of which had been shown by the former campaign against the Avars, and which a prospect of renewed hostilities hastened in endeavor. In the course of the Hungarian war, Charlemagne had experienced so much benefit from the power of transporting his provisions, and a part of his army by water, that the great and magnificent scheme of establishing the same easy means of communication from one side of Europe to the other, suggested itself to his mighty mind.

It would be attributing too much to him, great as he was, to suppose that the first idea of the enterprise was suggested by any other thing than the desire of facilitating his military operations: but, at the same time, anxious as he always evinced himself for the revival of arts and sciences, the encouragement of manufactures, and the diffusion of commerce, it would be yielding too little credit to his greatness of mind to conceive, that such motives did not mingle with the course of his design, hasten it in its progress, and strengthen it against the difficulties of execution. Whatever might be the origin of his intention, and whatever collateral purposes might combine to urge the attempt, it is certain, that during his stay at Ratisbon, the project of joining the Danube and the Rhine occupied him deeply. The proximity of the two small rivers, the Rednitz and the Altmuth— the one of which falling into the Mein near Bamberg, communicates with the Rhine, while the other joins the Danube near Kelheim—seemed to offer great facility for its execution; and the state of the Danube in that day, very different from what it appears at present, held forth the greatest prospect of advantage. In the spring, Charlemagne had himself laid out the plan of the proposed undertaking; and ordered the works to be commenced but towards the autumn, he proceeded himself, by water, to the spot where they were in progress, ascending the stream of the Danube and the Altmuth, from Ratisbon to the proposed point of junction. The whole autumn was consumed by the monarch in superintending the execution of his design, and encouraging by his presence the host of workmen employed. As winter approached, he crossed the narrow space between the two streams; and, embarking on the Rednitz, by sailing down its course into the Mein, which easily conducted him to Frankfort, at once proved the advantages that might be derived from the passage, if the junction of the rivers could be effected. To this, however, obstacles were opposed, which were in that day insurmountable. Tremendous rains continued to fall during the autumn; and acting upon a light, unstable soil, destroyed during the night nearly the whole fruit of the labours of the day. As the season advanced, diseases broke out, and difficulties multiplied; and, at length, after having carried the works two thousand paces in length, and three hundred in width, the attempt was abandoned. The conception, however, was worthy of Charlemagne; and the vestiges of that great endeavor may still be seen near the little village of Graben, a splendid monument of that magnificent mind, which, in the midst of a barbarous age, devised so vast an enterprize.

DEATH OF THE QUEEN FASTRADA.

At Frankfort, to which Charlemagne proceeded after this ineffectual attempt, was held the general council, some of the proceedings of which I have already alluded to; and there, also, died the Queen

Fastrada, whose deeds had served to darken the splendor of her husband's character, and whose epitaph remains to show the emptiness of epitaphs in all ages.

It may be now necessary, without following any farther chronologically the war against the Saxons, to conduct the history of the struggle between them and Charlemagne to its conclusion; which may be done in a few words. As soon as the Council of Frankfort had terminated its sittings, the monarch of the Francs prepared to re-enter Saxony, and to repress the revolt which had taken place in that country. He divided his army into two parts, and, directing one under the command of his son Charles to pass by Cologne into the lower part of the Saxon territory, he himself led the other division, by the eastern provinces, towards a place called Sintfield, where a large Saxon force lay, with the intention of giving him battle. A sudden terror, however, seized them at the aspect of the monarch, and instead of having recourse to arms, they immediately surrendered themselves prisoners at discretion, implored and received the clemency they had so often abused, and gave hostages for the faith which was soon again to be violated.

Scarcely was the revolt suppressed than it once more broke out; and though no new chieftain sprang up to lead the Saxons, and to concentrate their eflforts, they still waged a long and desolating warfare with the Francs, the history of which is but a catalogue of insurrections and repressions, without any incident of interest to render the detail either amusing or useful.

Charlemagne still pursued his purpose with unconquerable perseverance. If, from their proximity to France, their predatory barbarism, their utter faithlessness, their obstinate courage, and their savage cunning, as well as from the want of all natural barriers against them, and the impossibility of raising artificial ones sufficient to repel their incursions, the Saxons had been found by Charlemagne, at the beginning of his reign, the most dangerous enemies of his nation, he now felt himself far more called upon to subdue them utterly, since they had learned from the Francs themselves the art of war.

The conquest of the Saxons was not a matter of choice, but of necessity, involving at once the existence of the transrhenane provinces of France, the safety of all her northern allies, and her position amongst nations. To this war, therefore, Charlemagne in person devoted all his energies; and, at length, after having in vain attempted, by chastisement and by kindness, by force and by instruction, to tranquillize the whole of Saxony, he fell upon the extreme, but successful, measure, of transporting an immense number from the most turbulent tribes of the Saxons to a great distance from their native country. He accordingly entered Saxony early in the year 804, and, collecting his whole forces at the source of the Lippe, he detached several large bodies, which swept both banks of the Elbe of their inhabitants. Men, women, and children, were alike carried away, and spread over the face of France; and a great number were also transferred to Brabant and various parts of Flanders, where, at the time of the compilation of the Chronicle of St Denis, their language and many of their customs were still preserved.

Only one event took place during the course of these latter wars which is at all worthy of particular remark,—this was the first hostile collision between the Normans and the Francs. Some officers of Charlemagne accompanying his ambassador towards Sigifrid, King of Denmark, were met and slain by the piratical Northmen, and, as usual with savage nations, one aggression was immediately followed by another. The Normans, almost as soon as they had perpetrated the murder of the French ambassador, marched in a large body to attack the nation of Abodrites,—the firmest allies which the crown of France possessed amongst all the northern nations.

Thrasicon, Duke of the Abodrites, however, with Eberwin, an officer of Charlemagne, instantly opposed their progress with activity, vigor, and success. A severe conflict took place, in which many fell; but the principal loss was on the side of the Normans, who were routed and dispersed with terrible slaughter. These events took place some time previous to the last severe measure by which Charlemagne terminated the Saxon war; but on the depopulation of the banks of the Elbe by the transportation of the Saxons, the good services of the Abodrites were not forgotten. The vacant country was bestowed upon that friendly tribe; and Charlemagne thus at once recompensed his most faithful allies, and placed a host of brave and warlike friends between his own dominions and the savage countries of the north.

It has been asserted—though without even a show of reason to support the assertion—that the conquest of Saxony by Charlemagne called the ferocious Normans upon the rest of Europe. Without applying to this idea the harsh term of absurd, a few words may suffice to show, that the subjugation of the Saxons, while it removed one immense swarm of predatory barbarians, did not in the least facilitate the progress of those which followed; but had, in fact, the most opposite effect.

That the Normans never invaded the South by land, is sufficiently well known. All their expeditions were naval, made from their own coasts, and not at all depending upon what nation possessed the German territory; so that the Abodrites were a full and sufficient protection for the

northern frontier of the Frankish dominions; and the subjection of the Saxons gave no facilities to the Normans in that direction. On the other hand, it is more than probable, that, had the Saxons not been subdued, the irruptions of the Normans would have been attended with far more terrible and desolating effects. The Saxons, under the government of the Frankish Emperors,— while in other circumstances they might have been the friends and allies of the Normans, proved their first enemies, and the strongest barrier to their progress in the north of Europe. Scarcely forty years after the death of Charlemagne, the pirates of the north, landing on the coast of Saxony, suffered a most signal defeat from the Frisons and Saxons, whom the great monarch had conquered and civilized; and in 873 and 876, they were again and again overthrown in battle by the same Frisons. But had the Saxons not been so subdued and civilized, what would have been the probable result of their proximity to the Normans? Those two nations were, in fact, but two succeeding waves, in the long tide of barbarian invasion from the north. They were the last and most feeble of those waves, it is true; but had they been suffered to unite and roll on together, they might once more have overwhelmed Europe. Nor was it unlikely that they should unite. The great Saxon confederation offered a model, their proximity a means, and conquest and plunder an object akin to the habits and desires of both; while religion, manners, and national character, afforded a bond of union, and a strong assimilating principle.

Charlemagne conquered the Saxons, as the inveterate enemies of his nation; he attempted to civilize them, for the purposes of peace and security; and he strove to convert them, as a means of civilization. His objects, as a great king and a great patriot, were personal and national; but he no less conferred a signal and lasting benefit upon Europe at large, by subduing even one of those barbarian nations which had more or less desolated every land, and revelled in the blood of every people. That it was the natural tendency of all the northern nations to coalesce, for the purpose of conquest and plunder, is sufficiently evinced by the history of the Francs, the Saxons, and the Normans themselves.

BOOK XI

FROM THE RENEWAL OF THE HUNGARIAN WAR, TO THE ELECTION OF LEO III

794 TO 796.

Having conducted the Saxon war to a conclusion, the history of Charlemagne may proceed with more regularity than it could possibly have done, embarrassed with continual repetitions of similar excursions and similar revolts. It is necessary, however, to retrograde in point of time, and to look back to the year 794, at which period the war already commenced with the Huns, or Avars, had been arrested in its progress, by the conspiracy of Pepin the Hunchback, and the insurrection of the Saxons.

While the monarch in person turned his arms against his more immediate enemies, and met the new danger the moment it appeared, internal dissentions, probably arising in their late defeats, sprang up amongst the Huns, which greatly facilitated the after efforts of the Francs, and soon afforded that nation a favorable opportunity of pursuing the war. During a temporary halt on the banks of the Elbe, in 795, Charlemagne received messengers from one of the chieftains of the Avars, named Thudun, expressing a wish to embrace the Christian religion, and offering to hold his territory of the monarch of the Francs. Though Charlemagne was not yet prepared to lead his armies against Hungary in person, his immediate answer was evidently favorable to the Hunnish prince; but the precise nature of the whole negotiation is not to be ascertained; and an obscure, perhaps impenetrable, veil hangs over the civil dissentions, which opened the way for the entire conquest of Panonia. It became evident to Charlemagne, however, that internal strife reigned amongst his enemies; and every motive induced him to seize the favorable occasion which now presented itself. Thudun is represented, by all accounts, as one of the most wealthy and powerful of the Hunnish chieftains. He willingly submitted himself to France. The rest of the nation were in actual contention amongst themselves; and it was clear, that the moment had now arrived, for pursuing the unconcluded war with every prospect of success.

The subjugation of Saxony, as the enterprife most necessary to the security of his dominions, still occupied the monarch of the Franca himself; and, in consequence, he intrusted the important task of seizing the opportunity, and instantly renewing the war against the Huns, to Herric, Duke of Friuli; but, at the same time, he commanded Pepin, King of Italy, to hasten back from the south, and abandoning his strife with the Beneventines, to complete what Herric was about to commence.

The Lombards and the Huns had been continually at feud, and the accumulated animosity of many years, especially amongst the people of Friuli, soon procured for Herric, Duke of that province, an immense and willing army. Supported by this force, he invaded Hungary, swept the greater part of the country,—which, exhausted by civil wars, made little or no resistance,— and returned, bringing the most immense booty which had ever been captured by any of Charlemagne's armaments.

His steps were followed by Pepin, King of Italy, who, penetrating still farther, broke through all the fortifications of the Huns, whose monarch had been slain in the civil war, captured the royal fortress called the Ring, and carried off all that immense mass of wealth, which the Avars had accumulated, both by plundering the nations round about, and by wringing from the feeble empire of the East, the hoarded riches of centuries of prosperity. All the spoil was brought into France, and laid at the feet of Charlemagne; but that great monarch, after selecting some of the most splendid objects, as offerings to the church, distributed the rest of the enormous prize which had been thus captured, amongst his nobles and soldiers, so that the whole nation of the Francs "became rich, whereas they had been poor before".

At the same time, Thudun, who had betrayed his country probably with the sole purpose of his own aggrandizement, came willingly, with a number of his dependants, to receive baptism, and constitute himself a vassal of the crown of France. Charlemagne treated him with distinction and loaded him with presents, both as an inducement to himself to keep the faith he had voluntscrily embraced, and as an incitement to his countrymen to follow his example, as far as regarded religion. Nevertheless it cannot be doubted, that the monarch of the Francs, though he might look upon the baptism of Thudun as an act of conviction, not of apostacy, could not regard his treason to his country in the same light, and, while he applauded the convert, must have despised the traitor.

For the purpose of affording religious instruction to the conquered people, Arnon, Bishop of Saltzburg, was commanded to preach the Gospel in Panonia; and both captives and populace were treated with every kind of lenity, in order that the consequences of this warfare—so different from those they were themselves accustomed to inflict—might not disgust the Avars with the religion of their conquerors.

That portion of the spoil taken by the Duke of Friuli from the Huns which was destined by Charlemagne for the Church of Rome, was carried to Italy by Angelbert, Abbot of St Richarius, or Centulensis, who was also charged to receive the oath of fidelity from the Roman people, and from Leo III, on his elevation to the chair of St Peter. On Christmas day, AD 799 Adrian, the tried and affectionate friend of the French monarch, had closed a long and active papacy, in the course of which, though he manifested several faults, he had exhibited many noble virtues and splendid talents. Though he did not possess the grand dignity of Gregory the Great, neither did he possess many of the petty absurdities which chequered the character of that extraordinary man. He was firm and courageous, keen and clearsighted, humane, charitable, and consistent. He saw deeply into the characters of men, took extended and sagacious views, both in regard to the present and the future; and, had not a monastic education narrowed his mind, and the petty individuality of ecclesiastical policy contracted his feelings, it is probable that, free from the selfishness apparent in some of his negotiations, and the cunning contrivances which occasionally disgraced his pontificate, he would have been one of the greatest men of that or any other age.

When the news of the death of Adrian was conveyed to the ears of Charlemagne, the monarch wept. He afterwards composed the epitaph of hia early friend, which was sent to Rome, engraven on marble in letters of gold; but the noblest epitaph on the dead prelate was to be found in the tears of the hero.

The election of a new Pope had not in that day adquired the extreme importance which it received in after years, when the progressive encroachments of individual pontiffs, had raised the tiara above both the sceptre and the sword. It was a matter of sufficient consequence, however, to cause infinite intrigue and faction in Rome itself. On the death of Adrian, his nephews, who had been elevated by him to the highest ecclesiastical dignities of the Roman church, and who, beyond doubt, expected to obtain the apostolic seat in succession, were nevertheless excluded from the object of their ambition, and Leo, a Roman priest, the son of Arnulphus, was raised to the pontifical throne. No tumult, however, took place at the time : the wrath which the disappointed competitors felt profoundly, was covered with the specious mask of friendship; and the new Pope, secure in possession, instantly sent messengers to the great defender of the Roman See, to announce his election, and to do those acts of homage towards the Patrician, which were usual in feudal times on any new inheritor entering upon the feof of his predecessor. The forms of homage were ever various, according to the different terms of investiture, the different countries in which the territory lay, and the different circumstances under which the feof was granted. In the present instance, as the mark of his subjection, the Pope sent the keys of the tomb of St Peter, and the standard of the city of Rome; but, at the same time, he begged the monarch to dispatch some great man to Italy, who might, in his name, receive the oath of fidelity from the Roman people.

We must pause for a moment here, to consider this transaction, as it has been a matter of great difficulty and controversy amongst critics and historians. One party appeals to the positive testimony of Anastasius, that certain territories were bestowed upon the church of Rome, and to the corroborative allusions of the Codex Carolinus; while the other relies on the acts of sovereignty exercised by Charlemagne in those very territories, and the acts of submission constantly performed by the Pope. The one party declares, that the gift was absolute, the other maintains, that there was no gift at all; and those ambitious of the character of candour and moderation, assume, that Charlemagne gave, in a moment of liberality, what he chose to resume upon reflection. At the same time, both sides pervert the stubborn facts which are opposed, more or less, to every one of the hypotheses, which they uphold, and either corrupt the texts of the historians, mistranslate the passages which they dare hot admit, or violate all the rules of grammar, to give a forced interpretation to the most simple statement.

I have adopted, in the third book of this history, the opinion, that the territories were granted to the church of Rome, but that they were still held by feudal tenure from Charlemagne, in the same manner that other territories were held by his various vassals. My strongest reason for admitting this idea at first was, because it reconciled all the apparent difficulties which were opposed to every other hypothesis; and each event which I have since had occasion to notice, confirms my belief, that the monarch of the Francs, always reserving to himself the absolute sovereignty, had bestowed upon the Popes and their successors the Exarchate, the Pentapolis, and the Duchy of Rome, merely as feofs. Thus the donation stated by Anastasius, and alluded to by the Codex Carolinus, is admitted, and yet the acts of sovereignty exercised by Charlemagne explained, while the despatch of the keys and the banner appears as an ordinary act of homage from the new vassal to his sovereign. Neither does the fact of the Roman people having sworn allegiance personally to Charlemagne, at all prove that the monarch had made no donation, as some writers have imagined, nor at all militate against the opinion, that the provinces specified were granted as feudal lands. On the contrary, we find that it was the common custom, in the cases of high feofs, not only for the great vassal himself, but for all his principal nobles

also, to take an oath of fidelity to the general sovereign,—an instance of which may be found in the homage of Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria, mentioned in the former part of this work.

BUILDING OF THE PALACE AT AIX-LA- CHAPELLE

We must now turn for a moment to the internal occupations of the French monarch. With Adrian, the late Pope, Charlemagne had lived in that constant reciprocation of friendly offices, which we seldom find between men of so elevated a station; and it has been supposed, that the presents selected from the spoil of the Huns, though afterwards conveyed by the monarch's command to Leo, were originally reserved for his predecessor. Indeed, a gift had been conferred by the prelate shortly before his death, which Charlemagne was not likely to leave long unrequited. This consisted of the beautiful marbles and mosaics of the ancient palace of Ravenna, which had been sent to France by the pontiff, for the purpose of ornamenting the superb buildings then about to be raised at Aix-la-Chapelle. These specimens were, in every respect, invaluable, for although, as I have before shown, architecture, as a science, was by no means unknown in France at that time, and though the kind of mixed Roman, which has been sometimes denominated Lombard, was then making great progress in that country, yet no such works could be produced in any branch of art as those which were still to be seen at Rome and Ravenna, accomplished when the united powers of the East and the West had brought knowledge land skill to their highest perfection.

At Aix-la-Chapelle, situated nearly in the centre of his vast dominions, and in a salubrious climate, Charlemagne had fixed upon a spot for building a palace, in the neighborhood of some natural warm baths,—a Roman luxury, in which the Frankish monarch particularly delighted. All that the great conception of Charlemagne could devise, and the art of the age could execute, was done, to render this structure, and the church attached to it, worthy of their magnificent founder. But no account can be given; for nothing has come down to the present age which can justify any thing like detailed description. Nevertheless, a number of circumstances in regard to this building are occasionally mentioned in the historians of the time, that convey an idea of vastness and splendor, which probably might have been lost had minute examination been possible. Immense halls—magnificent galleries—a college—a library —baths, where a hundred persons could swim at large— a theatre, and a cathedral— a profuse display of the finest marble—gates and doors of wrought brass—columns from Rome, and pavements from Ravenna,—such, we know, to have been some of the many things which that great palace displayed.

Workmen were gathered together from every part of Europe; and, though but small reliance can be placed upon the anecdotes related by the Monk of St Gall, it is evident, from every account, that the building must have been the most magnificent architectural effort which Europe had beheld since the days of the splendor of ancient Rome.

Besides the palace itself, we find, that an immense number of buildings were constructed around it, for the accommodation of every one in any way connected with the court; and adjoining, were particular halls, open at all times, and in which all classes and conditions might find a refuge from the cold of night, or from the wintry storm.

Within the walls, was that famous domestic college, on the maintenance, extension, and direction of which Charlemagne, amidst all the multiplicity of his occupations, found means to bestow so much of his time and attention. But every trace of his actions tends to prove, that his first and greatest object—to which even conquest wasd secondary, if not subservient—was to civilize his dominions, and to raise mankind in general from that state of dark ignorance into which barbarian invasion had cast the world. The great primary step which he had taken had been the restoration of general order, and the re-establishment of individual security by a variety of laws—perhaps not the best that could be framed upon abstract principles, but beyond doubt the best which could be adapted to the age and society in which he lived. By his care the disorders which had pervaded France, even under his father's reign, were speedily done away; and security opened the way for literature and art. These we have seen encouraged by the monarch in their advance; and by this time, his efforts were beginning to bear fruit. The schools which he had established in every different province and cure, throughout his dominions, had now made great progress. Alcuin had returned from England to fix his perpetual abode in France. St Benedict, the younger, had already distinguished the school established by his monastery, had gathered together a considerable library, and had rendered his success a matter of emulation. The college of Orleans, under the care of Theodulphus, bishop of that city, had by this time acquired a name in Europe; and while science had become an object of ambition throughout the whole of France, the means of acquiring it were multiplied in every province. So much, indeed, had been the progress made by the French people since the commencement of the reign of Charlemagne, that, whereas at his accession letters were unknown, and all was darkness, at the present period we find innumerable efforts in literature, comprising both poetry and prose, which, though rude and dusty with ages of

forgetfulness, still show the human mind struggling up like a Titan from the mountains which had been thrown upon its head.

During the first ten or fifteen years after its establishment, the college of the palace had probably followed the court during its frequent migrations, notwithstanding the number of members, and the difficulty of transporting the library, which soon became considerable. Many circumstances, however, seem to show, that after the construction of the great palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, it became fixed in that place. The library, we know, was there concentrated; and several of the books thus collected, such as the Codex Carolinus, &c. have come down through a long line of emperors to the present day. Indeed, a great part of the most valuable literature of former ages, was preserved alone by the efforts of the French monarch for the revival of science; and the link of connection between ancient and modern civilization, owes its existence, as much to the endeavors of Charlemagne, as even to the papal preservation of antique Rome.

In speaking of the domestic college thus established by the Frankish King, I must not omit to notice a curious trait, of even childish levity, which mingled with some of his grandest efforts, for the improvement of his people. Amongst a number of very doubtful anecdotes concerning this institution, we find one fact mentioned, of which we have incontestable proof in the letters of the monarch himself, and which may well go to swell the long catalogue of the puerilities of philosophers, and follies of the wise. This was the adoption of emblematical names by all the persons connected with the palace college; so that we find Alcuin himself writing to Charlemagne as David, and the monarch of the Francs addressing Angelbert, his chancellor, as Homer.

Notwithstanding this little absurdity, which may be conceded to the darkness of the age, Charlemagne gave an example to his subjects of that ardent and indefatigable zeal in the pursuit of knowledge, which alone could lead others on the path along which he sought to guide them. Even the most dry and fatiguing parts of studies, which now form the very rudiments of education, he went through, when he had arrived at manhood. Under Peter of Pisa, whom he brought with him into France, after the conquest of Lombardy, he studied grammar; and Alcuin, at a still later period, became his teacher of rhetoric, dialectics, and astronomy; in the latter of which sciences, the scholar soon excelled his master. Gifted naturally with great eloquence, Charlemagne assiduously cultivated a knowledge of various languages, spoke Latin with the same facility as his own tongue; and acquired a thorough acquaintance with Greek, though the soft sounds of that musical language were difficult of pronunciation to the lips of the Frankish King. At the same time, the national dialect of the Francs was not neglected by the monarch. Licentious and irregular, it was at once corrupt and barren; and Charlemagne applied himself earnestly both to purify and enrich it. The names of the months and of the winds, which had formerly comprised both Latin and barbarian terms, he changed to others of a Teutonic origin. A grammar of the language was commenced under his inspection; and he ordered the old and barbarous poems, which sang the wars and actions of the ancient kings, and which had previously been only transmitted by tradition, to be preserved in registers for the benefit of posterity.

About this time, also, the mode of writing underwent a change. The rude characters employed under the Merovingian race were disused, and the small Roman letters were introduced. As the spirit of improvement proceeded, new alterations were sought; and some years afterwards, to write in the large Roman capitals, became the mode of the day, the initial letter of each paragraph being always highly ornamented, and sometimes painted, many specimens of which have come down to the present time. Though at an advanced period of life when this method of writing first began to prevail, Charlemagne endeavored to learn it, and even caused models of the letters to be laid by bis pillow, that during the waking moments of the night, he might practise the art which he sought to acquire.

Nor did the monarch remain satisfied with leading the way himself on the path of knowledge which he desired the whole nation to follow; nor content himself with bestowing on his children a careful and judicious education, both mental and corporeal; but, by constantly proposing in writing questions for solution, addressed to the various prelates and teachers of his realm, he forced them to exercise their talents and cultivate their minds, under the severe penalty of shame and ridicule. On the other hand, literary merit was never without its reward, for though, as far as we can discover, Charlemagne, wise in his generosity, seldom if ever gave more than one profitable charge at once to one man, yet those who distinguished themselves by talent and exertion, were sure to meet with honor, distinction, and competence.

Sometimes the nature of these recompenses must have rendered the conferring of them a painful duty on the part of the monarch, as it inevitably separated him from many of his best loved friends. Thus, in the year 796, to which I have now conducted the history of Charlemagne, his nomination of Alcuin to the abbacy of St Martin, of Tours, deprived him of that society in which he had been long accustomed to delight. Nevertheless, some compensation must have been derived by the monarch in

this instance, from perceiving, that the sacrifice he had made produced great benefit of that particular kind which he was most anxious to effect. At Tours, Alcuin immediately established a school, which soon became the most famous of all those that had lately arisen in France. From it, as from a parent, sprang a multitude of others; and knowledge was progressively diffused over a large tract of country, which had previously been destitute of any sufficient means of instruction.

I have before pointed out, that France alone was not the sole object of the monarch's care in these respects; and while speaking on this subject, I may be permitted to cast my view a little farther forward than the precise epoch to which the military and political events of this reign have been conducted. In those countries which Charlemagne had added to his native dominions religion and civilization advanced hand in hand. We have seen, through the whole of his life, that the mitigation of the ferocious character of the Saxons was one of the principal objects of his endeavor; and never, either during the fresh revolts which broke out after the Hungarian campaign, or when the whole of Saxony was at length totally subdued, did Charlemagne relax for a moment in his efforts to soften their barbarism, and court them to a better state.

Schools of various kinds were established throughout Saxony; and though the particular institutions of many of these are now lost, yet we find the instance of one perpetually endowed by the French monarchal Osnaburg in Westphalia, where Greek and Latin were to be taught to all applicants. Such were the means he employed to raise his new territories from a state of barbarism; and the immense progress which we find the Saxons had made within the years after their subjugation justifies the policy of the monarch, and evinces the wisdom with which his endeavors were conducted. Other means however, were at the same time employed, the rich and extensive plains of Germany from a savage wilderness were turned into a polished and cultivated land. Cities and towns rose up on the path of Charlemagne, and a civilized population became generally mingled with the original citizens of the country.

Some of these cities still remain, and some have vanished away beneath the decaying footsteps of time; but while France herself, soon after the death of Charlemagne, relapsed into anarchy and confusion, and sank rapidly down from the height to which he had raised her, the change which the great monarch had wrought in Saxony was never done away; and Germamy has yet to bless him as the guide which first led her from darkness unto light.

BOOK XII.

FROM THE RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES IN THE SPANISH MARCH, TO THE DEATH OF THE QUEEN LUIDGARDE.

797 TO 800.

The successful irruption on the part of the Saracens, mentioned in another place, had not only served the temporary purpose of carrying terror and destruction into the heart of the ancient Septimania, but had also procured more solid advantages to the Mohammedan princes of Spain, by shaking the Spanish March, or defensible frontier which Charlemagne had pushed forward far within the limits of the original conquests of the Moors. Barcelona, Huesca, and the entire seashore of Catalonia had now fallen into their hands; and it would seem that this line of coast became the great place of refuge for all those predatory armaments with which the Saracens now swept the whole extent of the Mediterranean. Sicily, Sardinia, the Balearic Islands, and even the coasts of Italy were all in turn made the subject of attack; and Majorca and Minorca remained for some time in the hands of the Moors.

Charlemagne, as the greatest and most zealous of the Christian monarchs at that period in Europe, was applied to by the sufferers; and he was never appealed to in vain. Notwithstanding a fresh insurrection in Brittany, and the war which he was then still waging with the Saxons, the monarch of the Franks made the most immense exertions to aid his Christian brethren in their struggles against the aggressions of the infidel. The Bretons were speedily subdued; and while he himself remained to direct the operations of his army in Saxony, he dispatched a strong force to expel the Moors from the Balearic Isles,—an expedition which was crowned with the most triumphant success.

At the same time, domestic dissensions among the Arab princes of Spain encouraged him to renew the war upon the Catalonian frontier; and the desire of assisting the Gothic Christians of the Asturias in their struggle against the Saracens gave vigor to his determination, and promptitude to his endeavors. Issem, the son of Abderaman, the Moavite, had expelled his brother Abdallah from the Moorish territories in Spain, and had driven him into exile in Africa. A number of the Saracens, however, of Catalonia and Arragon, retained their affection for the exiled prince; and either from private ambition or from attachment to Abdallah, Zatun, who, on the capture of Barcelona from the Franks, had been named governor of that city, sought the French sovereign at Aix-la-Chapelle, and surrendered the territory which he had been appointed to defend.

Although this act of treachery was not committed without an express stipulation that the territories thus yielded were still to be intrusted to Zatun, yet, according to the Frankish accounts, his homage to Charlemagne was complete; and the opportunity now afforded of diverting a part of the Moorish forces from the war with the Spanish Christians, and of regaining the eastern portion of the Spanish March, was not lost upon the monarch of the Franks. His son Louis, King of Aquitaine, then in his twentieth year, a period of existence when the springs of enterprise and zeal are unoppressed by the heavy load which all the difficulties and obstacles of life soon cast upon them, was commanded to march into Catalonia, and take possession of the country, which the Saracen irruption had snatched from the power of France.

Louis, however, notwithstanding his youth, wanted entirely the active vigor of Charlemagne; and though he made frequent expeditions into Spain, obtained some successes, took Lerida, and finally recovered the Spanish March, Huesca baffled his efforts more than once; and a marked difference was to be seen in all his proceedings, from the rapid and sweeping energy which had borne forward his progenitors to conquest and to empire. It has been frequently asserted, that the young King of Aquitaine either advanced in person to the assistance of Alphonso, the Christian monarch of Spain, or sent a large detachment to his aid : but as neither the annalists of Charlemagne nor the especial biographers of Louis himself make any mention of such a circumstance, it must not be admitted as an historical fact. Nevertheless, it cannot be doubted that a great and effectual diversion was operated in favor of Alphonso by the warfare carried on by Louis in Catalonia; and much of the success of that great monarch, in his struggles with the infidel strangers, who, locust-like, had invaded his land, may be attributed to the divided state of the Moorish councils and armies. Thus, while the Gothic Christians, going on from conquest to conquest, succeeded in establishing a united and independent kingdom, and while Alphonso, triumphant at the very gates of Lisbon, despatched part of the spoil of the Moors to Charlemagne, less indeed as a gift than as a proof of victory, and an inducement to co-operation, the monarch of the Franks used every means to retain the Saracen forces on the frontier, and promote the divisions which existed in their empire.

Many opportunities for effecting this purpose presented themselves. Abdallah, the exiled brother of Issem, sought the court of the Frankish sovereign, and, according to his own request, was sent back with honor to Spain, in order to head, the party of his adherents. Zatun, the Emir of Barcelona, soon forgetting his engagements with the Christians, returned to the domination of his former lord, and called back the Saracen power into the Spanish March. A new war instantly succeeded; and after a lingering siege of two years, Barcelona was recaptured by the Franks, and the defensive frontier of France, on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, was restored to the state in which Charlemagne had left it. All these wars in the north of Spain acted as a continual drain upon the Moorish forces, and enabled Alphonso to contend with some degree of equality against their power. At the same time, the Spanish March was restored, and the passes of the Pyrenees were defended, by the care of Louis, with fortresses the remains of which, either real or imaginary, are shown to the present day.

These objects being attained, Charlemagne made no other effort on the side of Spain. It is true, he might have urged his conquest farther, and possibly, taking advantage of the weakness of all parties in the Peninsula, might have added that territory also to those which he already possessed. Some persons have censured him for not making the attempt; and indeed, had either conquest or conversion been his sole object in any of his enterprises, the situation of Spain would have invited his march. But in all his wars, either the security of himself or his allies had been an ingredient in his motives. Such inducements did not extet in the case of Spain : Alphonso was already well able to defend himself, especially after a vigorous diversion had given him the means of establishing his power on a firm basis; and the Pyrenees formed a sufficient frontier barrier for the French territory, as long as the Spanish March was preserved. No motive, therefore, but simple ambition could have carried Charlemagne back to Spain after these objects were accomplished; and the ambition of that great man was always mingled with something which elevated it far above the oidinary passion of vulgar conquerors.

Having, both in regard to the Saxons and the Saracens of Spain, violated the exact march of chronology for the sake of brevity and perspicuity, I may be permitted also to conclude the warfare with the Huns in this place, and to dispose of various other occurrences of minor consequence, in order that the more important events which were preparing in Italy may be noticed with separate distinctness.

The active hostilities which, from time to time, took place against the Avars, like those carried on with the Saracens, were no longer conducted by Charlemagne in person; and the annalists of the time, who principally directed their attention to the proceedings of the monarchy leave in very great obscurityy both the motives for renewing the war and the circumstances which took place in its course. It is certain, however, that very shortly after the last victorious expedition of Pepin King of Italy, Thudun, the Hunnish chief, who had abandoned his religion and betrayed his country, unscrupulously violated the oaths which he had taken to Charlemagne; and, probably, with a view to render himself master of the whole territory, took arms, and prepared to offer a more desperate resistance than the Franks had hitherto encountered. Two of Charlemagne's officers, one named Count Gerold, and the other Herric, Duke of Friuli, collected their forces with all speed, and being already posted on the frontier, hastened severally forward into Hungary, in hopes of suppressing the revolt before time and preparation had rendered it general and dangerous. It is probable that the desire of taking their enemy by surprise engendered some degree of negligence on the part of both the Frankish generals. Advancing from opposite sides of the country, the one, the Duke of Friuli, was led into an ambuscade and killed, with all his followers; while Count Gerold suddenly found himself in presence of a Hunnish army, and was slain as he was addressing his army, preparatory to a general battle, the event of which is doubtful.

From that period the course of the warfare against the Huns remains obscure; but that Charlemagne did not suffer the death of his generals to remain unavenged, nor the hostilities against the Avars to linger, is evident from various circumstances; and in the year 803 we find him at Ratisbon, writing for the return of his army from Hungary. That army returned completely victorious; and the Huns, now permanently subdued, embraced the Christian religion, and did general homage to the Frankish sovereign.

The fate of Thudun is not known. Some accountsf declare that he was taken and executed for the breach of the vows which he had before lighted to the monarch of the Franks, but there is every reason to believe this statement to be perfectly erroneous; and, at the final subjection of his nation, we hear of a prince named Zudun, or Zodan,| Duke of Fanonia, who, with the rest of his countrymen, claimed and received the clemency of the king. That the individual who did so was the same who had before submitted in the year 795 is not only probable, but almost certain.

Although Charlemagne had to treat with the Hunnish people as a conqueror with the conquered; and although the state ot weakness to which they had been reduced by the warfare they had themselves begun with the Franks left them no powers of resistance though their country was little better than an empty desert, and their armies scattered like dust before the wind, yet we do not find that the monarch

took any base or unworthy advantage of their prostrate situation. He required some time to deliberate, we are told, upon the arrangements to be entered into with the vanquished people; but, at length, he dismissed those who had sought him at Ratisbon with kindness and honor. No precise information, indeed, exists in regard to the degree of submission which he demanded, or in respect to the influence he exercised in the government of the conquered country. But that he left the nation all their native laws and old forms of administration is clear; though we may infer, from the circumstance of his ratification having bieen afterward required for the nomination of a Chagan, that his assent was requisite on the elevation of any individual to the supreme dignity of the state. To spread the Christian religion universally among the people, and to ensure the purity of the doctrine taught, appears to have been the only interference which Charlemagne exercised in the domestic affairs of the Avars. But, at the same time, it would seem, that, in accordance with the advice of Alcuin, he exempted them from the payment of tithes to the priests whom he sent among them, and defended them with ready zeal from the attacks of external enemies.

For nearly thirty years Charles the Great had reigned over the Franks, seeing his dominions, his power, and his fame increase every hour. His court was not only the refuge of the unfortunate, but was the resort of ambassadors from all nations; and a history of the various embassies, and their causes, which from time to time reached his presence, would afford no incomplete picture of the general progress of the world during his life. Besides the envoys twice sent by Alphonso, the Gothic King of Spain, bearing rich presents, and instructed to call their monarch the faithful vassalf of the French king, a number of other messengers presented themselves at his court during the years 797-8-9, the most important of whom were those either directly or indirectly, despatched by the empire of the East.

IRENE, THE BYZANTINE EMPRESS, AND CHARLEMAGNE

For many years Irene, the beautiful Athenian girl who had been bestowed on Leo the Isaurian, had continued, after the death of her husband, to sway with delegated power the sceptre of the East, as the guardian of her son; but, after a time, her authority became irksome, both to the prince, whom she strove still to enthral, after the period of pupilage was over, and to the people, from whom she exacted an undue submission. The Armenian guards of the emperor, the countrymen of the wife which she herself had given him, were the first to oppose her encroachments; the youthful Constantine seconded their efforts, resumed the power which had been entrusted to his mother, and consigned her once more to a private station. But power to man or woman is like blood to the lion—once tasted, it brings a consuming thirst for more. What Irene could not accomplish by boldness she undertook by art. She submitted with apparent resignation; and while she attempted by flattery and caresses to regain the affection of her son, she laid within the walls of his palace a deep intrigue for his destruction. One of the first steps of the young emperor, after he had taken the staff of rule into his own hands, was to seek the friendship of the great monarch of the Franks; and he transmitted to the patrician Nicetas, who then governed Sicily, an epistle, to be sent forward to Charlemagne, in order to bring about a closer alliance than had hitherto existed between the courts of France and Constantinople. In compliance with the emperor's commands, Nicetas instantly dispatched the letter by an envoy named Theoctistes, who found the monarch at Aix-la-Chapelle. He was immediately admitted to an audience, and acquitted himself of his charge; but his embassy proved fruitless; for, while still upon his journey, a change had taken place in the Eastern capital. The plots of Irene had been successful: Constantino VI indeed, suspecting some design against his liberty, had made his escape for a time from Constantinople; but his flight did not place him beyond the influence of his mother's cabals. His officers and attendants were the creatures of her will; and fears lest their treason should be betrayed by its instigator gave them courage to accomplish their crime. Constantine was carried back by force to his capital, to his palace, and to the chamber of his birth, wherein his own servants, by the commands of his own mother, deprived him for ever of the light of day.

When any singular natural phenomenon follows or precedes the great actions or mighty crimes of human beings, the superstitious vanity which teaches man to regard himself as the prime object of all creation easily points out a sympathy in the inanimate world with the interests of mankind. Thus, an extraordinary darkness which pervaded the mater part of Europe during seventeen daysfafter the unnatural crime of Irene, was universally attributed, in those times, to her cruel ambition. Undaunted, however, by omens, the empress, now acknowledged sole ruler of the East, hastened to socore her power as far as human cunning might prevail. To court the sovereigns around her to peace or alliance, till such time as her authority was established at home, was one great object; and the next ambassadors from Constantinople which appeared at the court of Charlemagne were Theophilus and Michel, sumamed Ganglianos, two men of high station and distinction, who came charged, apparently, with the unimportant task of soliciting the enlargement of Sisinius, an officer who had been captured in Italy, on the defeat of Adalgisus. He was, it is true, the brother of Tarisius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who had been the secretary and favourite of the empress; but the patrician Michel and his companion were

intrusted, in reality, with a more important mission—that of communicating to the monarch of the Franks the cruel treason which had been perpetrated on the person of the unhappy Constantine, and of negotiating a peace between Constantinople and France.

The envoys stated, that the fallen emperor had been blinded by his attendants, on account of his depravities and tyranny; and Charlemagne, whether he believed the tale or not,—though it is probable, from his annals perpetuating the same story, that he did,—entered willingly into the alliance proposed by Irene; and, at her request, sent back to his native country the unfortunate Sisinius.

About this time, which in the life of, Charlemagne was a period of negotiations, his first communication was opened with the great ruler of Asia. The throne of the caliphs had, some time before, passed to the family of the Abbassides, and the mightiest of that family now governed the eastern continent. Haroun al Raschid, so well known in both real and fabulous history, first signalized his arms against the empress of Constantinople, while yet she wielded the scepter in the name of her son. He also, at that period, acted only as deputy for his father Mohadi. But after having advanced to the shores of the Bosphorus, and having treated with Irene for the security of her territories, he retired on receiving seventy thousand dinars of gold; and assumed, soon afterward, the sovereign power, on the death of his father and his brother. Custom, with most of the oriental nations, is very readily fixed into a law, known among some of them by the name of adeth, or canoun; and, once established, is regarded as a kind of covenant, which is as binding as if written. Whether this understanding existed in the time of Haroun al Raschid or not I do not know, but the seventy thousand dinars of gold, after having once been given, soon grew into an annual tribute, which the Greek empire found less expensive to pay than to neglect. Either by the conveyance of this tribute, or by the expeditions to which its occasional cessation gave rise, a constant intercourse of some kind was maintained between Constantinople and Bagdad. Various other means of communication also existed, both in the wanderings of the Jews, who were at this period spread over, and tolerated in all lands, and in the nascent efforts of commerce on the chores of the Mediterranean.

There were then but two great monarchs in the world; and the ears of the caliph were filled with the wars and enterprises of the sovereign of the Franks, who was either an open adversary or but a cold ally of the Greeks, on whom he himself trampled, and who was also the continual enemy of the Omaiades of Spain, whom the Abbassi contemned as heretics, and hated as rivals. The caliph beheld in the European king the same bold and daring spirit, the same rapid energy, the same indefatigable zeal, the same magnificent designs, by which ha himself was animated, and similarity of mind, free from rivalry of interests, produced admiration, respect, and affection. The feelings were the same in the breast of Charlemagne; and reciprocal regard soon produced a more direct communion. At length, in 797, one of those wandering strangers who are so frequently to be found in the courts of monarchs undertook to conduct ambassadors from the French king to the presence of the caliph. Three envoys were accordingly sent under the conduct of Isaac the Hebrew, as he is called by the annalists; and were charged to offer the presents and the friendship of the French sovereign to the ruler of Asia. The Frankish ambassadors reached the court of the caliph in safety; and, having acquitted themselves of their mission, and received the gift of an elephant, which they had been instructed to request, prepared to return to Europe. The change of climate, however, proved fatal to the Franks; and Isaac the Jew, leaving the bones of his companions in Asia, returned alone, bringing with him the elephant and other presents from the oriental sovereign, together with the proud but flattering assurance from the mighty follower of Mohammed, that he regarded the friendship of Charlemagne more than that of all the monarchs of the universe.

Such were the feelings of Haroun al Raschid towards the sovereign of the Francs, and such was the state of intercourse between them when the patriarch of Jerusalem, moved by what circumstances we do not know, despatched a monk of Mount Olivet to the court of France, bearing his benediction, and various relics from the holy places of the East, to the great promoter of Christianity in Europe.

Long prior to that period (about the year 637) Jerusadem had fallen under the yoke of the Saracens and the Christians of the Hebrew capital had been doomed for a long time to a general capitation-tax of two pieces of gold for each individual of the impoverished population. Three-fourths of the town also, had been usurped by the infidels; and whether the patriarch, in his embassy to Charlemagne, sought to mitigate the sufferings of his flock by securing intercession with the caliph, or was actuated solely by reverence for the many deeds of charity which the French monarch performed in favor of the pilgrims to the holy shrine, and the poor Christians of the African and Syrian coast, his conduct was at all events, attended with the most beneficial effects to the faithful inhabitants of the holy city.

The messenger of the patriarch was received with honor and kindness; and, anxious to spread comfort and consolation to every quarter of the world, Charlemagne suffered him not to depart without

an effort to ameliorate the situation of the Asiatic Christians. Zacharias, one of the ecclesiastics of his palace, was ordered to accompany the Syrian monk to the presence of the caliph, and to use all the influence of the name of Charlemagne, in order to procure the favor of the Mohammedan monarch for his Christian subjects. At the same time, the sovereign of the Franks, sent innumerable rich offerings to the shrine of the holy sepulchre, together with alms for the consolation of pilgrims and travellers.

Charlemagne had not calculated wrongly on the magnanimity or the friendship of Haroun. The monarch of the East not only interposed from that moment the shield of his protection between the Christians of Jerusalem and the oppression of his vicegerents, but he placed it in the power of Charlemagne himself to providie for their wants, their safety, and their comfort.

In reply to the message of the French monarch, the caliph sent back the priests who had been despatched to his court, bearing to Charlemagne the keys of the holy places, together with a standard, as the mark of sovereignty in Jerusalem.

Nor was this gift unimportant, either in the eyes of him who gave, or of him who received; for it must be remembered that the Mohammedans look upon the holy city with reverence little, if at all, inferior to that with which it is regarded by the Christians.

From that time forward, during the whole reigign of Haroun al Raschid, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to use the words of William of Tyre, seemed to live more under the domination of Charles than iunder that of their original sovereign. But Charlemagne made no vain, no ambitious, and no offensive use of the power with which the caliph entrusted him. He attempted to establish no claim of permanent domination—to revive no ancient pretensions to the city; he interfered not with the Moslem—he exercised no act of dominion, but for the consolation of the Christians of the place, and for the comfort and protection of the pilgrims to the holy shrine. For those objects, indeed, he spared neither care, nor trouble, nor expanse; and we find, that during his whole life, in the midst of a thousand other labours, and surrounded by anxieties without number, he never forgot or neglected his charitable exertions for the Christians of the East. Alms, assistance, and protection evinced his kindness and his zeal, during his life; and, long after his deaths a monastery, an hospital, and a library consoled the pilgrim, and perpetuated his bounty.

Haroun al Raschid esteemed the moderation as much as the talents of the French monarch; and the very temperate use of authority, which has caused the gift of the holy city to be, doubted by modem historiants, secured him the regard of his great contemporary. Other embassies followed, from the Asiatic to the European court. A variety of magnificent presents attested the continued esteem of the caliph for his Christian friend; and unbroken amity and undiminished admiration reigned between the two greatest monarchs of the age, during the whole course of their mutual reign. The carriage of such objects as the presents sent from Bagdad to France was, of course, attended with no small inconvenience; and the neglected state of the science of navigation rendered the journeys of the ambassadors long and dangerous. Between three and four years were generaly consumed in a mission from one capital to another and, indeed, it happened more than once that even after arriving within the dominions of the Frankish monarch, the envoys had still to seek him over a tract nearly as extensive as that which they had before crossed. Where a much greater degree of civilization exists in the monarch thanin his subjects, where his mind must conceive every great undertaking, and his eye must see it executed, without relying on the inferior spirits that toil, with the pace of pigmies, after his giant footsteps, it is seldom, of course, that he can enjoy repose in any one place for a considerable length of time. But at the period in the life of Charlemagne which we are now considering, his journeys were more frequent, long and difficult than at any previous epoch.

Besides the unconcluded war which was still raging with the Saxons, and which, as we have seen, occupied so much of his attention, other dangers threatened his kingdom, in such a manner as to render the preparations necessary for defence more extensive and general than had hitherto been called for by any event of his reign. The same natural causes which had impelled the nations of the north, in succession, to invade the more fruitful and cultivated countries of the south of Europe, were now acting upon the Danes or Normans; and the same advantages of seacoast and easy ports, which had given a maritime character to the early expeditions of the Saxons, tended to lead this new horde of barbarians to carry on their warfare on the waves.

Long before the present period, the Normans had begun to essay their strength upon the sea; and in the absence of domestic arts, as the population of the country increased without the means of supply, the desire of wandering and the necessity of plunder drove them forth to seek in other lands the wealth they possessed not in their own.

Repelled in their first attempts upon Saxony by the Abrodites and other allies of France, which Charlemagne had placed on the borders of Germany, the Normans spread themselves over the ocean;

and, by entering rapidly the mouths of the prin- cipal rivers, and making fierce and sudden descents upon the banks, they had now more than once carried terror and desolation into parts of France which had previously been exempt from the horrors of war.

Nothing was heard but complaints, and cries, and petitions for protection from the inhabitants of the coast; and the first moment that his presence could be spared by the armies warring in Saxony, Charlemagne hastened in person to examine the evil, and prepare a remedy. Scarcely had the spring of the year 800 appeared when the monarch set out from his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, and, traversing the whole of France, followed the coast of the Bay of Biscay, which had been particularly infested by the Norman pirates; established fortresses and garrisons to defend the shore; and, causing an immense number of small vessels to be built, he stationed them well manned and armed, in the mouths of all the principal rivers of France and Germany. Thus, the Normans found themselves opposed at every point; and, in an extraordinjary short space of time, the whole coast which had been subject to their depredations was in a complete state of defence. Driven back in every effort to land, they abandoned for the time their attempts upon the shores of France, and contented themselves with ravaging some of the small islands scattered on the borders of the German Sea. During this journey round the coast, Charlemagne is said to have arrived at one of the ports at the moment that the Norman pirates appeared. The invaders, however, learning the presence of the monarch, set all sail, and bore away; but Charlemagne remained gazing upon their departing vessels, while the tears were seen to roll over his cheeks. "I weep not, my friends", he said, turning to the nobles, who looked on in surprise, "because I fear myself those miserable savages; but I weep that they should dare to show themselves upon my coast while I am living; for I foresee the evils they will bring upon my people when I am dead."

Charlemagne, finding the entire success of the plan he had adopted against the Normans, pursued the same system in regard to Italy, and to the French provinces on the shores of the Mediterranean. These were as much threatened and as often plundered by the Moors as the northern and western portions of his territory were by the Danes; and the same scheme of defence, adapted to both, produced equally happy effects. The mouths of the Rhone, the entrance of the Tiber, and all the ports of Provence and Italy were furnished with armed vessels, continually prepared to repel and to revenge invasion; and the Saracens, with the exception of the capture and pillage of Civita Vecchia, gained no further advantage on the shores of Italy.

As soon as he had concluded the preparations necessary to defend the coast of France, Charlemagne returned to the monastery of St. Richarius, near Abbeville, probably with the design of holding the general assembly of the nation, and proceeding immediately towards Rome. The illness of his queen, Luidgarde, however, opposed a temporary obstacle to the execution of this purpose. With that domestic tenderness which formed a fine and endearing point in the character of the great monarch, Charlemagne accompanied the dying queen to Tours; knelt with her at the shrine of the saint whose virtues she fancied might restore her to health; closed her eyes, after skill and prayers had proved impotent to save her, and rendered the last sad offices to the clay of her whom he had loved.

BOOK XIII.

FROM CHARLEMAGNE'S LAST VISIT TO ROME TO HIS DEATH

800 TO 814.

While such had been the occupations of Charlemagne in France and Germany, Rome had been the theatre of events which strongly called for his presence in Italy. The hatred which Campulus and Paschal, the two disappointed aspirants to the papacy, had conceived against the more successful Leo had slumbered, but was not extinct; and towards the year 799 some circumstances which are not known seem to have roused it into new activity. The ecclesiastical situations held by the two factions Romans, and the favor with which they were regarded by the unsuspecting Leo himself, gave them many oportunities, we might imagine, for executing any project of revenue which went the length of aissassination. It would appear, however, that Paschal and his fellow-conspirator, though determined to gratify their vengeance, and to open the way to their ambition, rendering the pope incapable of fulfilling the pontifical office, hoped, by a mixture of boldness and art, to escape the penal consequences of their crime, and to cover the mutilation they intended to perform under the hurry and confusion of a popular tumult.

The moment they chose for the perpetration of their design was while the pope, attended by all the clergy, and followed by all the populace, rode in state through a part of the city, performing what was called the Greater Litany. On the day appointed for the solemnity—the 25th of April—the ceremonies commenced without any appearance of danger, or any suspicion of treason. Paschal and Campulus were placed close to the person of the chief pontiff, and are said to have received from him some new mark of kindness on that very morning. All passed tranquilly till the line of the procession approached the monastery of St. Stephen and St. Sylvester; and even then the banners and crosses, the clerks and the chorists, which preceded the pope, were permitted to advance, till suddenly, as the higher clergy began to traverse the space before the building, armed men were seen mingling among the people. The march of the procession was obstructed a panic seized both the populace and the clergy. All fled but Campulus, Paschal, and their abetter; and Leo was left alone in the hands of the conspirators. The pontiff was immediately assailed and cast upon the ground; and, with eager but trembling hands,—for crime is generally fearful,—the traitors proceeded to attempt the extinction of his sight, and the mutilation of his tongue. It is probable that the struggles ot their unfortunate victim disappointed the strokes of the conspirators; and that his exhaustion from terror, exertion, and loss of blood deceived them into a belief that they had more than accomplished their purpose. Dispersing the moment the deed was committed, the chief conspirators left the apparently lifeless body of the prelate to be dragged into the monastery of St. Erasmus, which was done under the pretence of yielding him aid and succour, but in reality with the intention of retaining his person in captivity, if he survived the horrible infliction with which they had visited him. The news of the crime which had been committed spread like lightning, not only through Rome itself, but to the adjacent states, and soon reached the ears of Winegisus, Duke of Spoleto, who, though frequently opposed to the see of Rome, was on all occasions a frank and gallant enemy or a sincere and zealous friend. Without losing an instant, the Duke of Spoleto armed in favor of the pope, and, marching with all speed, encamped under the walls of Rome.

In the meanwhile, Leo had recovered from the first effect of his wounds, and was in a state to second the efforts which were made for his release by his friends and attendants. Albinus, his chamberlain, left no means untried to assist him; and co-operators having been found in the interior of the convent in which he was confined, he was lowered from the walls by ropes, and restored to his friends, who immediately conveyed him to the church of St, Peter. His recovery and escape struck the conspirators with astonishment and terror; and their suspicions instantly fixing upon the chamberlain as the person who had contrived his evasion and had given him refuge, they attacked that officer's house, which was speedily plundered and destroyed.

Before they could proceed, however, to further search, the arrival of the Duke of Spoleto with an overpowering force put a stop to their outrages; and the pope, placing himself under his protection, retired to Spoleto, while messengers were dispatched to Charlemagne to communicate the events and demand instructions. The news reached the monarch of the Franks as he was about to head one of his many expeditions into Saxony; and, without pausing on his march, he commanded Winegisus to send the Roman pontiff forward to Paderborn, with all the pomp and honor due to the successor of St. Peter.

His commands were immediately obeyed; and Leo was received at the military court of the monarch with distinction and kindness. Nevertheless, accusations were not wanting against the pontiff, and, though what the crimes were with which his enemies charged Leo cannot be discovered, it is sufficiently evident that Paschal and Campulus now attempted to justify what they could not conceal, by

imputing atrocious vices to him whom they had attempted to destroy. The artifice was too apparent, and their own crime too glaring, for Charlemagne to give any credit to the charge, however boldly made, while it was unsupported by better evidence than their individual assertion.

Justice, nevertheless, required that examination and punishment should follow such accusations and such violence; and consequently, after entertaining the Roman prelate for some time at his court, Charlemagne sent him back to Rome, accompanied by nine commissioners, chosen from the highest and most incorruptible nobles of France, both clerical and secular, with orders to re-establish him in the apostolic chair; but, at the same time, to collect and investigate all the charges against him. The monarch's promise was likewise given to visit Italy himself and to judge between him and his accusers. Without any historical grounds for such a conjecture, a suspicion has been raised, and magnified into an assertion that Chariemagne, in saving that promise aimed at the assumption of the imperial dignity. The same populace which had fled terrified from the side of the pope when attacked by the conspirtors received him with joy and acclamations on his return; while the presence of the Frankish commissioners, and the support of a Frankish army, gave dignity and security to the resumption of the pontifical office. The counts, bishops, and archbishops who had followed the prelate from France immediately proceeded to exercise the functions with which Charlemagne had invested them, by inquiring minutely into the assault that had been committed on the person of Leo himself, and by examining the charges which his enemies brought against him. What was the nature of the evidence given on this occasion does not appear; but the investigation ended by the arrest of Campulus, Paschal, and several other Romans, who were instantly despatched as prisoners to France, to wait the promised journey of the monarch himself. By the various emergencies of state mentioned in the preceding book, that journey was delayed till late in the year 800; when at length Charlemagne, having convoked the general assembly of the nation, and announced the reasons which impelled him once more to journey into Italy, took his departure from Mayence, and, accompanied by an army marched on to Ravenna.

Various motives, besides the decision of the great cause between Leo and his enemies, combined to lead the monarch into Italy; and among these, one of the principal inducements was the desire of putting a termination to the war which had sp long continued between his son Pepin and the young Duke of Beneventum. In this Charlemagne had hitherto taken no part, except by affording occasional advice and assistance to his son; but now, although he seems still to have determined upon refraining from personal hostilities, he came prepared to render more effectual support to Pepin than that prince had hitherto received.

Nevertheless, it is evident that the attention of Charlemagne was principally directed towards the reorganization of the deranged government of Rome. It cannot be doubted, indeed, that the defence and support of the Roman church was always an object of great—perhaps too great—consideration with that monarch. But it must be remembered, at the same time, that in his days that church held out the only means within his reach of spreading the mild doctrines of Christianity, and thus afforded the only sure basis for civilization and improvement.

To guard and to maintain it, therefore, was one of the principal endeavors of his life; and, on the present occasion he did not show any relaxation of zeal in its defence. As soon as he had made all the necessary arrangements with his son Pepin, whom he sent at the head of the army he had brought from France to carry on the war against Beneventum, the monarch of the Franks quitted Ancona, to which place he had advanced, and then proceeded towards Rome. At Lamentana he was met by Leo, who was still received and treated with such marks of favor as showed no bad impression of his conduct; and on entering Rome the next day the monarch of the Franks met with the same enthusiastic reception which had welcomed him on his first visit to the eternal city.

After a repose of seven days, Charlemagne proceeded to the task which had brought him to Rome, and made every perquisition, we are told, in order to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the accusations which had been levelled at the pope. Every anthority agrees in stating that these could not be to the slightest degree substantiated; but, at the same time, it is but fit to remark, that all the accounts which have reached us received their origin from either the adherents of the person who was acquitted, or of the judge who pronounced sentence in his favor. No reason, however, exists for supposing that the decision of Charlemagne was prejudiced or unjust. Nor did he solely rely upon his own judgment in a matter where, though he might feel sure of the equity of his intentions, he might doubt the impartiality of his affections. A synod, comprising all the higher clergy of Rome, was called; the evidence which had been procured was laid before it : and the members of which it was composed were directed to pronounce between the head of their order and two of the most distinguished members of their own body.

Charlemagne, unbiased by the shrewd policy of ecclesiastical interests, sat as sovereign and judge to try the pontiff. He acted as the ruler that he felt himself to be; he used the authority he knew that he

possessed; and only considered his capability of deciding justly without looking into the remote consequences of the proceeding in which he was engaged.

Not so the eccLesiastics whom he called to his aid. Each individual was a member of that mystic and indivisible whole—the Church of Rome, which, in the perpetuity of its own nature, communicated to all its parts that prescience and devotion to future interests that no temporal and transitory dynasty has ever been able to inculcate or enforce. To the synod, therefore, from whose wisdom and impartiality Charlemagne expected a verdict, the precedent of such a tribunal appeared most dangerous, especially while a lay monarch assumed to himself the privilege of presiding at its deliberations. To sanction it by any recorded sentence was painful to each of the members, while to oppose the will of the patrician, or to expose the motives which rendered the measure obnoxious, were equally impossible. One of those happy stratagems which have so often blessed the policy of the Vatican, and which was doubtless concerted between the chief pontiff and his prelates, delivered the assembly from the difficulty under which they labored.

No one appeared to accuse the pope, and each of the ecclesiastics declared his private opinion of his innocence; but, without at all imputing the right of Charlemagne to sit in judgment on the supreme pontiff, the assembled prelates severally declared that they could not, according to any of the rules of ecclesiastical discipline, pass sentence, whether of condemnation or acquittal, upon their general superior. In this dilemma, Leo himself proposed, that, according to a custom frequently resorted to under peculiar circumstances, he should purge himself, by a solemn oath, of the crimes of which he had been accused; and, mounting the pulpit of the church of St. Peter, he took the Book of Life in his hand, and with the most awful asseveration which can pass the lips of a Christian, declared, in the face of the assembled congregation, his perfect innocence of the charges which had been brought against him. Joy and festivity succeeded this termination of the trial; and the judgment to be passed on the assassins who had attempted the murder or mutilation of the pope was reserved for an after period.

THE CORONATION OF CHARLEMAGNE

A great epoch in the history of Europe was now approaching. We have seen that the Roman people, with their efforts directed and concentrated by their bishops had cast off the authority of the Eastern empire on account of the inconoclastic heresy. They had not rendered their separation irreparable by electing a new Emperor of the West; but they had resumed some of the forms of the republic, and had named for themselves a patrician, who exercised in Rome the imperial power, without possessing the imperial name. That patrician had conquered for himself the kingdom of Lombardy, had claimed and received homage from Beneventum, had recovered a great part of the territories of ancient Rome in the West, and had acquired a vast extent of country that the empire, in her best days, had never been able to subdue. He had the power and the will to protect his subjects more than any other monarch in Europe; and he already possessed and exercised a degree of authority which no title could render greater.

At the same time, though the heresy of the East, which had caused the separation, was done away, the holy images restored to their places, and intemperate zeal displayed in their defence; yet the Patriarch of Constantinople was a dangerous rival to the pontiff of Rome; and the government of the emperors withheld from the pope many a rich diocess, and a profitable territory. The impotence of the court of Constantinople, either to defend or maintain the empire and its struggles with the Popes; and the natural predilection of the Byzantine monarchs for their eastern provinces had already proved the ruin and debasement of Italy.

To return, therefore, under the domimon of the East could never be contemplated either by the Romans or their pontiffs, while to render their separation eternal, by the election of a new Emperor of the West showed a prospect of many advantages, both direct and collateral. The orthodoxy of the French monarch, indeed, was more than doubtful in the eyes of the Roman church; but though his scribes had been zealous in their condemnation of the iconoclasts, even to ribaldry, the king himself had preserved a more temperate demeanour, and had bowed himself to the ancient proverb of following at Rome the usages of Rome. A thousand personal motives, also, conduced to close the eyes of the pope towards the heretical doctrines which had been honoured by the name of Charlemagne. Gratitude for immense benefits conferred, and the prospect of rewards to follow, might act as a strong inducement in determining the restoration of the Western empire, and the election of Charlemagne. But there might be other and more powerful causes still, which operated in the mind of the pontiff to produce the same resolution. The general vassals of an emperor bore a much higher rank than the vassals of a foreign king. Italy, so long a dependent province, would at once take the first place, rise up from the ashes of four centunries and soar again into the blaze of empire; while the pontiff, whom a king had presumed to judge, would shake off the degradation of his submission, by rewarding his protector with an imperial crown. The distant prospect of future claims and encroachments, to be founded on that gift, might

present itself vaguely to the eye of sacerdotal policy; and a basis for entire territorial independence and immense ecclesiastical dominion, might perhaps be seen by the pontiff, in his creation of an emperor, and nomination to dominion.

Such were probably the motires of Leo for the revival of the empire of the West in the person of Charlemagne. The motives of the French monarch for accepting it were as clear, but were not quite so unmixed with difficulties. The jealous enmity which must naturally arise in the bosoms of the Greek emperors would necessarily require opposition, either by arms or negotiations, in a moment when, surrounded on every side by enemies, all the energies of his own vast mind scarcely sufficed to meet the many dangers by which he was assailed. Nor could Charlemagne feel quite sure that the Franks would cordially accede to his deriving a higher title, and more unlimited authority, from another nation, than that which they conceded to their kings. All these matters required time for consideration; and, even when his resolution was fixed, time for preparation also. It is probable, that shortly after his arrival hi Italy, he received an intimation of the pope's intention to revive the empire of the Wast, and of the determination which had been formed, to elect him to the high station thus created; and it is probable also that he signified his disapprobation of the proposal in such terms as were intended not to crush the design, but to delay the execution.

The pope, however, impelled by much stronger motives, and withheld by no difficulties, having obtained the consent of the Roman people, and prepared all things for his purpose, determined not to lose the opportunity, or to suffer delay to bring forth obstacles to a transaction so advantageous to himself. It is not unlikely that some rumour of the preparations made by the pontiff might reach the ears of the French monarch, but that, always supposing he would be consulted before the ceremony actually took place, he felt sure of being able to delay it till such time as he himself had used every necessary precaution.

However that may be, on Christmas-day Charlemagne, with the rest of the Catholic- world, presented himself in the church of St. Peter, to offer up his prayers with the multitude to the Giver of all dignities and debasements, the Ruler of kings and peasants. At the request of the pope, and to gratify the Roman people, he had laid aside the national dress which he usually wore on days of solemnity, and which consisted of a close tunic embroidered with gold, sandals laced with gold and studded with jewels, a mantle clasped with a golden agraffe, and a diadem shining with precious stones. He now appeared in the long robe of the patrician, and, as military governor of Rome, presented himself to the people as a Roman. The church was filled with the nobility of Italy and France; and all that they saw around, after they entered its vast walls, most have told them that some great ceremony was about to take place. At the high altar stood the head of the Christian church, surrounded by all the splendid clergy of Italy; and the monarch, approaching, knelt on the steps of the altar, and for some moments continued to offer up his prayers. As he was about to rise, Leo advanced, and, raising an imperial crown, he placed it suddenly on the brows of the monarch, while the imperial salutations burst in thunder from the people,—"Long life and victory to Charles Augustus, crowned by God great and pacific Emperor of the Romans!"

Whether the extraordinary preparations which he must have seen in the church had given Charlemagne any suspicion of the intentions of the pope, or whether the conduct of the pontiff really took him by surprise, must ever be a matter of doubt. At all events, the only alternative now left him was either to refuse the dignity for ever or to accept it at once; and though, in all probability, he would willingly have delayed the expression of his determination, he acquiesced in the proceeding of the pope when the ceremony had commenced. Daring the different intervals of the religious forms appropriate to the day, the supreme pontiff administered the oath which confirmed Charlemagne's acceptance of the title put upon him, anointed him from the head to the feet, in the manner practised on the coronation of the Jewish kings, and adored him according to the forms employed towards the Cesars. From that hour the titles both of king and of patrician were laid aside; and the monarch of the Franks became the Emperor of the Romans. Thenceforward his coins were inscribed with his new dignity, and his acts were dated from the years of his empire.

Magnificent presents, tables of silver, vases and chalices of pure gold, crowns and patenas enriched with gems, expressed the gratitude of the monarch for the zeal, if not for the service, of the pope; and though Charlemagne declared that he would not have visited the church that day if he had anticipated the event, he showed no anger at the officiousness of the prelate.

Shortly after his coronation, Charlemagne proceeded to the trial of the conspirators, whose brutal assault upon the sacred person of the supreme pontiff had been one of the principal causes of his journey to Rome. The accusations against the prelate, under cover of which they had attempted to shelter their own crime, remained, as I have before said, totally unproved, while the facts against themselves were susceptible of no evasion. Their trial was carried on in Rome according to the Roman

law. Nothing was brought forward to palliate their offence, or to cast a doubt upon the charge; and, reproaching each other publicly for their mutual crime and common danger, they were silent in reply to the accusation and the evidence against them.

Their guilt being estabblished beyond doubt, their condemnation followed; and the severest sentence of the law was pronounced against them by the emperor. But the object of their hatred and their violence became their intercessor with the monarch, and, by obtaining the pardon they little deserved, did more to prove his own innocence and their calumny than had been done by the synod of the prelates or the oath at the cathedral. Their lives were spared to the earnest prayer of Leo. Neither did they suffer that horrible infliction which they had attempted to execute upon the pontiff—the deprivation of sight, which was then a common punishment for criminals less guilty than themselves. Charlemagne, however, wisely removed them from the scene of their crime and their intrigues; and, by banishing them for ever, at once relieved the pope from their presence, and assigned them a degree of punishment, though most inadequate to their offence.

WAR WITH BENEVENTUM

In the disposition and arrangement of the affairs of Italy the emperor passed the whole of the spring; and during his stay on this occasion, as well as on every former visit to Rome, he exercised an acknowledged power in ecclesiastical matters, which might have rendered the after claims of the clergy ridiculous, had they not been too successful. The conclusion of the war with Beneventum also occupied the monarch's attention; and, although he still refrained from mingling with it in person, the uncertain nature of his political relations with Constantinople made him far more anxious than he had ever hitherto been to conclude all domestic dissensions within the limits of Italy. The resistance, however, of Grimwald was obstinate, and often successful. Educated for some time under the eye of Charlemagne, his military talents had received a high degree of cultivation, while his bold and active disposition rendered him a dangerous rival for the young King of Italy. The war was thus protracted tor many years; and the rapidity of the Beneventine prince often obtained for him considerable advantages over the superior strength of his adversary. These advantages he never used to a base or unworthy purpose; and though he resisted firmly the exactions of his benefactor's son,—exactions which, we have some reason to imagine, were severe in themselves, and haughtily supported,— yet, in military skill and generosity of demeanour, Grimwald approved himself a worthy follower of Charlemagne.

The greatest success he obtained during the whole course of his struggles against Pepin took place in 802, shortly after the emperor's last visit to Italy. Winegisus, Duke of Spoleto, who seems to have been intrusted by Pepin, at that period, with the chief commiand against the Beneventines, having captured and taken possession of Lucera, suddenly found himself invested in that city by the forces of Grimwald. Already weakened by disease, the Frankish commander was not equal to the task of resisting the young and active Beneventine; and after a brief but severe siege the town surrendered, and Winegisus fell into the hands of the enemy.

The fate awaiting a prisoner was in those days a very uncertain matter; but the conduct of Grimwald to his fallen adversary was such as might have been expected from a prince who had followed for a length of time the camp of Charlemagne. The Duke of Spoleto was received with kindness; and, after having been entertained with honor during the winter, was set at liberty by his conqueror early in the following year. Very little of any interest or importance occurred afterward in the war of Beneventum. The resistance of Grimwald and the demands of Pepin still continued, till, in the year 806, the death of the Lombard prince made a change in the government of the province; and, shortly after, the Beneventines agreed to pay an annual tribute of twenty-five thousand solidi of gold, which put a termination to the war.

The prolongation of this struggle, however, weakened the forces of the young King of Italy by division, and prevented him from accomplishing many things which were necessary to the consolidation of the dominions intrusted to him by his father. On a minor scale, his contest with surrounding enemies resembled that which had occupied the whole life of the great monarch himself; and, continually opposed by the Venetians and the Beneventines in Italy, as well as frequently assailed by the Moors and by the Greeks from without, he showed courage, firmness, and activity, which justified the blood of Charlemagne.

Corsica, which had been bestowed by the emperor on the holy see, Pepin defended vigorously from the attacks of the Saracens; and, taught by his father's exertions on the coasts of France and Germany, he collected a navy round the Italian shores, which, under the command of the Constable Burchard, signally defeated the Moorish fleet in the Mediterranean.

Thus far the wars of Pepin were, in a manner, distinct and separate from the general progress of the empire of Charlemagne, and might properly be noticed apart; but the strife which took place

between the young monarch and the Venetian republic, of which I shall soon have to speak more fully, is intimately connected with the revival of the Western empire, in the person of his father.

As king of Lombardy and patrician of Rome, the Frankish monarch had claimed all that portion of Italy which had been comprised in the dominion of the Lombard kings and the exarchs of Ravenna; but, as the emperor of the Romans, his wishes or his rights might extend his title to the whole of Italy, and comprehend, beyond the absolute limits of the peninsula, Sicily on the one side, with Croatia, Liburnia, and Dalmatia on the other.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EAST

But in assuming the title of emperor, Charlemagne had little desire to plunge himself in new wars; and if he ever did entertain the idea of invading Sicily, as Theophanes declares, he soon abandoned a project which, however successful, must have required blood, trouble, and fatigue, at a moment when his time and his forces were already fully employed.

An easy mode of reconciling the jarring interests of the East and the West was suggested to Charlemagne, either by his own political foresight, or by the officious zeal of the Roman pontiff. The ruler of the Eastern empire, and the actual possessor of the disputed territories, was a woman, and a widow. Charlemagne himself, by the death of Luidgarde, had been left free to contract a new alliance; and the extinction of opposing claims, by the union of the opposite claimants, was soon agitated in the councils of the emperor. That the mutilator of her own son might, on occasion, easily become the assassin of her husband, was a consideration which did not deter Charlemagne from the proposed alliance; and the fact of his having demanded tha hand of Irene in marriage, is perhaps the strongest instance on record of the personal courage for which he was famous.

Either before, or immediately after, his departure from Italy, messengers were sent to the courtf of Constantinople from Charlemagne, accompanied by legates from the pope, both charged with the formsal annunciation of the revival of the Western empire, and with the more delicate commission of negotiating the union of the emperor and empress. The proposal was by no means disagreeable to Irene, who saw before her the prospect of terminating easily, by some method, those difficulties to which the occupation of the Western throne had given rise. It is not improbable, indeed, that she looked upon this alliance, also, as a means of gratifying, not only her vanity, but also her revenge upon those who had assailed or injured her. The power of the East, strengthened by the power of the West, might have conquered or overawed a world; and the young blood of the adolescent Franks, transfused into the veins of the ancient empire, might have given new vigor to the feeble frame of that decrepit monarchy, and raised it up once more to glory and to triumph. But whatever were the considerations which led the empress to desire the alliance proposed,—passion, vanity, policy, or ambition,—her inclinations were controlled by a domestic faction; and the eunuch Aetiaus, who had been raised by her to the highest stations of the empire, dared to oppose the will of his mistress. Supported by others equally indebted and ungrateful with himself, he compelled her to reject the hand of the monarch of the Franks, in the hopes of raising his brother to the imperial dignity, from which he was himself excluded by corporeal disabilities. The rejection, however, was accompanied by pacific proposals; and, in 802, an embassy reached the court of Charlemagne,—who had by this time returned to France,—in order to treat for a definitive arrangement of the claims of the two empires, and to determine the articles of a future peace.

Where such immense interests and extensive territories were involved, the negotiation, of course, offered many difficulties. However powerless might be Irene to enforce her claims, however moderate might be Charlemagne in his exactions, there were points to be considered, and obstacles to be removed, which required many conferences; and more than one doubt might naturally arise, which could only be solved by the court of Constantinople. Desirous that the transaction might be concluded with as much facility and speed as possible, the emperor committed the ultimate terms to which he would consent to Jesse, Bishop of Amiens, and Helingaud, one of the counts of his palace, who accompanied Leo, the ambassador of Irene, on his return to Constantinople.

On their arrival in that city, the negotiations were renewed; but, while still unconcluded, a revolution at the imperial court suddenly interrupted their progress. "The great treasurer Nicepnorus was secretly invested with the purple, Irene's successor was introduced into the palace, and crowned at St. Sophia by the venal patriarch. In their first interview, she recapitulated with dignity the revolutions of her life, gently accused the perfidy of Nicephorus, insinuated that he owed his life to her unsuspecting clemency; and, for the throne and treasures which she resigned, solicited a decent and honorable retreat. His avarice refused this modest compensation; and, in her exile of the Isle of Lesbos, the empress earned a scanty subsistence by the labours of herdistaff".

In the midst of the confusion of a sudden change in the dynasty, it is not improbable that the ambassadors of the Emperor of the West were insulted by the populace of the Grecian capital. But no

sooner was Nicephorus firmly seated on the throne which he had usurped from the usurper, than he hastened to conclude the peace which Irene had begun, and to send back with the Franks envoys on his own part to receive the ratification of the treaty from the hands of Charlemagne. The Greek ambassadors reached the monarch at Seltz; and the object of their coming was obtained without difilculty. The election of Charlemagne was recognized by the Emperor of the East; and his possession of Istria, Croatia, Liburnia, and Dalmatia was confirmed, as well as his title to Sardinia, Corsica, and Italy, as far as the limits of the inferior Calabria. Sicily and Naples remained in the hands of the Greeks; but the territories of Venice, it would appear, were left unmentioned in the document of partition.

THE REPUBLIC OF VENICE

Surrounded on every side by dominions possessed by Charlemagne, and forming an integral part of that territory which was now distinctly allotted to him, it is difficult to understand how the Venetians could wish or hope to remain attached to the Greek empire. Perhaps it might be the expectation of establishing their own independence, between the contending claims of the rival monarchs, which induced that peoplle to waver between both; or perhaps it might merely be the vacillation of those factions which always arise in republics, that alternately gave preponderance to the influence of France or Constantinople. Whatever was the origin of the disputes, that followed, the minor facts are remote and obscure; and even the general question has been clouded by the national prejudices of critics and historians. That Charlemagne considered the Venetians as his subjects is evident; but it would seem that a strong party in Venice opposed that distribution of power which conveyed the soveregnty of their state to the monarch of the Franks. The chief of this faction was John, the doge, or duke, of the republic; but, at that period, the power of the chief magistrate was controlled or corrected by the authority of tribunes; and on the first manifestation of the leaning of the doge to Constantinople, in the appointment of a Greek to the bishopric of Olivola, one of the Venetian islands, his views were thwarted by the tribunes, who, heading the Frankish faction, prevailed on the patriarch of Grado to refuse consecration to the prelate-elect. The revenge of the duke, which could not overtake the tribunes, fell somewhat barbarously on the unhappy patriarch. In concert with his son, whom he had associated with himself in office, the Venetian chief led the fleet of the republic against Grado, captured the city, and precipitated the pontiff from the highest tower.

This criminal action instantly raised the voice of the whole Christian world against the perpetrators; and Paulinus, patriarch of Friuli, addressed an epistle to Charlemagne, demanding justice upon the duke, at the hand of his sovereign. At the same time, Fortunatus, said to be the nephew of the murdered prelate, sought refuge at the court of the Frankish monarch, and besought his aid against the assassins of his uncle.

What were the proceeding which took place upon this application is a question of much doubt; but the result is known. John and his son Maurice were deposed and banished; and the tribunes Obelerio and Beatus were raised to the ducal dignity together. The power of France was now for some time preponderant; and the sovereignty of the Emperor of the West appears to have been acknowledged by the voice of the friendly magistrates. At his desire, they visited his court and received his commands; and every thing promised the tranquillity of the Venetian state, and the permanence of Charlemagne's authority.

SIGIFRED THE DANE

The power of the monarch, however, was menaced from another quarter. Sigifrid, King of the Danes, or Normans, was now dead, and in his place had arisen one, whose powerful and comprehensive mind would in all probability have united the fierce nations of the north, and led them to sweep and desolate the south of Europe, had not Saxony been previously subdued. The junction of the Normans with the Saxons, inevitable if the latter had continued in their state of barbarism, would have created a force which Charlemagne himself could hardly have opposed. But at present, the German nations, if not so far civilized yet as to furnish a strong barrier against the Danish king, were so far subdued as to afford him no support, and Charlemagne had to contend with him only on his northern frontier. The first efforts of the French monarch were for peace; and it would appear that several years passed before the mind of Godfrey the Dane so completely lost the impression of the emperor's victories over the Saxons, as to dream of following the example of their incursions upon the Frankish territory. In the year 804, this impression was evidently but deeply fixed, although many bodies of his piratical subjects had ravaged the coast of France. In the great deportation of the Saxons which took place in that year, it would appear that some of the leaders had made their escape to Denmark, and the emperor immediately sent messengers to require that they should be given up. The Danish king neither absolutely conceded nor rejected the demand, but promised to come down to the frontiers of his own country, and confer with the Frankish monarch on a permanent treaty of peace between the two nations.

Charlemagne remained at Holdenstein, near the Elbe, in expectation of his arrival, and Godfrey advanced, with a fleet and army, as far as Schleswick, in South Jutland. There, however, the remonstrances of his court on the danger to which, it was supposed, he would expose himself if he proceeded any farther, succeeded in inspiring him with fears and doubts of the French monarch; and, pausing in his advance, he terminated the negotiations by acceding to the demands of the emperor through the intervention of ambassadors.

That these demands were conceived in the same spirit of moderation which was apparent in all the other actions of the Frankish monarch there can be no doubt; and indeed it would appear, that as years increased upon the head of Charlemagne he naturally became more desirous of that peace and quiet of which he had known so little during the course of a long life. The aspirations of ambition were gratified to the full; the impatient energy of youth had passed away; the vigor of manhood, though not lost, was easily governed; and that weariness of exertion, and desire of rest— which at the end of a short day may be relieved by a brief repose, but which towards the close of a long existence demands permanent tranquility—began to fall upon the hitherto indefatigable monarch of the Franks.

By unequalled efforts against a thousand enemies, he had now nearly conquered peace, and he sought to enjoy it; but, nevertheless, no desire of ease could prevent him from affording aid to such of his allies or dependants as required the support of military intervention. From the Elbe and the Danube to the Vistula and the Baltic extends a tract of country which was then occupied by various Slavonian tribes, some of which were strongly and permanently attached to the Frankish monarch; while others, retaining all the wild ferocity of their original state, willingly seized every opportunity of attacking whatever country acknowledged the dominion of a more civilized power. Among the latter were the Bohemians, who, lying on the frontiers of Panonia and Hungary, took continual advantage of the depressed state to which long wars against the superior power of Charlemagne had reduced the Avars, and, by incessant and desolating incursions, gave that unhappy nation no time to recover vigor or to enjoy repose. The greater part of the people of Hungary had by this time embraced the Christian religion; and their monarch Theodore at length, in 805, undertook a journey to the court of Charlemagne, to beg that his nation might be allowed to abandon the country which they then held, and seek another less exposed to the attacks of the Bohemians.

The French monarch granted his request at once, and, with generous kindness, did all that he could to alleviate the sorrows of the Hunnish chief. Theodore, however, died soon after his return to Panonia, and a new chagan being elected by the Avars, the consent of Charlemagne was solicited to his nomination. This was not only immediately given, but, before permitting the Hunnish tribes to execute their purpose of emigration, the emperor commanded his eldest son Charles to lead an army into Bohemia, and endeavor by chastisement to restrain the Slavonians within their own bounds.

The will of the monarch was instantly accomplished by his son, who seems to have possessed much of his father's military talents and rapid activity. Before the year was concluded, the Frankish forces had been lead into Bohemia; a battle had been fought and won; Lecho, the Bohemian duke, had been slain,—it is said, by the hand of Charles himself; and the prince, leading back his victorious troops, met his two brothers Louis and Pepin at the palace of the emperor near Thionviile.

The union of his children around the emperor’s person was not without an object. Already considerably past the age which his father and his grand-father had attained, Charlemagne, notwithstanding the great degree of corporeal vigor that he still enjoyed, and the robust constitution which promised many years of health, determined to prepare against the approach of death, and to provide, as much as human foresight could, against those dissensions among his children which had caused the difficulties and cares of his own early reign, which might destroy the empire he had acquired, and sweep away the institutions he had founded.

He accordingly determined to remove all future cause of dispute, by himself allotting, among his sons, the territories which they were to possess at his death, and by gaining the solemn and irrevocable consent, both of his people and his children, to the charter of division he was about to trace out. The character of Charlemagne has been assailed by some, his virtues depreciated, his motives misconstrued, his actions misstated, and his laws reproached; but the enthusiasm of his people when danger menaced his person, their devoted zeal in seconding all his efforts, and the boundless confidence with which they adopted all his views, have left a glorious testimony in favor of his wisdom and his virtue deep written on the page of history, which neither malignity can efface nor hypothesis obscure. His children at once gave their consent to that distribution of his dominions which he thought fit to provide against the period of his death, and the general assembly of the nation sanctioned it without hesitation. The princes and the nobles swore to observe the partition; and a copy of the document was transmitted to the head of the Christian church, that the authenticity of the deed might be preserved undoubted, by a transcript, attested by the supreme pontiff himself, remaining in the archives of the church.

The division of the empire among the children of the monarch had been a principle admitted with the Franks from the earhest ages, although the equality of partition, and even the admission of all the heirs, had by no means been strictly enforced. If ever extent of dominion could render such a division necessary, it was in the case of the territory agglomerated by Charlemagne, which, in addition to the difficulty of consolidation, implied by extreme bulk, presented other inconveniences of a more insurmountable nature, from the composition of its various parts. The acquisitions of ancient Rome had been gradual, and in comparison slow. Step by step each province had in general been fully incorporated with the empire before other conquests were achieved; and but a small district added to the dominions of Rome was enough for the glory and triumph of a life. But, warring upon every frontier at once, Charlemagne had added to his native kingdom, in the short space of one man's existence, as much as would have cost two centuries of Roman conquest to acquire. No time had been given to blend the separate nations into one; they remained still discrepant, inharmonious, and requiring the same great mind which had conquered and united them to hold them in subjection and assimilate them together.

Such considerations may have been among the motives which combined to reconcile Charlemagne to the division of the empire; but probably the most powerful of all was the fact of its beings the custom, if not the law, of his nation. A sound and judicious policy might, and probably would, have induced the monarch to abrogate that law if his dominions had been small; but the extent of territory to be divided took from the custom its strongest objection, and in the act of partition itself we have a singular instance of the deference of the monarch to the privileges and institutions of hia country.

We have already seen several examples of the strong influence attributed to the popular voice in the election, or rather succession, of the Frankish monarchs. Eginhard states that the Franks were accustomed to choose their kings from the Merovingian race; and the supreme pontiff, in crowning Pepin, threatens with the thunders of the church such persons as should attempt to elect a monarch from any other family than the Carolingian. Charlemagne, more expressly still, points at the same active power in the people, and declares by his will, that if any of the three kings among whom he divides the realm shall in dying leave a son, and his people choose to elect that son in the place of his father, that portion of the empire shall descend to him, without claim or molestation on the part of his uncles.

The further dispositions of the monarch are directed to keep peace and amity among his children, and so to provide for all cases, that no disputes may arise, either between the monarchs themselves in regard to the territories allotted to each, or between them and their people in regard to the jurisdiction under which each individual subject is placed. Even while dividing his dominions, Charlemagne also strongly enjoins that mutual support and co-operation which would give to the several kingdoms the same strength as if still united in one empire; and he points out the path by which each prince may lead his armies to the support of his brothers. No precaution is wanting on the part of the monarch to secure the future concord of his sons; and, under the warrant of the oath which they mutually took to obey his will, he commands them, in case of any dispute in regard to their territories, to abstain from arms, and to have recourse to the judgment of the cross,—a judgment which, like every other sort of ordeal, supposed the active interposition of God to establish an earthly right. Even had this injunction not referred to one of the firm-rooted superstitions of the day, the command of Charlemagne would have still been wise, as, by subjecting every matter of doubt to a certain and indisputable method of decision, it guarded against the most remote chance of those bloody contentions which had desolated the realm under the Merovingian kings. Had he directed them to draw lots, the same purpose would have been answered; but, in the mode of judgment to which he now commanded them to apply, the religious feelings of the people, and even of the princes themselves, operated in support of the award.

Such was the charter of division conceived by Charlemagne; and certainly the clearness of his judgment and the benignity of his heart were never more fully displayed than in that document. It was destined, it is true, to have no effect; but it remains a striking proof of the power which a great mind has to employ the very prejudices and superstitions of his age for the best and noblest of purposes.

END OF ALL THE WARS OF CHARLEMAGNE

Soon after the deed had been received and ratified by all whose interests were implicated, the three princes quitted the court of their father, and betook themselves to the several occupations which had been assigned to them. Charles, the eldest, once more turned his steps towards the north, where the Bohemians, having been joined by another predatory tribe of Slavonians, were ravaging with fire and sword the frontiers of Bavaria and Hungary. The measures taken against them, however, were prompt and effectual. Charles himself led one body of troops against the Slavonians on the banks of the Sale and the Elbe, defeated them completely, slew their chief in battle, and, after guarding the frontier by the construction of two fortresses, returned to join his father on the banks of the Meuse. At the same time, a

triple army from Germany, Bavaria, and Hungary entered the country of the Bohemians, and by laying waste the border territory, punished their aggression on the Hungarian provinces, and put a stop to their future incursions.

This campaign terminated the Bohemian war, and left the frontiers of Bavaria and Panonia in security and peace. But Charlemagne was still destined to encounter hostilities on the northern verge of his territories, where Godfrey King of Denmark was daily increasing in power and in confidence. The peace which had been concluded with him, soon shared the fate of all treaties entered into with barbarous nations, and was broken as soon as the Northman king found it convenient to ravage the coast of France and Germany. He still covered his breach of faith with some degree of decency; and a renewal of individual acts of piracy on the shores of Charlemagne's dominions first announced the frail nature of the Dane's engagements. The next mark of hostility, though more glaring, was not directed against the emperor personally, but took the shape of an incursion into the territories of the Abodrites, those faithful allies on whose vigilance and courage Charlemagne greatly depended for the security of Saxony. The northern chief did not undertake this enterprise, however, without the certainty of some support; and, in the Welatabes, the Winidi, and the Smaldingi, a congregation of wild Slavonic tribes inhabiting the country between the Oder and the Vistula, and covering the whole of modem Pomerania, he found willing allies against their more civilized neighbors. To these were added the Linones, on the southern bank of the Oder; and instead of passing at once from Denmark by land into the territory of the Abodrites, which was probably guarded on that frontier from the anticipation of hostilities, he transported his troops into Wenedonia, or Pomerania, and thence marched upon that point of the destined territory where his prey was least prepared to oppose him.

The excursion of Godfrey was rapid and terrible. Attacked by so many of the Slavonian tribes, as well as the Danes, the unfortunate Abodrites were conquered before any assistance could reach them; and when Charles, dispatched by his father to their aid, arrived with his army on the banks of the Elbe, he found that their duke, Thrasicon, had been expelled from his country, and that the whole land had been pillaged and subdued. This, it is true, was not effected by the Danes without great loss on their own part. The nephew of the king himself fell in battle—the best of their army perished; and, in no condition to resist the force they knew to be advancing against them from France, they once more retired into Pomerania, took ship, and set sail for Denmark. Apparently fearful of pursuit by sea the Danish monarch, before his departure, destroyed the port from which he embarked, and carried away the merchants into Denmark. Charles did not reach the scene of action till the Danes were gone; and no trace of them was left but in their ravages. The tribes who had aided them in their expedition, however, still remained; and throwing a bridge over the Elbe, the Franks poured into the territory of the inimical Slavonians, and took severe vengeance for the injuries inflicted on the Abodrites.

In the mean time, Godfrey, warned of the proximity of the Frankish army, and remembering the bitter and never-failing punishment which had overtaken the similar irruptions of the Saxons, hastened to add to the means of defence which his country already possessed. The narrow neck of land between the duchy of Holstein and the province of South Jutland offered every facility for the formation of such a fortified boundary as he proposed to construct. His arrival at the port of Schleswick brought him on the very spot suitable to his purpose; and he instantly began the erection of a defensible wall, running across the isthmus, from the estuary on which that town is situated to the mouth of the Eyder and the German ocean.

While this great work was in progress, the Danish monarch found it necessary to temporize with the emperor; and accordingly, sent ambassadors to the court of France, in order to justify his aggression on the allies of the Franks; and to demand a congress of deputies from both nations, in order to consider and determine all matters in dispute. This was immediately granted; but the negotiations produced no effect; and the Danish king prepared to renew the war against the Franks themselves.

The multitude of his Slavonian allies rendered the power of Godfrey formidable even to Charlemagne; and, had the Saxons been still inclined, even in their state of depression, to join with the Normans, the whole of Europe, as I have before observed, would most probably have been once more plunged in blood and darkness. But the Saxons, now beginning to appreciate the benefits of civilization, were the first to aid in repelling the advances of their barbarous neighbors. Thrasicon, Duke of the Abodrites, was soon restored to his country; and, being supported by a large Saxon force, while the Danish king swept over the seas and made a terrible descent upon the German coast, he entered the territories of that monarch's Sclavonian allies, and with fire and sword retaliated the injuries they had inflicted on his nation.

The Frisons, also, so long the implacable enemies of the Franks, were now the first safeguards of their shores. Though, after three rapid and bloody combats with the Danes upon the German coast, they were at length obliged to buy the invaders' absence with a hundred pounds of silyer, yet the smallness of

the sum demanded by Grodfrey, and the speed of his retreat, evinces how steady had been the resistance of the Frisons, and how dearly purchased had been the victory he gained.

His landing, however, and his persevering contest with the inhabitants of the coast, had spread consternation into the heart of France. He had been heard boldly to declare, that he would carry his arms to Aix-la-Chapelle; and that he would make the attempt, was universally believed. But, though now in his seventieth year, Charlemagne forgot the load of age, started from the repose in which he had indulged, and once more hastened to the field. No mark of time's enfeebling power was to be found in the movements of the great monarch; and all the active energy of his brightest days reappeared on the approach of danger. Messengers were sent in every direction to gather together his troops; and, while land forces were assembling, he hastened, without loss of a moment, to inspect in person the state of the fleet in the mouth of the Rhine, and prepared to contend with the Norman on his own element. No sooner were his commands given, and the means of war in readiness in that direction, than, forgetful of all personal fatigue, the emperor hastened back to the head of his army; crossed the Rhine at Lippenheim; and, after forming his junction with other forces, which were marching up to support him, advanced as far as the confluence of the Aller and the Weiser, in order to give battle to the Danes.

At that spot, news of a varied complexion reached him, which rendered his further march unnecessary. Thrasicon, Duke of the Abodrites, while pursuing hit success against the Slavonians, had been assassinated by emissaries of the Danish king. But, at the same time, Godfrey himself had quitted in haste the shores of the Frisons, in order to return to Denmark, and the tidings almost immediately followed of his own death, by the same treacherous steel he had used against others. He had been slain by one of his followers,—whether instigated by personal revenge or kindred ambition, does not appear. A more pacific sovereign, however, succeeded. A truce was concluded between the Danes and Franks; a congress was held; and with little difficulty a peace was agreed upon, which terminated the Norman war during the life of Charlemagne.

In the northern campaigns, the principal active agent on the part of Charlemagne, had been Charles, his eldest son; but, in the south, Pepin, King of Italy, had been in no degree unoccupied since the partition charter, for the purpose of acknowledging which he had been called to France. Scarcely had he returned to Italy, when he found that Nicephorus, now firmly seated on the throne of Constantinople, began to regret the concessions which he had made in the first dangers of usurpation, and to seek the recovery of those territories, which he had too hastily suffered to be alienated from the Greek empire. His first efforts were directed against Dalmatia, the seaports of which, commanding the whole commerce of the Adriatic, were of infinite importance to the Greeks. In the year 806, we accordingly find the patrician Nicetas, accompanied by a large fleet, sailing with the express purpose of recovering Dalmatia. It would appear, that his expedition ended without any great military effort; and, probably, the success of the Frankish armaments against the Moors, who were about the same time signally defeated on the coast of Corsica, determined the Greek commander to bring the incipient war to a speedy termination.

He accordingly hastened to conclude a fresh treaty of peace with the young King of Italy; and withdrew his fleet from their station in the Adriatic. It appears not unlikely, indeed, that at this time, by the commands of his father, Pepin yielded to the Greeks the sovereignty of the Dalmatian ports, while the rest of that province was reserved to the Frainks. That such a transaction ultimately took place we know from the account of Eginhard; but the period is left in doubt.

The state of Venice also, about this time, is very obscure. The very same year in which we find the duke, or doge, and his coadjutor at the court of Charlemagne, submitting to his will as to that of their sovereign, we are told that Nicetas, coming avowedly with hostile intentions towards the dominions of the Western emperor, remained with tranquil security in the Venetian ports. Nevertheless, through all the contradictory events which now took place in regard to Venice, the effort is still apparent, of a weak state struggling to gain independence among the contending claims of two more powerful countries; and possibly it was a part of the policy of the Venetians to cast as much obscurity as possible on the degree of submission they were forced to yield to either empire.

The peace concluded between Pepin and Nicetas was not of long continuance; for either the emperor Nicephorus was dissatisfied with the terms granted and hoped, by a renewal of warfare, to obtain more, or some new cause of hostility immediately arose. The patrician withdrew his fleet from Venice in August of the year 807; and before the winter of the following year, another Greek armament appeared in the Adriatic. The commander Paul, prefect of Cephalonia, was still charged to negotiate with the King of Italy; but he seems to have imagined that some military success would prove a good prelude to the demands he might be instructed to make; and, accordingly, he landed a part of his forces at Commachio, then garrisoned by the Franks. The Greeks, ever unsuccessful in their contests with the

Franks, found fortune still unfavorable to their efforts; and, after suffering a shameful defeat at Commachio, they made all sail for the port of Venice.

Peace was here once more proposed; and it appears that both Pepin and the Greek commander were desirous of obtaining it but such a consummation did not accord with the policy of the Venetians; and they contrived to break off the negotiations before they were half-concluded. Their treachery, however, was not long in reaching the ears of Pepin; and probably this instance of duplicity opened his eyes to much more of the same double and perfidious policy. An injury is always a thousand-fold aggravated when united to the insult of deceit; and the King of Italy, with natural indignation, proceeded to take vengeance on the Venetians. Their territories were immediately attacked both by land and sea; but the degree of success which attended the arms of Pepin has been for years a matter of national dispute. That he was successful to a certain point is proved by the French, and admitted by the Venetians; but in determining the extent of his conquest, if we suppose it a little more than Venice will allow, and a little less than France exacts, we shall probably be very nearly correct. That he subdued all their continental possessions is clear; for from that day the Venetians paid some kind of tribute for their lands on terra firma. But it would appear, that though he conquered most of the islands which composed the Venetian state, he was repulsed from Rialto, not so much by the courage of the inhabitants, as through the difficulty of access, and the unwieldly nature of the vessels he employed. Probably the sight of his partial success, and the menace of pursuing his advantage, induced the Venetian government to submit, when they found that easy terms would be imposed, in return for the doubtful conquest.

Pepin willingly desisted from an enterprise which had offered many difficulties, and despatched the fleet, for which he had no longer any occupation at Venice, to ravage the coasts of Dalmatia, which had been resign to the ungrateful Greeks. The appearance, however, of the patrician Paul, with a superior force, obliged the Frankish armament to retire; and not long after, the Venetian states were formally ceded by Charlemagne to the desires of the Eastern emperor.

Such was the end of the struggles which the empire of the East made to recover from Charlemagne some portion of that territory which Nicephorus, in the lavish timidity of unconfirmed authority, had deemed a trifling sacrifice for the enjoyment of unmolested dominion. As he grew old in empire, his native covetousness resumed its power over his mind; but before he could proceed to exact more from the generous moderation of the Frankish monarch, the steel of the Bulgarians had terminated the life of the avaricious usurper. Stauracius, who succeeded, devoted his short reign of six months to render himself hated and contemned at home; and Michael I, who followed Stauracius, was too eager to seek the friendship of Charlemagne, either to impugn his title to empire, or to strive for the dismemberment of his dominions.

DEATH OF THE CHILDREN OF CHARLEMAGNE

Those dominions were now as extensive as the proudest ambition could well desire to possess, or the mightiest genius could pretend to govern. The whole of France and Belgium, with their natural boundaries of the Alps, the Pyrenees, the ocean, the Mediterranean, and the Rhine, formed no inconsiderable empire. But to these possessions were added, to the south, all that part of Spain comprised between the Ebro and the Pyrenees, and to the north, the whole of Germany, to the banks of the Elbe. Italy, as far as the Lower Calabria, was either governed by his son or tributary to his crown; and Dalmatia, Croatia, Liburnia, and Istria, with the exception of the maritime cities, were joined to the conquered territories of Hungary and Bohemia. As far as the conflux of the Danube with the Teyss and the Save, the east of Europe acknowledged the power of the Frankish monarch. Most of the Slavonian tribes, between the Elbe and the Vistula, paid tribute and professed obedience; and Corsica, Sardinia, and the Balearic Isles were dependent on the emperor's possessions in Italy and Spain.

Such were the dominions of Charlemagne at the conclusion of the Venetian war in 810; and such were the dominions which he proposed to leave divided among his sons. The fatigue and difficulty which he felt in governing and restraining this vast empire himself doubtless rendered him the more willing to see it parted among his children, whose powers of command he could not but perceive were far inferior to his own. Yet probably paternal tenderness and affectionate equity might combine with his other motives for the equal allotment of his territories; as we know that a private station, where all the softer sympathies of domestic life are fostered by every means of reciprocation, never produced a tenderer parent than the monarch of that mighty empire.

This division, as I have already stated, was destined never to take place. That prolongation of existence, to which human nature clings with so much fond tenacity, brought with it to Charlemagne many of those concomitant sorrows attendant ever on old age. He saw his friends and his children die around him. The companions of his dangers and his glory, the participators of his labors and their success, in general sank into the grave, ere the great spirit which had called forth, directed, and

combined their efforts was separated from its human dust. Alcuin had died some time before; but the severer stroke still awaited Charlemagne of seeing the order of nature reversed, and the children of his love fall before the parent who had given them birth.

His first loss was that of his eldest daughter Rotruda; and though the irregular conduct of the female part of his family had caused him frequent pain and continual anxiety, he felt her early fate with all the poignancy of a father's grief, and forgot her weakness in her death. Scarcely had the news of his son's victories over the Venetians reached the ears of the emperor, when it was followed by the tidings of his decease; and scarcely had the monarch secured to the son of Pepin the kingdom which he had formerly assigned to the father, ere Charles, for whom the imperial throne had been reserved, was also called to the tomb. Honor, and glory, and strife, and labor, and victory, and success, had not been able to extinguish one spark of those warm affections with which Charlemagne had been endowed by nature; nor had a long life of prosperity, dominion, and absolute command been sufficient to weaken one of those gentler feelings, which united the great monarch so endearingly with his fellow- creatures. Charlemagne wept the loss of his children, and the broken ties of kindred affection, with as bitter, as human a sorrow as if he had been the tenant of a cottage, instead of being the emperor of one-half the world; nor can his preservation of domestic attachments surely be looked upon as a weakness when they interfered with no public duty, and served only to soften his private character.

Of the emperor's three sons, none now remained but Louis, King of Aquitaine, and in him centred all the affection of the monarch. After the death of his brothers, a feeling of diffidence and modesty withheld him for some time from his father's court, lest he should appear too eagerly to covet the dominion which, in the course of nature, would soon fall into his hands. But Charlemagne was incapable of being jealous of his son; and, as soon as he had terminated the various negotiations which the loss of Pepin and Charles left entirely to his own exertions, he despatched messengers into Aquitaine to call Louis to is presence.

Although the death of his two elder sons had abrogated the charter of division, and though the emperor had provided for Bernard the son of Pepin, by confirming him in the government of Italy, so that the succession of Louis to the imperial throne, with all the territories attached to it in France and Germany, was not to be doubted, yet Charlemagne resolved, by a solemn act of association, to secure the empire more firmly to his surviving son, and to guard against the intrigues of faction and the efforts of ambition.

As soon after the arrival of Louis as possible, the emperor called the general assembly of his people to meet at Aix-la-Chapelle; and there, in an eloquent speech, he alluded to the probability of his own death before many years could pass, and exhorted the nation to be faithful and obedient to his successor, as they had been to himself. He then demanded the consent of each individual present to the nomination of Louis as heir to his empire, and required the promise of their allegiance to that prince. The assent of the nobles was unanimous; and on the Sunday that followed, the emperor marked, with solemn ceremony, the ratification of his own purpose by the voice of his subjects.

The immense church which he himself had built at Aix-la-Chapelle was prepared for the occasion, and, a little before the morning service began, the monarch proceeded to that building, which was already filled with the nobles of all the different nations he united under his sway. His usual simple garments were laid aside, and, robed with imperial splendor, and surrounded bv imperial pomp, he advanced to the high altar of the church, leaning on the shoulder of the King of Aquitaine. The father and the son knelt together, and continued for some time in prayer, beseeching the blessing of Heaven upon their designs. At length the emperor rose, and addressed his son in the presence of the whole multitude. He exhorted him, above all things, to fear and love God, and to follow his law; to govern carefully the church, and to protect it against its enemies; to show kindness and endurance towards all his relations; to honor the clergy as fathers, and to love the people as his children; to force the proud and corrupt to turn to a better path; and to be himself the friend of the faithful and the poor. He prayed him also to choose his ministers from those who were known to be trustworthy, filled with the fear of God, and the enemies of unjust partiality; to deprive no man of his property without full cause; and to keep himself irreproachable in the sight of God and of his people.

After having addressed him for a length of time with great power and eloquence, he demanded if he were willing to follow those precepts for the government of his people; and on Louis's reply in the affirmative, he directed him to raise, with his own hands, a crown which had been laid purposely on the altar, and place it on his own head, as "a gift which he held from God, his father, and the nation". Louis complied, and the ceremony ended with the usual solemn service of the day.

DEATH OF CHARLEMAGNE

Not long after this event the King of Aquitaine returned to his government, and Charlemagne, embarrassed by no hostile movements, except some slight disturbances among the Slavonian tribes, dedicated the rest of his days to the general organization of his dominions, and to preparation for that interminable future towards whose awful barrier he was fast approaching. His external relations I have already traced; and the internal regulations attributable to this period of his reign afford no cause to alter the opinion before expressed, that if they were not the best which could be formed on abstract principles, they were the best that could be adapted to the circumstances of his age and nation.

Notwithstanding the weight of seventy years, the Latin emperor had yet lost but little of his personal energy; and the reconstruction of the ancient light-house near Boulogne, the long and fatiguing journeys he took to inspect the state of the fleets destined to protect the coast, and the design of a that bridge at Mayence, which he proposed to build in stone, after the destruction of the former wooden structure by fire, evince the incessant activity of his mind, and its fertility in projects for the protection and improvement of his dominions.

Notwithstanding frequent attacks of the gout, and a degree of lameness which that disease had left, he still followed the chase, in which he had always delighted, with unabated ardor, and still enjoyed the bath, wherein he had so long been accustomed to exercise himself in swimming. It was one day after he had been using the thermal waters of Aix-la-Chapelle, that he felt the first attack of that malady which terminated his life. He was suddenly seized with a violent pain in the side, which was soon proved to proceed from pleurisy. In common with all men who during a long life have possessed robust health, Charlemagne despised and rejected the aid of medicine, and, imagining that abstinence was the sole remedy for all sorts of sickness, he refused food of every kind, and only allayed his feverish thirst with small quantities of water. The violence of his disease required more active means of cure; these were not employed, and at length, after a few days' illness, on the 28th of January, in the year 814, Charles the Great expired, in the seventy-second year of his age, and the forty-seventh of his reign.

The character of Charlemagne can alone be appreciated by comparing it with the barbarism of the times from which he emerged; nor do his virtues or his talents acquire any fictitious grandeur from oppo-sition with the objects around; for, though "the ruins of Palmyra derive a casual splendor from the nakedness of the surrounding desert", his excellence lay not alone in adorning, but in cultivating the waste. His military successes were prepared by the wars and victories both of Pepin and Charles Martel; but one proof of the vast comprehensiveness of his mind is to be found in the immense undertakings which he accomplished with the same means which two great monarchs had employed on very inferior enterprises. The dazzling rapidity with which each individual expedition was executed was perhaps less wonderful than the clear precision with which each was designed, and the continuous, persevering, unconquerable determination wherewith each general élan was pursued to its close. The materials for is wars,—the brave, the active, and the hardy soldiers,—had been formed by his father and by nature; but when those troops were to be led through desert and unknown countries, into which Pepin had never dreamed of penetrating, and in an age when geography was hardly known—when they were to be sup-plied at a distance from all their resources, in a land where roads were unheard of, and provisions too scanty for the inhabitants themselves—the success was attributable to Charlemagne, and the honor is his due. His predecessors had contented themselves with leading an army at once against the point they intended to assail, or against the host they proposed to combat; but Charlemagne was the first in modem Europe who introduced the great improvement in the art of war of pouring large bodies of men, by different roads, into the hostile country; of teaching them to co-operate though separate, to concentrate when required, and of combining their efforts and their movements for a general purpose on a preconcerted plan.

In a life like his, which was a life of improvement on all that immediately preceded him, it is wonderful that he did not meet with repeated disappointments and disasters, from the many hazardous experiments he was obliged to make, and from the insecurity attending many of his conquests, on account of the very rapidity with which they were accomplished. This will appear the more extraordinary when it is remembered that, in addition to the fierce savages of the north, he had to contend with the civilized and warlike Saracens, with the veteran Lombards, whose whole history was warfare, and with the cunning Greeks, who supplied by art much that they wanted in vigor. The native energy, activity, and strength of the Franks, indeed, gave him advantages and facilities in all his struggles; but had he not, as a leader and a king, possessed energy, activity, and strength in a far greater proportion than all, the very qualities in his subjects which he used as implements in his own great designs would have been employed by them against himself; and, instead of combating and conquering a thousand foreign enemies at once, he would have had, like many who preceded him, to strive through life with unwilling vassals, for a precarious throne.

War was a necessity of the time and the country; and the Franks could not have been governed without war. Charlemagne, happily for himself and for his people, brought with him to the throne warlike talents, and a warlike disposition; and, happily for the world, possessed likewise the spirit of civilization and improvement.

Notwithstanding one instance of terrible severity,—which, however erroneously, he judged necessary to strike terror into a fierce and lawless people, and to stop the further desolation of both nations,—he was the most clement of kings, and the least selfish of conquerors. After his victories, he imposed a benefit and not a yoke, and raised instead of degraded the people who became his subjects.

His great success in civilization was all his own. Nothing had been done by those who went before, scarcely a germ, scarcely a seed had been left him. He took possession of a kingdom torn by factions, surrounded by enemies, desolated by long wars, disorganized by intestine strife, and as profoundly ignorant as the absence of all letters could make it. By the continual and indefatigable exertion of mental and corporeal powers, such as probably were never united but in himself, he restored order and harmony, brought back internal tranquillity, secured individual safety, raised up sciences and arts; and so convinced a barbarous nation of the excellence of his own ameliorating spirit, that on their consent and approbation he founded all his efforts, and sought no support in his mighty undertaking but the love and confidence of his people.

Of his many conquests, the long and persevering wars which he waged with the barbarians of the north have been, in their success, the most advantageous to Europe; for as civilization advanced step by step with victory, and as he snatched from darkness all the lands he conquered, he may be said to have added the whole of Germany to the world. Italy fell into greater disorders than before; France underwent another age of darkness; but from the Rhine to the Elbe, and from the Danube to the ocean, received light which has continued unextinguished to the present day.

In domestic life, Charlemagne was too indulgent a father, and perhaps too indulgent a husband; and the consequences of this weakness often gave him pain. Nevertheless, the monarch could hardly reproach his daughters for passions which they inherited from himself, nor for yielding to those passions when he set them the example. The private vices or follies of any man can only become legitimate matter for history when they have had an effect upon society in general; but it may be observed, without entering deeply into any unpleasant details, that Charlemagne scarcely could expect the morality he inculcated to be very strictly observed, when his own incontinence was great and notorious.

This, however, is the only vice which history has recorded of Charlemagne, among a thousand splendid qualities. He was ambitious, it is true; but his ambition was of the noblest kind. He was generous, magnanimous, liberal, humane, and brave; but he was frugal, simple, moderate, just, and prudent.Though easily appeased in his enmities, his friendships were deep and permanent; and, though hasty and severe to avenge his friends, he was merciful and placable when personally injured. In mind he was blessed with all those happy facilities which were necessary to success in the great enterprises which he undertook. His eloquence was strong, abundant, and clear; and a great talent for acquinng foreign tongues added to his powers of expression. The same quickness of comprehension rendered every other study light, though undertaken in the midst of a thousand varied occupations, and at an age to which great capabilities of acquisition are not in general extended. His person was handsome and striking. His countenance was fine, open, and bland, his features high, and his eyes large and sparkling. His figure was remarkable for its fine proportions; and though somewhat inclined to obesity in his latter years, we are told, that, whether sitting or standing, there was always something in his appearance which breathed of dignity, and inspired respect. He was sober and abstemious in his food, and simple to an extreme in his garments. Passionately fond of robust exercises, they formed his great relaxation and amusement; but he never neglected the business of the public for his private pleasure, nor yielded one moment to repose or enjoyment which could be more profitably employed. His activity, his quickness, and his indefatigable energy in conducting the affairs of state having already been spoken of at large, it only remains to be said, that in private life he was gentle, cheerful, affectionate, and kind; and that—with his dignity guarded by virtues, talents, and mighty renown—he frequently laid aside the pomp of empire, and the sternness of command.

No man, perhaps, that ever lived, combined in so high a degree those qualities which rule men and direct events, with those which endear the possessor and attach his contemporaries. No man was ever more trusted and loved by his people, more respected and feared by other kings, more esteemed in his lifetime, or more regretted at his death.