

Stories of Russia and Germany

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Stories of Russia and Germany

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Stories of Russia and Germany

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Compiled From:

The Story of Russia, by M.E. Benson, London: Rivington, (1895).

History of Germany in Words of One Syllable, by Helen Pierson, New York: A.L. Burt Company, (1899).

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Printed in the United States of America

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The Story of Russia

by

M.E. Benson

The Russians Home.

When Beauty was left in the Beast's house by her father, what did she do? What did she most want to know?

She wanted to know what the Beast was like, and whether he would be likely to eat her up at once. But he was not there to be looked at. Still that was no reason why she should not find out what he is like.

She looked round the room. First she saw how prettily and carefully everything was arranged, and she thought he could not be rough and rude. Then she looked at the books, and thought he could not be stupid or sleepy. Then at the flowers and birds in the garden, and she thought with those near him he could not be cruel and gloomy.

So all the time she was learning what the Beast was like. And when he came she felt that she knew so well what his mind was, that she was surprised to see that his outside was rough and ugly. If she had seen the Beast himself first, it would have taken her a long time to find out that he was not a real beast.

So you see that by looking carefully at the place he lived in, she learned a great deal about him without once seeing him.

That is just what I want you to do about the Russians. Before we look at them, we will look at their house, Russia, and see what that tells us.

It is a very large house; as large as all the rest of Europe put together. There is plenty of room for a large nation; even room enough, one would think, for several nations at once. Why should not one nation go and settle down by itself in one corner, and others in other corners, and never know or care anything about each other?

For two reasons. Perhaps you live in a house in a row. If you do, it is also likely that you do not know your next-door neighbour. Yet there is only a wall between you. Why do not you meet? Because you each have all you want on your own side of the wall; all the food you want, and the books you want.

But suppose that you and your next-door neighbour were put down, each in one corner of a large open field. And suppose too that you had only water to drink in your corner, and he had only food in his: what would happen then? Soon you would each go wandering about to find what you wanted, and you would meet, and agree to exchange water and food. So you would know each other and live together.

Russia is just like this open field in two ways.

First, it is flat, so that there are no mountains to rise up like walls between nation and nation. All the stone in Russia lies flat along under the earth. It has never been broken up by earthquakes, except in one small place. Secondly, there are different sorts of things to be found in

different parts of it. In the north, wood and some sorts of animals. In the south, corn and fruits.

So you see that there are no walls to keep different nations apart; and the nations must meet and exchange their goods and know each other.

There is another thing to remember about Russia.

When Beauty was in the Beast's house, she had not time or chance to see whether he had any neighbours, or what they were like. But if she had seen them, and had found them courteous and kind, and had found the ways to their houses well trodden by the Beast, she would have thought that he would be kind and gentle too.

Now Russia is unlucky in her neighbours. This also for two reasons.

The first reason is that there are very few doors out of Russia; very few ways to get to the countries round.

Look, it is nearly a square. On the east side there is a long straight wall, and no door through it. That wall is the Ural Mountains. It is quite a low wall, but for all that it is more trouble to climb even over a low wall than to stay where you are.

That wall is rather a good thing than otherwise, for the neighbours of the Russians on the other side of it are not pleasant neighbours. They would have taught the Russians bad ways and bad manners.

But now let us look to the north. There is the sea, with plenty of bays and gulfs, so that it seems as if this side was full of doors. If the Russians can go out that way it is lucky for them. They might sail round by Norway and Sweden to Germany and England, and the other European countries. They would be very good neighbours for the Russians, for they were like clever elder children, when the Russians had baby minds and babyish ways.

Ah! but these doors are of no use to the Russians; or very little use. They are only open for two or three months in the year. All the rest of the year they are tight shut and locked by great blue icebergs, between which no ships can sail. The Russians cannot get to their good neighbours that way.

But look along the side a little further. Russia, you see, seems to have a small room, which goes right up to the top of the peninsula of Norway and Sweden. Cannot she get out that way?

No; for that piece of land, which is called Finland, is a very difficult land to pass through.

It is as if the Beast's front hall, out of which the house-door opened, was full of boxes like a lumber-room—boxes piled one on the top of the other, and stopping the way everywhere; and as if the roof had not been mended, and the rain had come in, so that all the boxes were lying in great pools of water.

For Finland is full of great granite rocks that came floating there long centuries ago in icebergs. When the icebergs melted, the granite blocks, which could not melt, dropped down on the earth and lay there. And as the icebergs melted, the water that ran away from them, and the icy sea which brought them, left pools of water behind in the vast stony basins of the land.

So Finland is of no use as a way to Europe. But what do we come to if we go across Finland to the southeast?

This looks well. There is a sea, the Baltic, which goes down to the coast of Germany. That is like a good road to the house of good neighbours. Three doors open upon it. The Gulf of Bothnia is the most nort*hern one; but that, like the bays on the north side, is shut and locked half the year. That is little use.

Then a little lower down come the Gulfs of Finland and of Riga. For many years those doors were closed and shut to the Russians by fierce enemies who lived there. It was as if the Beast's door had been guarded by fierce robbers who would not let him pass. But at last the Russians conquered them, and made the Gulf of Finland their own. Then they built a city there, and called it the window from which they could look at Europe.

It is very lucky for the Russians that they have that door. Look at the two other sides.

On the west there is first a straight easy way into Europe. Some of the Russians' relations went there and

settled down. But then they quarrelled with the Russians, and would not let them pass through to go into Europe.

Further down the west side there is a long range of mountains. That is a wall without doors, so Russia cannot go to Europe that way.

Then on the south the doors only lead to bad neighbours or to quarrelsome neighbours.

The Black Sea leads to Asia, where the neighbours are not good for the Russians, or to Constantinople, which always quarrelled with them. Over the Black Sea come high, rocky mountains, the Caucasus, and across them a sea which often freezes in the part that touches Russia.

So you see that the Russians were left very much to themselves. It took them a long time to find out that neighbourly help was good, and then much trouble to get it. So the Russians grew up slowly, and were ignorant for a long time. Children who are not told that fire burns can only learn it by putting their fingers into it and getting burnt. So the Russians often only learned what things were harmful by trying them and suffering for it. You must be sorry for them, as you would be sorry for the burnt children.

Now for the Russians' house itself. I want you to use your eyes well, for it has a great deal to tell you.

It is very flat, laid out all open. Only in the middle there is rising ground in the shape of a square, like a platform in

the middle of a room. At the top corner of the square there are some little hills called the Valdai Hills.

Now you know something which I have not told you. You know which way the rivers run.

For take a piece of paper, and pour some water on it. Then tip up the middle of the paper. The water all runs off to the sides. So from this low rising ground in Russia the rivers come flowing down to the fro*ntiers. That is very important, for rivers are like roads and railways to those early men. There is a very interesting fairy story coming presently about three of these rivers.

Come up to the Icy Sea, and let us pretend that we are sailing over Russia in a balloon. We can look down with strong telescopes and see what it is like.

See, first, that Russia is divided into two halves—one half is forest and the other flat green plains. To the north forests, to the south plains.

Now look down below you. This is November, so there are great icy stretches of sea. Huge icebergs lift their blue sides above the snow, and seabirds are flying about and screaming. Look at that great white beast picking his way among the bare granite rocks on the shore. That is a white bear. You will see many strange beasts up here,—bears and wolves, and lynxes and foxes, and reindeer.

The shore is all bare and frozen, covered with little salt pools. Beyond these are still salt marshes, with trunks of trees lying on them here and there. Between the pools a

grey moss creeps about. All the shore is bleak and bare and cold with bitter winds. Sometimes there are snowstorms, and then the snow is heaped up in great masses by the wind, and sweeps on, writhing and turning and burying everything with its white veil. And on clear frosty nights the northern lights burn bright in the sky.

Away to the west lies Finland, with granite rocks and salt pools, and its long line of fir-trees like a horse's mane.

Up here there is night and scarcely any day for half the year; in the summer there is day for three months with no night. The early Russians made up a story about this. They said that the Dawn and the Sunset loved each other, and went wandering about to find each other half the year. And in the summer they met and burned their lights together.

Beyond these marshes comes the vast forest. At first it is only stunted, miserable-looking alders and little wizened willows. Then, as our balloon sails gradually away from the cruel cold sea, come silver birches stretching away for miles and miles, and then the dark-green pines, and last of all the oaks.

Look to the west, to your right hand. There lie two great lakes, with many little ones round them. That largest, the one nearest us, is called Lake Onega. It is like a hand and wrist with fingers stretching after Finland. But that hand is nearly as large as the whole of Yorkshire.

The shores are all covered with rocks, and are difficult to land on. The sailors know that well, and so do the sailor's wives, when there are fierce winds all night and the cruel Onega catches at ships with its hungry waves and swallows them up.

That second lake farther to the west is Lake Ladoga. That is larger still. On the south its shores are low and sandy, covered with loose stones of all sizes. There the lake is quite shallow. Up to the north it gets deeper, and great granite cliffs rise up from the shore.

Look at the south of it. There is a great river flowing in. We have passed many rivers on our way through the forest. But we must look well at this. It is the Neva, and it is nearly a mile wide. On that great river the Russians built a city so proud and mighty that it called itself "My Lord The Town on the Neva," or "My Lord Novgorod."

On it, later, they built the city which was their window that looked at Europe. So look at it well as it comes smoothly along among birches and pines and alders, through many little lakes, going straight north to the Lake Ladoga.

Look at the swamp to the south of the Valdai Hills, with pines on their tops. There begin two tiny little streams flowing east. One is the Volga, and as it goes it grows and grows till it is the largest river in Europe. The other little stream flows southwest. That is called the Dnieper.

Now comes the fairy story.

Once upon a time the Dnieper and the Volga were two children, brother and sister. Their father and mother died, and they hadn't a crust to eat, and had to work all day to get food. They dressed in rags which they picked off dust-heaps, and were cold and hungry.

So one day, when they had been crying with hunger, they made up their minds to walk about the world till they found a place where they might turn into great rivers. So they walked about the world for three years, and at last they stopped to spend the night in a swamp, where they went to sleep.

But while Dnieper was asleep the cunning Volga thought she would turn into a river and flow quietly away to choose the best and most sloping place for herself. She flowed away to the west, between flat and marshy land on one side and hills on the other. At last she got frightened lest Dnieper might catch her. So she suddenly turned her course, and ran straight south to hide in the sea.

When Dnieper awoke he was very angry to find Volga gone, though he was generally very good-natured. And because a river can run faster than man, he too changed himself into a river, and flowed away south, hoping she had gone that way.

He rushed so fast in his anger that he cut his way deep through granite rocks and steep slopes. He was still furious when he left the forest, but about half-way through the

plains his good temper came back again and he flowed more quietly. At last he flowed so quietly that he left pretty little islands with oaks and aspens and poplars standing up in the middle of his current. And he no longer cut a deep way, but spread out gently over the country, and so flowed into the Black Sea.

He never caught the Volga, but after all his course was quicker than hers, for he had cut such deep ways in his anger. Now you know why there are cataracts on the Dnieper. He was rewarded, too, by having Kief, the second great city of the Russians, built upon him, just where he left the forest.

Now come on quickly over the rich plains. There are apple-trees and cherry-trees, and all sorts of fruit. Corn grows well, though in winter it is very cold.

So we blow along for miles and miles. Here and there, where the soil is turned up, you can see that it is rich and black—so black that this is called the Black Land.

Now look below you, and you will see these trees giving way to vast grass-grown plains. The grass is five or six feet high.

A strange flat place. As far as we can see there is nothing but flatness, like a great sea of grass. Bisons, wolves, foxes, and hares live here. In April for a few weeks it is covered with flowers of all kinds. There are thyme and hyacinths, and tulips and pinks, and thousands of larks sing everywhere. Presently the hot sun and scorching

winds burn it to a dull brown. Later comes the snow, and covers it with a smooth white coverlet till the Spring.

There are no long shadows here to tell when the sun is sinking. Down it drops, and darkness comes, as if it was a lamp snatched away.

Now come on to the Black Sea. On the shore are rushes and reeds. Here and there you can see a row of oaks and birches and willows; that shows that a river is running there.

Then come sandy plains with coatings of ice for miles and miles. Look at that small sea that separates that little three-cornered island, the Crimea, from the land. There are long stories to be told about that little island. To the Sea of Azof it is all sandy and bare, but on the outer side it has fine cliffs and rich trees.

Look to the east, at that little neck of land between the Caspian and the Black Sea. First there are trees, and then long dark marshes. Rising out of the marshes there are rocky peaks and crags, with, precipices between them, and eagles flying round, and misty clouds. Then at the top of all, against the sky, bright snowy mountaintops. Those are the mountains of the Caucasus.

One look at the Caspian, and we shall have seen the Beast's house. There it stretches out, nearly three times as large as the whole of England. The shores are sandy and barren. The sand moves and shifts with the wind, and the sea itself looks like pale liquid sand, muddy and livid.

There are tempests here, when the sky looks grey and sickly, and the sand is whirled about to and fro.

Look close at the shore. Do you see how horrid? Crowds and crowds of black beetles crawling about. If a hut is built there they crawl up it, and come dropping down inside like living rain. And the Caspian is very witch-like and weird, for at night you may see the water burn! That is, there is oil on the top of it which sometimes catches fire. The oil is petroleum, and it comes out of the rocks around.

Now down with our balloon. Like Beauty, we have done looking at the Beast's house, and we must see what it makes of him, and what he makes of it.

The Glorious People.

The people who first lived in Russia were not what we call Russians at all.

They were all a sort of cousins to each other, of the Ugrian family, some Fins, some Laps, some Votiaks, and many other strange names. They lived in the north by hunting and catching fish; and they drove about in sledges dragged by reindeer. They were funny squat little men, dressed in skins, and lived in little wooden huts.

Further south, near the Black Sea, were other tribes. The Greeks, who had cities on the coasts, told odd stories about them, and called them Scythians. Some were warlike, and loved fighting, others tilled the ground, and others again had flocks. The Greeks knew most about the warlike tribes, and they said that their god was a sword stuck in a clod of earth. They were strong people, with brown or yellow hair, and long beards. They loved fighting and bloody deeds.

No one knew much about these tribes in the great country of Russia. The Greeks said that up in the north were people who had only one eye, and others with bald heads and snub noses, and that in their land the air was always full of feathers, and there was darkness and no light. That shows that in some matters they used their eyes, and in others their imaginations.

These tribes lived on quietly till about three hundred years after Christ was born. But farther away over the Ural Mountains matters were going on that concerned them very much. The great family of the Sarmatians, who lived there, were having a disturbance among themselves.

So great was this disturbance, that one tribe of this family would go on living there no longer, and marched off towards the Ural Mountains, to cross them and find another home. The name of this tribe was the Glorious People, or in their language, the Slavs. They were going to come and live in Russia and be the Russians.

So this Glorious People came pouring over the Urals. They were tall fair men and women, with brown hair and grey eyes for the most part. All on foot and all very bold. They were sunburnt and muddy and dusty with their long journeys. Nothing stopped them. When they came to rivers they threw themselves in and swam across, or carried their children over in rough boats.

The fighting tribes came first, and made way for the others. Even these were a little frightened by the Greek fortresses and the even files of soldiers which they came to on the coast. For these Slavs rushed on to battle anyhow, shouting their war-cry. They carried heavy bucklers and sabres, and short spears and poisoned arrows. As they came along, the people in the villages were afraid, and fled from their houses.

These Slavs were cunning as well as brave. When they were lying in wait for an enemy, they would sometimes lie for hours under water in a stream, breathing through a long reed in their mouths that reached up to the air. They ate raw meat, so their food was little trouble.

On rushed these warlike Slavs through the steppes and the rich plains, and into the forest. As they came forward the other tribes drew back before them, up to the north and the east. At last the foremost tribe came near to the shores of the Baltic. There on the Neva, near the Valdai Hills, they settled down, and built themselves huts, with many doors, that they might escape easily,

After this fighting tribe came many others. Some had flocks, and some tilled the ground. All could fight, but not so well as the first tribe.

These did not take the trouble to go further up. Some settled down on the Dnieper among the rich plains, and there they built Kief. Others went into the forests on the Volga. Others stayed lower down on the grass of steppes where they could feed their flocks.

But you remember that the Dnieper and the Neva and the Volga all rose near together. So these tribes could easily meet, and exchange things with one another, and hold together.

These Slavs became the Russians themselves.

There they lived, and grew up, and learned. Only it takes a very long time for a tribe to grow up. Still, when

two hundred years had passed by, there was a great change to be seen in them.

When they first came into Russia they had had no governments. The father had been the head of the family, and made the family obey him, but that was all. He made the women obey him like slaves. The women were not much thought of. The old Slav name for a woman is "a live shovel or broom."

Presently, however, they began to find that it was awkward not to have a government. For when one family quarrelled with another, there was no one who could settle the dispute. Also there was no one who could divide the land between the different families.

So they arranged that all the heads of the families should meet together and arrange these matters, and they called the meeting the Mir. All the land belonged to the Mir, that is, to the whole village in general. The Mir divided it up into little lots of land, and gave one lot to each person. There was a fresh division every three years or so. This Mir was a great and wonderful institution. It is lasting still.

The heads of the different Mirs in villages near one another used to meet together about two or three times a year at the nearest town, and there settle all the affairs between village and village. This meeting was called the Volost. In this little town, too, they had their idols, and they went there to offer sacrifice.

They had learned, too, to grow millet and grain, and eat it, and to drink milk.

Just as people like to have photographs of their friends at different ages, and see what they looked like, so we will have another look at the Slavs when they have been another hundred years in Russia.

They have learned more about dressing themselves. The women make themselves quite grand, with long dresses, and glass beads and bits of metal for ornaments. The men dress in long trousers in summer, and in winter they have coats of skins.

They still have their curious old feasts and songs. When a man dies they often kill his wife and slaves to bury with him.

They have learned music, and they dance. One day when the Greeks attacked them, they conquered the Slavs easily, for they were all fallen asleep with listening to a harper. Though that does not look as if they cared for music particularly, it shows that it had some effect on them.

Now for our last photograph before we begin the real story of our Russians. This is two hundred years later again; that is, five hundred years since they came to Russia.

Now the men who fight are separated from the men who do not fight. There are many fighting men. Those who are the strongest and bravest are a kind of

commanders of the rest, and are called *boyards*, that is, the fighters. Each tribe has its chief, but he is only the head of the boyards.

The other people, who do not fight, till the ground, and go trading with their skins in Greek cities. They have learned many things from the Greeks; how to make their idols of metal, and how to paint them. Besides these people there are slaves, who are prisoners taken in battle.

Now for the gods they believed in.

The greatest and oldest of their gods was called The Shiner. He was so great that he did nothing, but reposed quietly, and let the other gods do all things. His two children were the Sun-god and the Fire-god.

But the most important god of all was Perun, the Thunderer. His power was great and terrible. The Slavs said that once, long ago, the world had been a little egg, but that Perun had made the heat of his lightnings to shine upon it, and it grew and grew, larger and larger, and then out came land and sea upon it, and the trees burst out, and the grass grew, and the birds flew out of it, and animals sprang forth, and so it became our earth. And all that was done by Perun.

There was nothing he could not do. He could strike down trees and destroy evil-willed clouds that were bent on doing harm. When the lightnings pierced the clouds in the spring, and made them pour out rain, they said that Perun was going abroad in his fiery car, and was piercing

the demons—that is, the clouds—as he went with his fiery darts, so that the blood streamed from their wounds. Some times Perun travelled on a millstone, flying in the air, carried by the mountain spirits. He stood upright on it, with his black hair and golden beard streaming on the wind, and in his hand he carried his great club.

In the spring the Russians used to hold sacrifices, and then they prayed to Perun, and said; "Perun, father! give thy blessing on the plough and on the corn. Let golden straw, with well-filled ears, rise up as plentifully as rushes. Drive away all black hail-clouds, and give sunshine and gentle rain."

They sang, too, many songs about Perun's doings, and what a great and generous god he was. This is one of their songs—

Perun drove across the sea,
To many a maid across the sea.
Sun followed with a dowry,
Giving gifts to all the woods:
To the Oak a golden girdle,
To the Maple motley gloves.

They told how one day the Sun's daughter went to a spring to wash her golden cups; but the spring drowned her. Then Perun struck the spring to its depths and dried it up.

Perun had a wonderful golden key. With it he used to unlock the hidden treasures of the earth, gold and silver.

He unlocked, too, wonderful waters. One water was called dead water, the other living water.

If the dead water was put on the wounds of a dead man, the wounds healed, but he was still dead. Then if the living water was put on his lips, he sat up with a shiver, and said, "How long I have been asleep!"

Perun's golden key could stop the flow of blood from wounds. Even now among some of the Russian peasants, if any one's nose bleeds, they let the blood drop through a closed padlock as a sign of Perun's key. Perhaps, too, that is why a key is put down children's backs now to stop nose-bleeding. You do not know how much the ideas about those old gods and others like them mingle in our old customs.

Sometimes the Russians said that Perun died, and floated about in a coffin of dark clouds and mists until the spring brought him to life again.

The people honoured Perun very much, as you may think, for his power, and they had many images of him. Among others, there was a great statue on a hill, near a city called Kief, about which you will presently hear a great deal. It was made of silver, with a golden beard. In its hand it held a yellow stone shaped like the lightning, and before it burned an oakwood fire. If by chance the fire went out, it was lighted again by striking sparks from the stone.

One of Perun's names in the very oldest times used to be Voloss; but, as time went on, the Slavs began to think

that Voloss was a different person to Perun, and they said he was a god that took care of the cattle. When they swore oaths they swore by Perun and Voloss.

Perun had a sister called Lado, who was the goddess of light, and about her they sang many songs, though we know very little of what they thought about her.

There were many other gods. There was a god called Swifteye, who had huge eyebrows, and such heavy eyelids that he could not open them himself, but they were lifted up with pitchforks. But as soon as they were open, the look of his eyes turned all he looked at to stone and ashes.

But there is not space to tell you about all these. Some day perhaps you may read for yourselves about them,—about the White God, with a long white beard, who helps travellers to find their way; and about the Black God, whose dwelling is always dark, and many others.

But for all that the Slavs thought that they knew so much about the gods and their doings, they had very few ideas about the place to which the spirits of the dead went. They seem often to have thought that the souls of the dead had to cross a deep sea to reach the far-off land. So they buried or burnt their dead, in coffins shaped like boats, and put money into their cold hands to pay for the journey.

Some said that the soul had to climb up a steep hill. So if the nails of a corpse were cut, the parings were put into the coffin, that the soul might use them to climb with.

Sometimes, too, they put small leather ladders into the coffin to help the soul out of the grave.

What the land was like that the souls reached at last the old Slavs did not know. They thought that they lived there as they had lived on earth, only the sun shone always, and there was no night. Some said that it was a lovely land, where the sun went when his day's work was over, and where the souls of little children played ahout among green trees, and gathered golden fruits. No cold winds blew there, and winter never came; but when the swallows and other birds left Russia in the autumn, men said that they had gone to this land in the east.

They told stories of many other things about the soul; different tribes had different stories. One thing they all agreed in: that the souls of the dead came back to their homes, often as butterflies, but sometimes in no visible shape, and there they watched over their children, and their children's children.

So they would put food for their ancestors' souls, and worshipped them, in a manner. And because the great thing they thought about in the long cold winters was the comfort of the fire, they began to think that these souls lived near the fire. Even now, when a Russian peasant changes his house, he carries some of his fire with him in a jar. For he thinks that the spirits of his fathers will come with him. When they thought so much about these spirits that lived near the fire, they began to think that the fire had

a spirit to itself. They called the spirit the Domovoy, and said it watched over the house, and took care of it. Later on there grew to be many stories about this Domovoy, and how he was a little hairy old man in a blue dress. But this the old Slavs did not think.

Besides these, they believed in many other spirits; and because they had much to do with the forests, and often lost their way when they thought they were going right, and heard the strange sound of the wind among the trees, and saw the odd dark shadows, they thought that here too there were spirits who wandered about and did mischief. They called them Lyeshies, and said that they were hairy men, with hoofs and horns and long claws, and that they fought with forest trees for clubs.

Then there were the water-spirits, the Rusalkas. These were girls, some tall and quite grown up, and some quite little girls about seven years old. They had dresses of green water-weeds, and long green hair, from which water dripped. If their hair grew dry they died. They lived under the water, and dragged in people sometimes with their long thin arms; but they never looked happy. They wandered about and moaned.

I cannot tell you now of the magicians they believed in; and the ogresses with iron teeth, whose houses were made of men's bones, and the lock human jaws; and how once an ogress was outwitted by a little girl with a clever doll that could speak; and of the horrid fat old men that

live in the water; and of the babies that live with them, and are white and pretty. Some day you may read these. How old those stories are, and if these old Slavs knew them, we cannot quite tell. Anyhow they had stories rather like them, and as the Russians grew more numerous and more clever, they made out these stories from the old ones for themselves.

How the Russians Got Their Name.

But the time was coming when the Slav tribes round Novgorod should change their name, and become at last—Russians.

This was how it fell out. Up to the north-west of the city Novgorod there lived a race of men who were not Slavs but Norse. They were as tall as palm trees, so men said, and carried huge shields of skins, as tall as themselves. They too had boyards, and princes who were heads over the boyards, and they loved to fight their neighbours; and one of the strongest and bravest tribes was the tribe of Rus.

So one day it came to pass that these Varangians, as the Slavs called them, of the tribe of Rus, came down over the plains near Novgorod, and conquered the Glorious People who lived there.

At that the Glorious People were a little ashamed. And to cover their shame, they made up stories and songs, in which they said that the Slavs had asked the Varangians to come and reign over them.

This was the story they told. They said that they themselves had grown tired of fighting, and longed for peace, and wanted a prince who would rule them well. Then they heard of three brothers, princes of the tribe of Rus, who lived in Norway, and were strong and brave. So they sent a messenger to these princes, and the message

was, "Our land is large and fruitful, but it lacks order and justice; come and govern us, and be our ruler."

Then, so goes the story, Rurik the king and his two brothers came in answer to the message. Rurik the king built towns on the banks of Lake Ilmen. And at Novgorod he built a castle, and there he lived and ruled. And from the name of his tribe, Rus, the Slavs were called Russians.

Two of his boyards, said the Russians, Askold and Dir by name, conquered a city called Kief, on the banks of the Dnieper. There they set up a kingdom for themselves.

Kief is like the yolk of the egg that is to feed the Russians. There the nation is going to form itself and to grow mighty, till the very Greeks tremble before its kings.

We cannot quite tell how much is true and how much false about those early men. But if Rurik and the rest were not real men, the real men were very like them.

After Rurik died, Oleg, his next brother, came to the throne.

Oleg was fierce and brave. He determined that Askold and Dir should not rule at Kief. But he feared their army was stronger than his, so he made up his mind to take them by craft. Then he dressed himself and his nephew Igor, Rurik's son, in the dress of Norwegian merchants. Then with some soldiers he rowed right under the hill where stood the mud walls of Kief.

Next he sent a message to Askold and Dir: "Askold and Dir, princes of Kief, down below, by the river, are some Norwegian merchants who have come from Greece. Come and see them, for they are your fellow-countrymen."

When Askold and Dir heard that, their heart yearned to see Norse faces. So they hurried down to the bank of the river. But the moment they reached the beach, out rushed the warriors of Oleg and seized them. And Oleg said mockingly, "You are not princes, nor the sons of princes; here stands the son of Rurik," and he pointed to Igor.

At his words the warriors struck down Askold and Dir, and killed them with their spears. Then they buried them on the mountain. Those were the ways of the early men,—craft, and cunning, and treachery.

Oleg went up the hill into Kief, and took possession of it. As he looked down, and saw the fruitful country round Kief, and the river flowing beneath, he said, "Henceforth Kief shall be the mother of Russian cities."

Oleg grew bolder after he had conquered Kief. He conquered many other tribes, and forced them to give him tribute. Not tribute of money, for they had none, but skins, or corn, or whatever their land brought forth.

At last he grew bold enough to lead his army against the mighty Constantinople. That was a great city with stone palaces and houses, and beautiful statues, and

wonderful old manuscripts. Oleg knew nothing about all those, but he wished to conquer and grow mighty.

So with a hundred boats, and forty men in each, he rowed down the Dnieper. At the cataracts (which Dnieper made in his bad temper) they had to get out and drag their boats by land. The wild tribes on the banks fought against them from time to time; but they went on bravely. At last they reached the Black Sea. They sailed across it to the very gates of Constantinople. Then they turned against the villages round about it and burned them up. That was to terrify the Greeks in the city.

The Greeks were in great fear. They, too, tried cunning, and offered Oleg's men poisoned food when they came to treat for peace. But Oleg was still more cunning, for he had forbidden the men to eat the Greeks' food. At last peace was made. It was agreed that the Greeks should pay Oleg sums of money, and that the Russians might live and trade in Constantinople. Only they were not to come armed nor in large bands.

Then Oleg in his pride nailed his shield to the great gate of the city, called the Golden Door, and went back to Kief.

The people at Kief thought that a man could not have done what Oleg had done. So they said he had magic power. They told all kinds of strange stories about his doings at Constantinople. They said that he had put his boats on wheels, and the wind had driven them against the

gates of the city. All the tribes about feared him yet more. But a magician had told Oleg that he would soon die, and that the gods said his death would come through a favourite horse of his. Oleg feared the decrees of the gods, and he rode the horse no more. Presently it died.

Then Oleg went to look at its corpse. As he looked he said scornfully, "There lies my death," and, laughing, he kicked the horse's head with his foot. Then out of the skull crept a serpent, and stung Oleg's foot, so that he died. When the people heard it they sighed, and shed tears for the mighty Oleg.

Then Igor, Rurik's son, ruled the country. In his time there came from the east a great giant race of men, called the Patzinaks. They pastured sheep and cattle, and plundered their neighbours. They fought with lances and bows and arrows, and could swim well.

Igor made friends with these tribes. With their men and his own he too went against Constantinople, hoping to win glory like Oleg. But the Greeks threw burning oil on his ships, and he was beaten, and went back to Kief.

The next year he took heart and came again. That time he conquered, and agreed with the Emperor that the Greeks should give him large sums of money. This was how the men of Kief swore to keep their side of the agreement. They went up to where the gold and silver statue of Perun stood, near Kief, and there they laid down their battle arms and gold, and made their oaths.

One day Igor's boyards said to him, "We have no fine clothes like the men of other princes. Go and conquer the tribes, and force them to give us what we want."

Igor was afraid that his boyards would turn against him if he refused their request. So he led them gainst the Drevlians, a tribe that lived near by. And they conquered the Drevlians, and took from them many fine robes. Then they turned to go back to Kief.

On the way back Igor thought that it was a pity that he had not taken more. So he sent his army on, and he and a few boyards returned quietly to the Drevlians to take more. When the Drevlians saw them coming they said to each other, "When a wolf attacks sheep, he will destroy the whole flock if he is not killed." And by the wolf they meant Igor, and by the flock they meant themselves.

So when Igor and his men reached the city, the Drevlians took them prisoner, and put them to death. It is said that they killed Igor by tying him to two young trees which they bent down to the earth and then let fly again. Thus Igor died for his greediness of gold.

Igor's son was called Sviatoslav. That is no longer a Norse name, like Igor, but a real Slav name. Sviatoslav was only a few months old, so his mother Olga ruled for him.

She was a good and wise queen in many ways. We should call her cruel too, and treacherous; only men thought differently then. She took fearful revenge for the death of Igor. This was Olga's revenge.

The Drevlians said among themselves, "Now that Igor is dead, we will send our prince to marry Olga, and so her kingdom will become ours." So they sent messengers to her, who said, "We killed your husband because he was a ravening wolf, full of cruelty. Come now and marry our prince."

When Olga heard that, she was glad at heart. For she had feared to lead an army against the Drevlians, and she felt that now the day of her revenge had come.

So she answered the messengers with soft words: "It is true that my weeping and wailing cannot give back life to my husband. Your message pleases me. But now let me treat you with honour. Go back to your ships, and in the morning I will send my people to you, and they shall carry you up on their shoulders to the palace, for the honour I wish to show you."

Then the Drevlians went back to their boats well pleased. But during that night Olga made her people dig a deep trench in front of her palace at the entering of the town. And in the morning she sent down her men from Kief to the Drevlians. And they took the Drevlians' boat on their shoulders, and carried them so. Olga sat watching them, as they came, from the balcony of the palace, and the Drevlians were pleased with the honour she was doing them.

But when the men of Kief reached the trench they suddenly turned the boat over, so that the Drevlians and

their boat fell into the trench. Then Olga, watching, cried out, "Well, my dear guests, does so much honour please you?" And they answered with groans, "Alas! we suffer for the death of Igor." Then Olga bade the men of Kief throw in earth upon them, so that they were buried alive.

That was not all her revenge. She killed many others in cunning ways. She conquered one city, and only asked from them three sparrows and three pigeons for each house. And they gave them gladly. Then Olga tied lighted tow to their tails, aud they flew home again to the roofs of the houses, so that the houses took fire, and the city was burned.

Yet Olga was a great princess. She was the first to think of the peasants, and whether they were happy or not. She went from village to village, hearing complaints and giving judgment. She had no written laws, and some of her laws were very strange. But it was a great thing that the people should have a law at all, and not have to obey simply the will of each great man.

When she died her people all wept for her, and called her Olga the Wise. And they still keep the sledge in which she used to drive from village to village. Perhaps some day you may see it.

Before she died she took a long journey to Constantinople. Sviatoslav was old enough then to rule alone. Olga did not go to conquer, but to see this beautiful, mighty city.

When she reached it she went into the great Christian churches there. She saw the magnificent golden images, and the great size of the churches, and the beautiful vestments of the singers. As she looked she wondered, and felt great awe. She saw too, how the Emperor of Constantinople himself bowed before the altar. Then she thought that this God must be greater than even Perun, for Perun's altars were only wooden, and the singing and worship were rough and rude.

So she felt that she must become a Christian, and worship this great God. Then she was taught and baptized, and went back to Russia the first Christian princess.

Yet she could persuade none of the Russians to become Christian. Sviatoslav said to her, "Why, if I became a Christian all my men would laugh at me." And as she went on arguing with him, he grew angry and went away, and would hear no more.

Yet, though he would not heed her words, he loved his mother very much, and he thought her so clever that he left all the ruling of the Russians to her. He himself spent his time in going to war, which he loved.

He was a strong man, and as light as a panther, and loved the noise of camps. He was of middle height, with a wide chest and a thick neck. He had thick eyebrows, and blue eyes, and a flat nose. His beard and moustaches were long and thin, and his head was all shaven, except for one

long tuft of hair, which showed that he was a great man. He wore a gold ring in one of his ears, with two pearls and some rubies in it

When he went to war he would only eat raw meat, and particularly horse-flesh. He could sleep in the saddle, and he rowed his boat himself. When he went to war he sent to his enemies to say, "I am marching against you."

Sviatoslav had a great deal of trouble with the wild tribes round, the Patzinaks and others. Some he conquered, but others, who lived further away, then came into his country, and once came right up to Kief. Olga and Sviatoslav's baby son were there, and were nearly taken.

The Greek Emperor one day asked Sviatoslav to come and help him against the Bulgarians. These were tribes who lived between Constantinople and Kief. Sviatoslav came gladly, for he loved to fight. And with his brave men he conquered the Bulgarians and took their cities.

Then, like many other people, having gained a good thing, he thought he might keep it. So he stayed in Bulgaria. That the Greek Emperor did not like, for he feared that the Russians might grow too strong, and then it would not be convenient to have them so close. So he sent messengers to Sviatoslav to ask him to go back to Kief. But Sviatoslav's answer was, "Presently I hope to be at Constantinople."

At that the Greek Emperor was troubled and afraid. And to try to terrify Sviatoslav he marched against a city,

in which were some of the Russian men, and he took the city and burned it. Then Sviatoslav, in a mighty rage, marched to meet the Greeks near the city Dorostol, and he and his men went into the city, and the Greeks besieged them there.

There were twelve great battles, and though Sviatoslav's men were only 10,000 against 100,000 Greeks, they fought bravely, both men and women. During the night, when the battle stopped, they used to go out of the town and burn their dead by moonlight.

At last there was a very fierce battle. The Russians might have won, but there was a great wind that blew dust into their faces. The Greeks said that Saint Theodore was fighting for them in the wind on a white horse, but the Russians did not see him. They were terribly beaten, and had to ask for peace.

The Emperor then made them promise that they would never invade Constantinople again, but help to defend it. So they swore by Perun and Voloss, saying, "If we do not keep our word, may we become as yellow as gold, and perish by our own arms." Then they turned to march home, the few that were left.

But the giant Patzinaks had heard of their defeat, and hid themselves in the bushes on the banks of the Dnieper. And as Sviatoslav and his men came rowing up, worn out and weary, they sprang out on them and killed Sviatoslav.

Then they cut off his head, and sent the skull to their king as a drinking-cup.

Russia at School.

Sviatoslav before he died had made a great mistake. He had divided his kingdom among his three sons. He said, indeed, that the son who reigned at Kief was to be called the Grand Prince, and have a sort of authority over the others. But this did not do away the evil of his mistake. From this time, for centuries, there were disputes and quarrels among the different princes of the Russians.

These three sons quarrelled until two of them were dead. The one that was left was called Vladimir. He came and ruled at Kief alone.

He was a brutal, savage man. His own wife hated him so much that one day when he was asleep she drew near with a dagger to kill him. But he awoke and caught her hand. Then he resolved to kill her. He told her to dress herself in her wedding-robe, and then went to her room to kill her. But at the door his little son met him with drawn sword, and said, "Father, you are not alone here." Then Vladimir flung away his sword and called his boyards to advise him. And they told him to pardon the mother for the sake of the child.

We have been hearing all this time how the Russians lived when they were ignorant like babies. Now we shall hear how Russia went to school, and learned many things, and had new rules to obey.

Vladimir was to choose Russia's school for her. For it was priests and teachers of religion who were the Russians' first schoolmasters. They taught them how to behave, and to live like civilised people.

Vladimir had come back victorious from war, and in gratitude to the gods he said that he would sacrifice a human victim to them. He cast lots to choose the victim, and the lot fell on the son of a Varangian or Norseman, who was a Christian.

Then the people went to this Varangian's house, and said to him, "Bring out your son to be sacrificed to the gods." But the Varangian anawered, "Your gods are no gods, but only wood; they neither eat nor drink nor sleep. The God whom the Greeks worship, he alone is God. He made the heavens, and the earth, and men. Your gods have made nothing, but are themselves made by human hands. I will not give my son to devils."

When the people heard that they were very angry. They broke into the house, and took the Varangian and his son, and put them both to death. But they told Vladimir all the words that the Varangian had said; and Vladimir was troubled in mind. For he began to think that perhaps the Varangian was right, and that the gods of the Russians were not gods at all.

Yet he remembered that if he was wrong, that did not in itself prove that the Varangian was right. He thought that as there were many religions he had better inquire

about all before choosing any. So he sent for Mohammedan, and Jewish, and Christian men, to ask about their religion.

The Mohammedans came before him first. They, you know, believe in one God, and say that Mohammed was God's great prophet. They spoke to him of how beautiful his life after death would be if he became a Mohammedan. And Vladimir heard them well pleased. But presently they told him that if he became one of them he must give up eating pork and drinking wine. At that Vladimir said, "Drinking wine is the pleasure of Russians, and we cannot live without it." And he would hear no more.

Then Jews came to him, and he was well pleased with them, till at last he happened to ask them, "Where is your native land?" Then they answered, "We are driven out of our native land by the wrath of God." Then Vladimir said, "Do you wish to teach others, who are yourselves so miserable! Do you want us to feel the same punishment?" And he would talk with them no more.

Then at the last came a Greek Christian, a philosopher. He spoke scorn of the Mohammedans and Jews, and he told Vladimir of the life of Christ and the beliefs of the Greek Christians. He explained, too, how these beliefs were different from those of the Roman Church. He told Vladimir that the Patriarch, the head of the Greek Church, lived at Constantinople, and that the Pope, the head of the Roman Church, lived at Rome.

Vladimir did not understand all that, and when the philosopher saw that, he showed him something else. He drew out a picture of the Last Day. On the right side of the picture the good were being taken up to heaven by bright angels; on the other side the evil were being hunted into hell by black ugly demons. Vladimir looked at the picture, and it made him feel that these things were real. Presently he said, "How happy the people must be who are going up on the right hand, and how miserable the sinner's at the left!"

Then the philosopher said, "Be baptized, and you will go with the people at the right hand." At that Vladimir thought for a minute or two, and then said, "I will wait a little." For he felt he had better ask the boyards what they thought.

Vladimir told the boyards all the philosopher had said to him, and he asked them, "What do you think of all that?" The boyards answered, "Of course no one will speak evil of his own religion. If you want to know the truth, send men whom you can trust to the countries of different religions, and let them see what they believe and how they serve God."

What they said pleased Vladimir. So he chose ten prudent and observant men and sent them out.

First they went to the Mohammedan mosques. But the service was poor and mean, and they saw nothing that made them think that this God was greater than their god.

Then they went into Bulgaria. The Bulgarians held Roman Christianity. These envoys did not understand the difference between Roman and Greek Christianity; indeed there was at this time very little difference. But they saw that the churches in Bulgaria were very bare, and the vestments of the priests were not gorgeous. So they thought that this religion was not worth much.

Then they purposed to go to Constantinople. The Greek Emperor was very anxious to make friends with the Russians, and he hoped that they would become Greek Christians, and so often come in a friendly manner to Constantinople. For this reason he gave orders that the grandest services of the Church were to be shown them.

They were led into the great church of S. Sophia, which shone with different-coloured marbles and jasper, and was gorgeous with gold and rich mosaics. The Patriarch himself marched at the head of the long procession in splendid vestments. Tapers were blazing all round, and sounds of music filled all the church with sweet chanting of voices. The priests swung jewelled censers to and fro, and out of them rose clouds of incense. All the time the envoys watched, half breathless with admiration, though the words were almost the same as those the Bulgarians sang. It was just like judging whether a book is good or not by its binding. Then the long lines of robed deacons and priests with torches in their hands came out from behind the great veil hung across the church, and all the people fell on their knees. Then the envoys were

overcome with the beauty, so that they thought they saw angels singing in the air. And they cried out, "We want no more proofs! Send us home again." The Emperor sent them home well pleased.

When they reached home they told Vladimir and the boyards all they had seen. And they said that there was no religion like the Greek religion. For the foolish people thought that because the services were grander the religion was greater.

When all had been heard, Vladimir asked the boyards whether they would accept the Greek religion. They answered, "Yes;" and added, "If it were not a good one, your grandmother Olga would not have adopted it." So the matter was settled.

So Russia had chosen to go to school. That was a very good thing. But it was a pity that she had not chosen the Roman Church instead of the Greek Church. This for two reasons.

You know that when two children go to school together they get to know each other. Then they talk together, and one learns from the other. All the European nations belonged to the Roman Church. So if Russia had belonged to it too, she would have learned to know the Europeans, and they would have taught her many things. It would not have given her an extra door, but it would have made her eager to go into Europe through the doors she already had. That is the first reason.

You know, too, that the headmaster of a school does not only teach his scholars but looks after them also. The Patriarch was like Russia's headmaster. But he was not nearly so powerful as the Pope, because he had no great nation under his care, except Russia. So when Russia was conquered by fierce tribes, as she was not long after this, there was no nation he could call in to help her. If Russia had belonged to the Roman Church, the Pope would have ordered the European nations to help her. That is the second reason.

Vladimir was too proud to ask baptism from the Greeks as a favour. So he laid his plans and collected an army and marched against a Greek city called Kerson, and took it. Then he sent word to the Greek Emperor that he would not give up the city unless he might marry his sister.

The Greek Emperor answered that his sister must not be the wife of a heathen. At that Vladimir was much pleased, for it suited his plans. He replied at once that he was ready to become a Christian.

So Anna, the Greek princess, was sent to him, though she wept, and said she would rather die. Then he was baptized and married, and went back to Russia.

When he reached Kief he assembled the people on the hill where the idols were. There stood the gods of the Day and the Sun, and many others. Vladimir bade his men cast them all down and hew them to pieces and burn the pieces. But the statue of Perun, with its great gold and

silver head, was dragged down the steep bank to the shore of the river and thrown in.

Next day Vladimir collected the people and made them all wade into the Dnieper, while the Greek priest read the Baptismal Service over them. Then he thought it was all right, and that they were Christian.

The people did not like Christianity all at once. They went on telling their old tales of the gods, and fearing them for a long time. When a statue of Perun at Novgorod was thrown into the river, men said that it swam against the stream. And a voice was heard saying, "This for you, O people of Novgorod, in memory of me." And at the same time a rope was thrown up on the bridge. After that for many years the people lashed themselves with ropes on the day of the overthrow of Perun.

But if anything could have made them think that Christianity was better than their old religion, it was the change that came over Vladimir. He became mild and gentle and just. In old days he had tried to kill his wife. Now he would not take the life of a robber, because he feared to sin. At last the Christian priests themselves reminded him that he sinned if he did not keep order in his kingdom, and that for this sometimes it was necessary even to put men to death.

Vladimir grew very fond of learning. He built schools and churches, and had copies of the Bible in the Russian tongue sold and given away about his kingdom.

When he first built the schools, he found that no children would come to them. For their mothers thought that reading and writing were wicked magic arts. Vladimir then commanded the children to come to school, so the mothers were forced to let them go. But they wept very much, and did not like it for a long time. We will hope the children were wiser than their parents.

Besides learning, Vladimir taught the Russians gentler ways and better manners. He gave them many books, and had them taught music and how to paint churches and house-building. At last his boyards grew so grand that they grumbled at having to eat with wooden spoons, and asked for silver ones.

More than this, Christianity taught them to be gentle instead of cruel, just instead of unjust, honourable instead of treacherous.

All these changes, of course, came in quite gradually, like light coming into the room in the morning. The Russians caught sight of one fresh idea after another. And though strange customs and rough ways remained for a long time, the Russians were growing up and learning.

Vladimir did not forget his skill in war. He conquered the great giant Patzinaks, who once nearly took Kief. The people told strange stories about this war. They said that during a war a young boy met a giant Patzinak in single fight and crushed him to death. But, you see, about this time the priests were teaching them the story of David and

Goliath. They were unused to learning, and so they mixed up the two things in their minds.

But Vladimir's reign was drawing to an end. One hot summer he was taken ill, and died. His death was kept secret at first, for reasons that you shall hear presently. His servants cut a hole in the floor, and let his body down into the cellar beneath, and then took it quietly by night to the Church of Our Lady in Kief. But the people found it out and came to the church. There they wept and wailed for Vladimir. For they forgot his early cruelty, and only thought of his good deeds since his baptism, and how he had conquered the Patzinaks.

Vladimir had said that the kingdom was to be divided among his nine sons. But Boris, his favourite, was to be Grand Prince of Kief, though not the eldest.

Boris refused to be Grand Prince, as he did not think he had any right to Kief. So Sviatopolk, another of his brothers, seized Kief, and made himself Grand Prince.

But he was afraid that the people would go over to Boris. That was why Vladimir's death was kept secret. For Boris was gentle and honourable, and the people loved him. So Sviatopolk managed to turn Boris's own guards against him. One morning, when he was singing matins, the guards rushed in and pierced him through and through with their spears, and carried him off, still alive, wrapped in a tent-cloth. Sviatopolk sent his own boyards

to see if he was dead. They, seeing he still breathed, pierced him through the heart and killed him.

Now Boris had a brother whom he loved dearly, whose name was Gleb. Sviatopolk was afraid of Gleb too. So he sent treacherous messages to him, and asked him to come to Kief because his father was ill.

Gleb did not know his father was dead; and because he was truthful himself, and very tender hearted, he set out towards Kief. On the way messengers met him, and told him, "Vladimir is dead, and Sviatopolk has taken Kief, and has killed Boris your brother."

At that Gleb cried out for sorrow, above all, that Boris was dead. While he was weeping, murderers sent by Sviatopolk came up behind him and killed him. Then his servants took up the body, and carried it to where Boris's corpse was buried. Then with tears they laid him by Boris's side. After wards they called the brothers St. Boris and St. Gleb, because of their saintly lives and the love they had to each other. And in battles the Russians often thought that they saw them in the sky fighting for Russia.

When Sviatopolk heard that Gleb too was dead he was glad at heart. But he little thought that vengeance was coming close.

Jaroslav, another brother, who was Prince of Novgorod, heard of these two murders. He and the people of Novgorod were very angry. They collected an army and marched against Kief.

Then there were bloody battles between the two brothers. At last Jaroslav forced Sviatopolk to fly.

Sviatopolk was ill, and he was carried away in haste from the battlefield. But he was mad with fright, and thought at each step that Jaroslav was coming up with him. If by chance his men stopped for an instant, he cried out, "Ah! ah! they are pursuing me. Look, there they are! Fly! Fly!" At length he reached the deserts, and there he died. That was the end of Sviatopolk the murderer.

These are sad, dark stories. But sadder, darker days are coming presently,—days when the Russians did not know where to turn for help, and the land was full of misery and evil deeds.

Those days did not come till Jaroslav died. He reigned at Kief happily and prosperously. He was the greatest sovereign that Russia had yet had. He was not so great in war as the other princes had been; but he was greater than they, for whereas they spent their time in killing their enemies, he helped his friends.

There were a few wars. There were wild tribes like the Patzinaks who fought him. Besides that, there were wars with Poland. Do you remember in the first chapter how some of the Slavs settled down to the south of the Baltic? and how I said that these Slavs quarrelled with the Russians, and prevented them from going through to Europe? Those Slavs were the Poles, and lived in Poland.

There were others near them, called the Lithuanians. These joined the Poles, and fought against Russia.

There was a Greek war also. In that the Russian fleet was destroyed by a storm.

But now for Jaroslav's real work. He was the first to write down the laws of Russia. And he called them the Russian Right.

They are strange, odd laws—Norse laws, as Rurik and his sons were Norse. These are some of them: Murderers and thieves were not always to be punished, but were to pay a sum of money instead. A murderer was not pursued and taken by public officers as now. The relations of the murdered man tracked him out, aud either killed him, or took money to pay for his crime. When a Russian had cause of complaint against another, he summoned him to go before the prince, or one of the judges appointed by the prince. With the judge there was a jury of twelve men, and these and the judge listened to the whole story, and gave judgment.

But if both sides disliked the judgment, then they settled matters by a fight. The relations of the two men formed a ring round them, and then they fought. Generally they fought with swords, and the one whose sword cut sharpest was the victor. When the fight was over, the victor could pass what sentence he liked upon the other.

Sometimes when a man was accused of a crime he had to prove his innocence in one of two ways. He carried red-hot iron on the back of his hand for three steps, or plunged his hand into boiling water. Then the hand was wrapped up, and the bandage sealed by the judge. After three days the bandage was taken off again. Then if the wound had healed, and no mark remained, the man was declared innocent.

There was no capital punishment, no cruel deaths, no torture to make men confess, no beating, and no public prisons, in Jaroslav's time.

But at the same time the Christian priests began to bring in different laws. They would not allow money to be paid for a murder. For they said it was an offence against God, and the murderer must suffer death, according to the Jewish law. Besides this, they brought in Greek laws, which were far more cruel than Russian laws: flogging and hard labour, and torture and imprisonment, and the cutting off sometimes of the hands and feet of a prisoner.

There was one bad law which they tried to alter. They tried to prevent the judgment by red-hot iron and boiling water; for that, you can see, was a foolish judgment. They did not get these laws written down in the Russian Right. But sometimes these were followed, and sometimes the Russian Right, until the times of Ivan the Great and Ivan the Terrible.

Jaroslav built the first school in Russia. It was to hold three hundred children. He also built many new cities.

But the city that he made most beautiful was Kief, the mother of Russian cities. Round it he built ramparts; and the houses inside were built taller, and of two stories, often with a paling round them. Inside, he divided the city into eight parts, so that the Slavs and Norsemen and foreign merchants might live with their own countrymen in the different parts of the town.

Many merchants came to Russia in the time of Jaroslav. His name was well known in Europe. For one of his daughters had married Harold the Brave, King of Norway, and another was the wife of the King of France. One of his sons married the daughter of our King Harold. Besides this, he gave shelter to St. Olaf and his son, as you will read in the story of Norway. So many merchants came from these countries, till the Dnieper was covered with their ships.

The most glorious church that Jaroslav built was the church of St. Sophia in Kief. He had built four hundred churches, but this was the grandest of all. Many Greek artists came to build these churches.

This St. Sophia shone like the sun inside; for her vaults and pillars and walls were covered with gold. On one wall was a mosaic in rich colours of the Last Supper. That you may perhaps see for yourselves some day. The singers and the priests were taught by the Greeks.

But even the most glorious reign must come to an end. And about ten years before William the Conqueror came over to England Jaroslav the Great died.

The First Troubles.

Do you remember in the first chapter that I said that Russia was like a child that puts its hand into the fire because it has never been taught that fire burns? Yet the fire burns it all the same.

And so the Russians were to pay the price of their king's mistake. There were now many little kingdoms, and because of that there was misery and war. And there was one arrangement that made it worse. When the Grand Prince, the eldest of a family, died, the next eldest moved to Kief, and became Grand Prince. Then the next eldest to him moved into the kingdom he had left, and so on. Thus you see the ruler of each little kingdom was constantly changed.

So there was much discontent and bad ruling. For the people of each state never had time to grow fond of their ruler; nor did they care to, for they knew he would not be with them long. And their ruler troubled little about their welfare, or the beauty of their cities. For he never knew how soon he might leave them, nor who might follow him. So all the kingdoms were neglected and miserable.

Thus Russia went gradually down into a gulf of misery and fighting, and evil of all sorts.

In her good days she was like a fleet of little boats—different tribes—sailing happily and prosperously together, in sunshiny weather, with flags flying, Now in

these sad times it is as if a storm had come on, and the sky had grown black, and the waves rough. Then the ships break up and part, or are driven by the waves against each other, so that one and another sink. That is Russia in these hard times,—kingdom striking against kingdom, so that sometimes one is destroyed. Kief, the mother of Russian cities, went down in these rough times. She came up again, but her greatness was gone and her glory dimmed.

What shall we see when the storm is over? Broken masts, torn flags, battered boats. Broken powers, ruined beauty, wrecks of kingdoms.

Terrible things were done in these sad days, things that I hardly like to tell you. Brother fought against brother, father against son. There were treachery and lies and murders.

This is the sort of thing that happened. One prince drove another out of Kief. Then the exiled prince called in the help of the Polovtsi, wild barbarians like the Patzinaks. These overran the country, and burned the peasants' houses and their corn-fields. But the exiled prince cared nothing for that. It served his turn. At last he was murdered on a dark night by murderers sent by his brother.

There was once a prince that loved his fatherland, and tried to drive out the barbarians and make peace. His name was Vassilko. But he died sadly. His cousin seized

him treacherously, and sent him away in a cart, loaded with fetters. His eyes were put out, and so he died.

Once it seemed as if these princes were growing weary of war. For six princes met together, after about forty years of war, and they declared that they would live together with single hearts in friendship, and that they would protect Russia. This they swore, and kissed the Cross as they spoke their oaths. Then they parted and went home. But so weak is human nature, that next year they were at war together again as fiercely as before.

False oaths were often taken. One prince swore a great oath and kissed the Cross. Next day he broke his oath. He was reproached with breaking it, but he only sneered, and said, "It was such a little Cross."

Little by little the learning and the better manners and the foreign trade were all lost to Russia. Grass grew in the churches and the schools, and the walls crumbled away. It seemed as if all the good that Vladimir and Jaroslav had done to Russia was no lasting good at all.

Yet one set of people, whom Vladimir had brought to Russia, now showed how good they were. These were the Christian priests. All through this sad time they were faithful to their work. They comforted and helped and taught the poor miserable peasants.

In one thing they were very wise. They knew well that the people would not give up their old heathen songs and stories and feast-days. So very cleverly they changed the

names of the gods of whom they sang into names of Christian apostles and saints.

Here is a song, for instance. The people used to sing it about the Goddess of the Harvest, who made the land fruitful, and Perun, who blessed the corn. But the Christian priests changed the names, and for Perun they said God, and for the goddess the Mother of God, and for the helper of Perun they said St. Peter.

So the song ran like this:—

"A golden plough goes ploughing
Afield in the fertile lands;
At the plough is the Lord Himself; by Him
The holy Peter stands;
And the Mother of God holds corn for sowing."

When the people sang it, they learned to think that God blessed them, and not Perun.

But a man was coming presently to the throne of Kief who was to give Russia a few years of rest. He showed the Russians hopefully that, even in those evil, bad times, men could be pure and upright and unselfish.

Before we come to him I want to tell you a little about the story of the great city Novgorod.

The chief thing for you to remember about it is its splendid pride. It stood on the Neva, in sandy, marshy land where little would grow. There were often famine

and pestilence there, but nothing could bend the pride of the old city of Rurik.

So great did the men of Novgorod think their city, that they called it, as I said, "My Lord Novgorod," and the saying went among them, "Who can equal God and the great Novgorod?"

My Lord Novgorod was ruled by a great council of all the citizens called the Vetché. The head of this council was called the Possadnik. The councillors were summoned together by the great bell of Novgorod, and met on the bridge of the Neva, and the army formed of citizens belonged to them. They had full power to judge and sentence. The Possadnik told news to the Vetché, and conducted the business. He asked questions as to what was to be done, to which the members of the Vetché shouted out Yes or No. Then, if more said Yes than said No, there was quarrelling and disputing among the council until every one agreed to say the same. If they could not agree, the two sides fought on the bridge, and sometimes one side drowned the other in the river.

That seems a strange way of doing business, and as if Novgorod would not long remain one city. But the pride that all the citizens felt in My Lord Novgorod held them together.

Besides the Possadnik there was always a Prince of Novgorod. He was called Prince, but he had very little

power. My Lord Novgorod invited whom he liked to come and rule.

Once when a prince wanted to come, against the will of the citizens, they said, "Send him here if he has a spare head." When a prince came they told him very plainly what he might and what he might not do. He was to swear to keep the laws of Jaroslav. He was allowed a certain amount of money, paid by the different quarters of the town. Also he had the fines paid by criminals.

He could not own any villages in the country round Novgorod. And he could not order even the harvests to be reaped at his own will. He lived by the church of Novgorod, at the right side of the river, and had his boyards and councillors, and his own army.

If in anything he displeased the citizens, they "made him a bow, and showed him the way out of Novgorod." And very difficult it was to find the way in again after My Lord Novgorod had shut the door upon him.

The Novgorod people took very little part in these terrible civil wars. They went on choosing their own prince, and doing what they liked, up to the time when a certain great man became Grand Prince. The city had its own songs and stories and books, and an archbishop of its own. They had their own heroes, and told how Vassili the boyard had fought on the bridge up to his knees in blood.

Besides all this greatness My Lord Novgorod was very rich. The citizens told fairy stories, to show how rich it

was, about a merchant who went down to the sea-king, and brought up great treasure, but not so great as the treasure of Novgorod.

There were many other republics. Pskof, a city not far from Novgorod, was one of them. The men of Pskof tried to think that their city was as great as Novgorod, and they called it My Lord Pskof. But when My Lord Pskof and My Lord Novgorod met in battle, it was pretty plain which was the stronger of the two.

Now for the one good prince in this evil time. Vladimir-Monomachus is his name. He was very different from other men of his time. He was truthful, and never broke his oath, even with the savage tribes who overran Russia, though every one else thought that a promise made to them was no promise at all.

One day Vladimir-Monomachus and his army marched up to the very gates of Kief to punish the Grand Prince for his cruelty to Vassilko. But the men of Kief, who were starved and broken by war, came out and begged him with tears not to bring fighting again inside their city. And Vladimir-Monomachus had such a tender heart that he turned away and did not make war on Kief.

The men of Kief never forgot the pity he showed them. So when their prince died they begged him to come and rule them. At first Vladimir-Monomachus refused, for he hated fighting, and he knew well that he would have to fight if he came to Kief.

But the men of Kief, to show how eager they were, plundered the houses of the Jews who lived in the city, because they had been favoured by their last prince. Poor Jews! But it is not so different now. Then Vladimir-Monomachus could refuse no longer. It was well for Russia that he did not.

The first thing that this new king did, who was to bring Russia peace, and teach her that fellowship was worth more than many kingdoms, was to move the bodies of Boris and Gleb to a finer tomb. As the procession went along, such crowds came to follow it that Vladimir had to scatter furs and gold to them to clear the way.

And as they watched the bier borne on high, they thought how gentle and good Boris and Gleb had been. They thought how they had cared nothing for power, but only for peace and good-fellowship. And they had been the first to suffer from the evilness of this evil time. When these thoughts came into their minds, and they saw Vladimir-Monomachus leading the procession, they said to each other, "This new king will be like the holy brothers Boris and Gleb. Let us help him to give peace to our country."

So Monomachus reigned. He was brave in war as well as gentle at home. He drove back the barbarian Polovtsi, and weakened their strength. And he gave to the poor worn-out Russians twelve years of rest.

He did more than that. He added to the Russian Right a law about debtors and creditors. For he found that in Kief the Jew money-lenders had asked for far too high an interest.

He built up churches again and schools. He built also one new city, and called it Vladimir. He did not neglect to make friends with other countries, for he married the daughter of King Harold of England.

He did much for the peasants. That was why he fought the barbarians, as he said, "that the Polovtsi might not come and pierce the peasants with arrows, and carry off, not only their horses, but also their wives and children."

Have you ever quarrelled, and cried with anger till you felt hot and restless and miserable? And has any one then ever come and put the quarrel right, and taught you gently to be sorry and to be good again? That was what Vladimir-Monomachus did for Russia.

All did not go smoothly in his reign. There was a famine in the land, and a great fire at Kief. But the men of Kief loved him, and felt safe in his hands. For they trusted him, and knew he would do the best for them. So the land had peace.

At last the time for Vladimir's death came near. When he felt that he was going to die, he wrote down rules for his children to follow. But at the beginning these were the words he wrote, being a humble man, and one who thought little of himself: "I am drawing near the grave;

you, my dear children, and all who read this, listen carefully to these precepts, and if your heart does not find them good, then do not think I meant amiss, but say to yourselves, 'He was an old man, and his mind was getting a little weak.'"

Then he wrote, "The groundwork of all virtues is the fear of God and the love of man. Neither fasting nor being a monk can give you life eternal, but well-doing alone. Do not forget the poor, but succour them, and give them of your wealth.

"Do not bury your riches in the ground, for a Christian should not do that. Be a father to orphans, and hear the cause of widows, and do not let the strong oppress the weak. Never put any man to death, either innocent or guilty, for nothing is more sacred than the life and the soul of a Christian. Never take God's name in vain, nor break an oath when you have kissed the Cross as a pledge."

Then again: "Drive pride away from your heart, and remember that we shall perish; today full of life, tomorrow in the shroud. Abhor lying, drunkenness, and loose living. In time of war be vigilant. This is not the time to dream of feasts and of softness. Respect foreigners, and learn their languages. My father knew five. Mind that you are on your horse in good time, when you are at war, to guard against surprises. When you are on horseback say your prayers often from time to time; or at least say the shortest and best of all, 'Lord, have mercy on us.' When you wake at

sunrise, praise God, as my father did, saying in the joy of your heart, 'Light me, my God, with Thy divine light.'"

Then he went on to tell them of all the wars he had fought, and how he had been in eighty-three battles, and made peace nineteen times with the Polovtsi, and how he had caught wild horses, and ridden fast through the forests, and fought with stags and elands.

Then he ended up: "I broke my head, I wounded my arms and legs, but the Lord watched over me. And you, my children, do not fear death nor wild beasts, but be brave at all times. The protection of Heaven is above all the care that man can take."

We must leave him now. As soon as he was dead there was a terrible fresh outbreak of war over all the country, and evil deeds were done in all parts.

There was a strong prince at Kief, Andrew by name, and he for a time conquered the kingdoms and won them, but he could not keep them or give Russia peace.

Alas for Russia! The country is overrun with wild savage tribes, and Poland—that little country where the cousins of the Russians settled down— is fighting against Russia also. We shall hear more of that Poland soon, for she became a terrible enemy to Russia. And Russia is divided against herself. And far off over the mountains a fierce band is making its way towards Russia, and coming daily closer. Worse troubles than ever are coming. What will happen to her?

The Tartars.

Far, far away in the middle of Asia there lived a tribe of strange people. They had brown faces and small eyes very wide apart. Their beards were thin and their shoulders broad and their hair was black. They had flocks of cows and sheep, and wandered about from place to place.

They had no towns or walled villages, no books and no writing. They had no worship and no laws. Their little children learned to shoot birds and rats with their arrows, and to ride and break-in horses. These people ate raw flesh, and the strongest got the fattest and largest pieces. What have they to do with Russia? Read on and see.

About 1150 one of the people who had been fed on the largest and fattest pieces collected together tribes and tribes into one large force. For he said that as there was one God in heaven, so there ought to be one ruler on earth, and that ruler he himself, Genghis Khan, meant to be.

So he led them on westward. They went in creaking wooden chariots, with camels and buffaloes and horses, and they howled their terrible war-cry. They went on taking town after town through many years. But at last on the horizon before them lay the flat dull surface of the Caspian Sea. And still they went on … That is their side of the story, or rather their Asian side of it. Now for Russia. Russia was in the same miserable state, when one day a

messenger came from the Polovtsi to the Russian prince who lived near. This messenger said, "A strange, fierce tribe, called the Tartars, have attacked and taken our city. Tomorrow they will take yours also. Come and help us."

At that the princes near took fright for their own sakes. The Tartars sent to say, "Be at peace with us. We have only a quarrel with our relations the Polovtsi." But the princes were foolish, and killed the Tartar messengers, and rushed on to battle to the Sea of Azof. There they met the Tartars. But their battle order was bad, and the Polovtsi ran away. So the rest of the army was cut to pieces and massacred just before the Prince of Kief and others came to help them.

Then the Tartars offered to make peace with the Prince of Kief if he would pay tribute. He agreed, but they broke their word, and killed his men, and stifled him and his son by pressing planks upon them. In the evening they held their festival over the dead bodies.

All the Russians were in terror and trembling. But suddenly the Tartars changed their minds, turned round, and went back to Asia.

At first the Russians could hardly believe their good fortune, and wondered and thought about the Tartars for a long time. They said they were a strange, unknown people, who had come upon them for their sins, and that only God and very wise men knew who they were. But time passed on, year after year rolled by, and most of the

people forgot all about the Tartars. The more thoughtful believed that they saw in the famines and plagues and the eclipses of the sun signs of a great misfortune to come upon Russia.

Thirteen years had passed by when the Russians one morning were struck sick at heart. For they heard that the wild tribes of the east had taken refuge in the country of the Bulgarians because the Tartars had come back.

On they came, more terrible than ever. They took the great city of the Bulgarians, burned the houses, and killed the people. Then seven of the princes of Russia advanced with an army to meet them. The Tartars sent to them to say, "Give us the tenth of your goods and we will leave you in peace." But the princes answered boldly, "You may have the whole—when we are dead." And, alas for Russia! that soon was the case, and they lay stark and bloody on the field of battle while the Tartar host went on.

They burned Moscow to the ground, sacked Vladimir and the cities round. As they went they left a terrible black desert behind them, with blackened houses and huts, and masses of ruins. Nearer and nearer to the great Novgorod they came, and the Russian heads fell like grass beneath the scythe; but at the edge of the Novgorod dominions they paused and turned. The next year they came southwards till they reached Kief, fallen Kief, but still beautiful, with white walls and painted towers and golden

domes. But Kief even in her fall was brave, foolishly brave, and killed the Tartar envoys.

Then for three days a fierce siege raged round her, with the horrible bellowing of the buffaloes and the cries of the Tartars. At last Kief could hold out no longer. Her temples were razed to the ground, thousands killed and taken captive, the wives of rich boyards, till then adorned with jewels, became slaves of barbarians. Kief was left in ruins, and all Russia, except Novgorod and the northwest, was under the yoke of the Tartars.

Even My Lord Novgorod had to give way at last, you shall hear. And the whole of Russia was to be under the rule of a wild tribe of Asia.

This was in 1240.

Were the Russians cowards then? Not so. The numbers of the Tartars were very great. Then, too, they had hundreds of horses and the Russians almost none. Again, every Tartar was a soldier, while only the Russian nobles and citizens could fight. Lastly—and this is the Russians' fault, but not their cowardice—they were not one nation, but divided up into many little militias and Cossack bands.

So the Tartars conquered "the house divided against itself." And Bati, the Khan, built the city Sarai on the Volga, and there he lived and ruled.

Novgorod alone held out, by the help of a prince whose name will never be forgotten. Alexander was his

name. When the Tartars came back he was only seventeen years old. But he was Prince of Novgorod. Four years after that the Swedes attacked the country, and all the Russians were in great fear. But Alexander went boldly to meet them on the banks of the Neva. As he was going a Christian friar met him, and said, "I have had a wonderful vision. Last night as I was watching the sea just about sunrise I heard a sound coming from it. Then I looked, and behold! a bark came towards me, and in it were two rowers, but their faces were hidden in mist. In the midst of the boat stood two shining forms in purple robes. And I saw they were the holy brothers Boris and Gleb. And Boris said, 'Brother Gleb, bid the rowers make haste; for we must go to the help of our kinsman Alexander.' At that a great trembling came over me, and when I looked again the bark and the rowers and the holy saints were gone."

When Alexander heard that he rejoiced and went forward hopefully. And he conquered the Swedes in a great battle. After that he was called Alexander Nefsky, that is, Alexander of the Neva.

The Novgorodians were proud of Alexander, but they could not brook obeying him. Twice they forced him to leave the city, but twice had to call him back again. Many and great were the victories he won. Bati himself at Sarai heard of his fame and sent for him. Then he sent him to the depths of Asia, where lived the Great Khan himself. That was a journey of many months for Alexander. At last he reached the palace of the Great Khan. There he was led

between two fires, lest, being a Christian, he should pollute the house. And he saw the Great Khan and his wife on the throne. Round him were lords and great men who emptied golden cups of drink while music played. Alexander was forced to bow down many times on his face to the ground. The Great Khan was pleased with him and made him Grand Prince, and sent him home again.

A few years after this Bati died. The Khan who followed him laid a tax on every man in Russia, and sent his men to count them. My Lord Novgorod would not bear that, for never as yet had the Tartars entered the town.

Alexander knew what the Novgorodians would think about it He tried hard to make the Khan alter his mind, but it was of no use. Then Alexander went himself with the Tartars to Novgorod, hoping that at sight of him Novgorod would yield. But Novgorod would not yield. The gates were locked, and the Tartars had to go back again. Alexander tried afresh to persuade the Khan to change his mind.

But it was of no use. Next year with a bleeding heart Alexander brought the Tartar officers back again. That time the chief citizens were persuaded by his reasons, and gave leave for the Tartars to enter the town.

But at the sight of them the common people grew full of rage, and rang the great bell. The assembly flocked together, and they cried aloud, "We will die gloriously for

our city; we will not be numbered and taxed by accursed feeders on raw flesh." Then Alexander, to terrify them, left the city again; and when they saw he was gone, they grew afraid, and said to each other, "Who will lead us when Alexander leaves us?" At last they agreed sadly to let the Tartars come in. They sat in their houses silent and offering no resistance to the Tartars, who went round numbering and taxing them. But they felt bitter at heart that My Lord Novgorod the Great had fallen, and that Russia was now at last all under the Tartar yoke.

Soon after the Tartars sent foreign merchants to collect the taxes for them, and they asked more than was due. Then the sore-hearted people rose up against them, forgetting to be wise, and killed them. Alexander was terrified as to the vengeance the Tartars would take, and he set off to Sarai to beg mercy for the people from the Khan. On his way back he fell ill and died.

When the news of his death reached Vladimir service was going on in the cathedral, and at the end Cyril the archbishop turned round and said to the people, "O my children! the sun of Russia is set—is dead." "We are lost!" cried out the people, and burst into tears, for they felt that their last hope was gone.

Four days later Alexander's body was brought back, and though the ground was white with snow, the whole city went out many miles to meet him and bury him with tears. And now the whole land was under the Tartar yoke.

Now think for a while what difference that made to them. What difference would it make to you if some stranger with odd ideas conquered your father and mother, and made them obey him, and lived in their house? It would make two great differences to you.

Firstly, you would have different rules about lesson-hours and pocket-money, and so on.

Secondly, the conqueror would gradually change your ideas, and make them like his own. If you saw much of him, and wanted to please him, you would gradually get to behave according to his ideas, and then to think as he did. That change would take a long time, but it is the greater of the two.

Now what difference did the Tartars make to Russia in these two ways? The Khans did not take away their princes and put Tartars in their place. They did not take away the Vetchés or the Mirs, or any of the Russian institutions. These might make what laws they liked.

But they made a great difference in the country all the same. If you had looked over Russia you would have known. Black ruins of villages and towns; fields left uncared for, and overgrown with weeds; gardens and trees broken down and burned; and a few miserable people living miserably. They did not care to dig the fields, for they knew that presently the Tartars would be sweeping over the country, destroying their harvests, burning, killing, carrying away slaves. These slaves were taken away

to slave-markets chained in long rows by the neck. They were branded, and given hard labour by day, and slept in dark cells by night.

Besides this, there was a heavy tax on each man. You know how the people of Novgorod had to give in to that tax.

Then their princes were not altogether free. They were forced to visit the Horde at Sarai, and there to be made princes. Often, like Alexander, they were sent on to the Great Khan in Asia. They were forced also to bring a certain number of men to fight for the Khan when he wanted them. They were treated fairly, and given their share of gain; yet that did not make up to them for the constant leaving of home, and the fighting against their fellow countrymen.

Besides this, they had to ask for leave when they wanted to make war. And in all things they were obliged to treat the Khan with great respect. They had to meet his messenger on foot, and prostrate themselves while the message was being read.

Now for the second sort of difference. This was more important. For when the Tartars left the country, all these first differences would disappear at once. But it is a different thing when the thoughts of a people are changed. Then whether the men who made the change go away or remain, the thoughts will work changes themselves.

Suppose that a toy ship has its rudder turned to make it go a certain way. You can put your hand down in front of and hold it so that it cannot move, or you can pull it another way. But the moment you set it free again, it follows the old direction. That is like the first sort of difference.

Suppose, instead of that, you were to alter the direction of the rudder. You might go away and leave it altogether, but the difference you had made would last. You would have changed its course. That is the second sort of difference.

Now the thoughts of a nation are like the rudder of a ship. It is by them that the nation is guided. What difference of the second sort, the lasting sort, did the Tartars make to the Russians?

Remember this first, that the Tartars made a difference, chiefly to the princes and the boyards, and the rich people. They made little difference to the peasants and the poor. The Tartars called them the black people and the Christians, which showed they cared little about them. But the merchants and the boyards and princes took to dressing like the Tartars, in long caftans and turbans, and carried bows and arrows.

But the greatest difference that we see between the ways of the Russians, before and after the Tartar conquest, is the different idea they have of their prince.

You remember how Igor went to spoil the Drevlians because his boyards asked him to. And how Sviatoslav rowed his own boat, and lived like the common boyards, and how he would not become Christian because he thought they would laugh at him. Again, how Vladimir asked the advice of his boyards about his wife and his religion. All that shows that the prince in those old times was more the head soldier than the king.

But when the Tartars conquered them, the Russians learned how the Tartars treated their king, the Great Khan. They saw how his will was law, and how he could command what he liked, and no one could say him nay.

Besides this, the Khan seemed to think that the Russian princes could rule as he ruled. He sent orders to the prince, and expected that the prince would have no trouble in making the Russians obey him. Then the Russian prince tried hard to make them do so.

So with seeing how great the Khan was, and how great he expected princes to be, the Russians' idea of a prince began to change. Day by day they thought more and more that this was the real idea of a king. This change of mind was helped on by another cause. You remember that the Russians took their Christianity from Constantinople, and that there the Emperor was a sort of head of the Church.

This Emperor was very powerful, and he believed that his power was given him by God. The early Russians once

asked him to give them the purple mantle and leggings he wore. But they were told that those things had been brought down by an angel from heaven for the Emperor alone.

So they began to think that this new idea of a king was not only the Khan's idea, but God's idea too. They thought that a king ought to be very powerful, and that there was something holy about his power, and that they ought not to rise against it.

They thought this the more because they listened very attentively to the Church teaching in these sad days. The poor peasants loved it above all. They were miserable at seeing their children taken away, and their houses burned, and at never feeling safe. So they loved to hear the priests tell of a land where there would be meetings and no partings, a land of plenty and of peace, where no Tartars could ever come; and they grew to love the priests, and to believe all they said. They did this the more because the priests used to feed them and protect them; for the Tartars favoured the priests, and never touched their monasteries.

So when the priests said that a king was holy, the people believed it. They little thought that this idea would bring misery on them, and grind them and crush them down.

But Russia was not to be under the Tartar yoke for ever. It was like a fresh young shoot over which a prickly

old bramble had crept. When the shoot grows it presses upwards, and forces away the bramble.

So in a little quiet town in the middle of Russia there was growing up a clever, determined race of princes. That little village was Moscow. Look for it, for you will hear more and more of it.

The Tartars said that the people of Moscow were very cunning. When they brought Russian slaves into the market to sell, they used to call out, "Fresh caught slaves, simple and not cunning, and none of them from Muscovy." Be that as it may, these princes were very clever. The first prince had only Moscow, but he gained two more towns. After that Muscovy the state grew and grew. Presently there was a little piece of country, the shape of an arm, belonging to Moscow.

Then a prince married the Khan's sister, and was made Grand Prince. He fought with a prince near, and had him killed by the Khan. In revenge this prince's son killed him. Russia had not yet learned to be at peace with herself. So her strength had to grow very slowly through many years.

Then came a prince called Kalita. He was the first to give strength to Moscow. He did one thing which was not like a king of old times, but like the new sort of king. For he took away the great bell of the city Tver, which called together the assembly of the citizens, so that he might make the laws himself.

He was a good prince to his people for all that. He was so kind to the poor that he was called the Almsbag or Kalita. But all his kindness came from the idea that he was to take care of his people; not that they were to take care of themselves, and he was to carry out their ideas. He built many churches, and was kind to the clergy, for he felt that they upheld him. He persuaded the Archbishop of Vladimir to come and live at Moscow. He also built stone walls round Moscow.

It does not seem yet as if the Tartars need fear much from Moscow. But everything has small beginnings. Even the Grand Khan was a baby once.

Twenty years after Kalita's death there came a prince to the throne whose name was Dmitri. He was unlike the princes of this time. For he was not treacherous or cunning, but brave and straight forward.

Gradually he gained the lands round him, and cheered his people with hope. All the time he watched quietly what was going on in the empire of the Tartars at Sarai.

For the Tartars were falling into the old mistake of the Russians, of quarrelling and division among themselves. The consequence was that they invaded Russia, in small bands, and the Khan who owned Sarai, whose name was Mamaï, was not nearly so powerful as the old Khans. Consequently the wise Dmitri felt it was safe to disobey Mamaï many times. When Mamaï grew angry he humbled himself, and then went back to disobedience.

At last one day he fought against Mamaï's chief captain and won the battle. Then the people rejoiced, and took heart, and Dmitri cried out joyfully, "Their day is past, and God is with us." Mamaï was furiously angry, but the first thing he did was to drive out the Russian Prince of Riazan, who was Dmitri's chief enemy, so that Dmitri was still more powerful.

But Mamaï's vengeance was coming. For two long years he was quietly collecting a great army of Turks and all sorts of other tribes. He was helped by a prince whom he had driven out, for this prince arranged secretly that other princes should help Mamaï—a foolish, wicked thing for a Russian to do against his own country.

Dmitri was not idle. He called all the neighbouring princes together, and then sent to Vladimir to ask for the blessing of St. Sergius, the bishop. St. Sergius sent him two monks, and on their cowls he made the sign of the Cross, and said, "Behold a weapon which faileth never." Then Dmitri and his great army set off, 150,000 men, with their hearts beating high with hope, longing for freedom and thirsting for revenge.

On they went, and once they almost stopped for fear, but took courage again and marched on through the gathering night. As they went, presently they began to hear the sound of a vast host over the plain near the river of the Don. When the morning dawned it was dark and misty, and a heavy fog lay over the forests. Then Dmitri

called one of his generals to him, and sent him with a large part of the host to creep quietly up into the forest on one side, and get in front of the Russian host, and there to lie hid. Presently the fog began to clear off and the sun to shine brightly, and then the Russians saw before them the vast Tartar host on their horses, with their lances and poniards. When the Tartars saw them they set spurs to their horses, and came on, howling their war-cry, at a terrible gallop, meaning to crush the Russian army at once. The Russians fought boldly, but soon began to yield, and the Tartars thought the victory was theirs. But suddenly out rushed the Russians who lay in ambush in the forests, and fell on the rear of the Tartar army.

In a moment the Tartars were confused and terrified, and thrown into disorder. The Russians in front of them took heart and pressed on again; the day was won, the Tartars turned and fled. The great Tartar empire had been beaten by the Russians. Dmitri was found swooning and wounded; but he was revived, and he went back to Moscow gloriously at the head of his army. That was 140 years after the Tartars had taken Kief.

But sad things happened after that glorious victory. The Tartars turned again against Dmitri, and once managed to seize Moscow when he was away, and burned it, and killed the inhabitants. When Dmitri came there, he sat down and wept over the ruins, and said, "Our fathers, who never beat the Tartars, were not so unhappy as we are."

Bat that was not true, for they had been base and cowardly, and had had no hope of honour and glory. The Russians felt now that at any rate the Tartars could be conquered, though they did not conquer them again for a long time. Dmitri was called Dmitri Donskoi, that is, Dmitri of the Don.

Dmitri did many other good things before he died. He made the dominions of Moscow much larger. He taught the people to use money altogether instead of skins, and he encouraged them to trade with Europe. He brought also the first cannons into the Russian army.

After Dmitri was dead, Moscow went on quietly, gaining more and more, fighting but gaining. Meanwhile the Tartars were growing weaker and weaker because of their quarrels.

About thirty-five years after Dmitri's death a little boy of ten years old came to the throne. Then for a time there were great troubles. For he was conquered by an evil man called Shemyaka. Shemyaka was so unjust, that now when the Russians want to say, "That is a great injustice," they say, "That is Shemyaka justice."

Shemyaka put out the little prince's eyes, but for all that he could not keep Moscow long. When the little prince came to the throne he ruled well and strongly. He was called Vassili the Blind.

Great things had been happening at Constantinople. In 1453 Mahomet II, a great Turkish king, made war

against it, and conquered it. The Greek Emperor had to flee, and Russia feared worse oppression yet.

How glad the Russians would have been if they could have known what we know! For we know that all the time there was growing up at Moscow a boy, now only thirteen years old, who was to break the Tartar yoke and make Russia free.

That boy was Ivan the Great.

Breaking the Yoke.

Now we come to the man who is first really to shake off the Tartar yoke. That was a great and wonderful deed, and the man who did it was great and wonderful in his way. He was not like Dmitri of the Don, open and straightforward and ready to fight. He was cautious and prudent, and clever. He knew one great secret—how to *wait*.

When he was born, so the story goes, an old man in Novgorod came to the archbishop and said, "To day the Grand Prince triumphs; I see this child making himself famous by glorious deeds. But woe to Novgorod! Novgorod will fall at his feet and never rise again."

Ivan grew up full of cleverness and keenness. He was so terrible to look at that when he slept after dinner his boyards sat fearing him, not daring to move. And behind his wonderful dark eyebrows and piercing eyes plans were being formed to bind up broken Russia into one nation again.

And to do this Ivan saw that he must first bring Russia itself under his empire. After that, when he had many soldiers and money at his command, he could do more. He could throw off the Tartar yoke. Little by little, with long patience, he began to gain the Russian kingdoms. When one of his brothers died, Ivan took his kingdom.

Then his eyes turned towards the great city Novgorod. And Ivan's eyes were like the eyes of the god Swifteye. At his glance all enemies crumbled away like dust and ashes.

Some people from Novgorod had ill-treated Moscow people. Ivan sent to ask for redress. But the Possadnik replied that My Lord Novgorod had given him no orders on the subject, Ivan said not one angry word. But he quietly invited all the citizens of Novgorod who were friendly to him to come and see him.

Now, at this time Novgorod was divided into two sets of people. One was headed by a wonderful woman called Marfa, who spoke well and was very brave. This set wished Novgorod to ally itself with the King of Poland, and not to be subject to Ivan. The other set desired to ally Novgorod with Ivan. So while Ivan was giving grand dinners to the arch bishop and others off gold plate, Marfa and the Vetché were quarrelling on the bridge. Some shouted, "Long live Ivan!" and others, "The King of Poland!" At length Marfa and her party conquered, and the men of Novgorod sent to the King of Poland and asked to ally themselves with him.

Then Ivan felt his time was coming. So he sent an army into the land round Novgorod. Then there was much bloodshed and cruel treatment, and Ivan's army always won, until at last the men of Novgorod were forced to give in, and agreed to pay a tax. So for the time matters were settled. But Ivan had made up his mind to be the only ruler

in Novgorod. He waited five long years. All the time he quietly made friends with the lower classes of the city, who were ill-treated by their masters. He invited them to come to a Court he held in Novgorod. Many came, serfs and merchants and all kinds of people. Ivan heard them all so fairly, that when he went back to Moscow many followed him.

Soon after that a lucky chance happened. For one of the clerks, in writing out the document which said how much Novgorod was subject to Ivan, made a mistake. He wrote that Ivan was *sovereign* of Moscow, instead of *lord*. Ivan's quick eye spied out the mistake, and he showed it to the men of Novgorod.

Then the men of Novgorod, fearing lest Ivan should take advantage of the mistake, rose up foolishly, and killed his messengers. Then Ivan said that the Novgorodians had written that he was sovereign, and were now bold enough to deny it. And when he said that, all the priests were on his side, and so many of the poor people joined him also. Ivan called it a Holy War, and marched up to Novgorod with a large army.

He laid siege to the city, and waited. Marfa and her party inside cried out, "Let us die for liberty. We will never yield!" But presently their provisions gave out, and there was no hope of help. So they begged for peace.

Ivan gave them fair terms. He promised to take no lives, and not to make the Novgorodians fight in his army.

But when he marched into the city, he took away the great bell, and said that there should no longer be a Vetché.

So My Lord Novgorod fell at the feet of Ivan the Great and never rose again.

Now you see what sort of a man Ivan the Great was; how he went on patiently and cleverly working and waiting. He was not a good man or a religious one, but he did great things for Russia.

Then he gave his mind to carrying out the great aim of his life. He determined to throw off the Tartar yoke, and make Russia free. But he did not fight the Tartars, like Dmitri of the Don, openly and fiercely by bloody battles. No; he managed to drive away the Tartars without striking a single blow, or losing one single soldier. That sounds like magic. Now hear how it happened.

The Tartars, as I said before, had quarrelled among themselves. They had split up into three states. The Khans of these states lived, one at Kazan, another in the Crimea, the third at Sarai. This last was the ruler of Russia.

Ivan had watched the Tartars carefully for many years. He had seen how they were growing weaker through their divisions. Now, ten years after he began to reign, he had married Sophia, a Greek princess. Sophia was so proud that she could not bear to think that she was subject to the Tartars, and she kept exclaiming, "How long am I to be a slave to these Mongols?" That made Ivan's purpose still more firm. But he would not be in haste, and it was five

years after he married before he even made friends with the Khan of the Crimea. That Khan was a very useful friend to him.

But at last, having laid all his plans, he quietly refused to pay tribute to the Khan of Sarai any longer. Then he marched to meet the Khan's troops on the bank of the river Oka, near Moscow. But while he waited there, he began to feel a doubt as to whether it would be wise to fight. So he went back to Moscow to think about it. When he reached Moscow, his mother and his boyards were all angry with him, and thought him a coward. "Ought a Christian to fear death?" said the archbishop. Ivan said nothing, but was pleased, for he only wanted to make sure that Moscow would stand by him.

Now he was sure of that, so he went back to his army. There they remained on one aide of the river while the Tartars were on the other. Some times they shot arrows across, or shouted out rude remarks, but neither side tried to fight. There they stood and waited for a week. At the end of the week the Khan said that he would forgive Ivan, if Ivan would come and kiss his stirrup. But Ivan answered politely that he had rather not. So they went on waiting.

Then the people of Moscow thought that Ivan was afraid. And the archbishop sent a stern letter to Ivan, saying, "Will you deliver Russia to sword and flame? The blood of your people will cry out upon you! Where will you flee from that accusation? Even from the stars God

will hurl you down. Cast away fear." Ivan read the letter, and sent a courteous message to the archbishop, and said, "Your letter fills my heart with joy and courage." Then he waited a fortnight longer.

At the end of the fortnight bitter frosts came on. Then Ivan bade his army retreat. The soldiers were much surprised when they heard this order. They said to one another, "Ivan must be afraid. And if Ivan is afraid, who can be bold?" So, instead of marching away, they ran away.

When the Khan saw them going away, he thought it was a clever trick to make him follow them and then catch him in a trap. So to make himself safe he began to march away. Then his army thought he was frightened, and they too began to feel fear. So they marched faster and faster, till they were running away as hard as they could. They ran and ran, and never stopped till they reached the middle of Asia. And they never came back again. That was in 1480, and that was the end of the Tartar rule.

After that Ivan grew very bold. He had driven away the Tartars of Sarai by sitting and looking at them for three weeks. So he thought he would try what sending an army against the Khan of Kazan would do. It did quite as much as he hoped. For the army came marching back after a few weeks with the Khan of Kazan as their prisoner.

But Ivan was far too wise to put a Russian prince in Kazan. For he knew that would make the Tartars rebel. So he offered the kingdom to the nephew of the Khan of the

Crimea. That pleased the Khan of the Crimea, and made the Kazanese contented, and the kingdom was still in Ivan's power.

The friends of the old Khan of Kazan asked Ivan to give him his liberty. Ivan refused, but he refused so politely, and sent them such presents of clothes and falcons and fishes' teeth, that they could not be angry.

Then Ivan turned to another enemy. This was Poland. Ivan longed to win Poland for himself. But he would never make war without a show of reason. Ivan's daughter had married the King of Poland. But Ivan had made her promise that she would remain a Greek Christian. And the King of Poland had promised not to convert her to his religion—Romish Christianity,

But presently Ivan said that his daughter was being forced to be a Roman Catholic. So he made war on Poland. There were several fierce battles, but Ivan always won. At last he made peace for six years on condition that a large piece of Poland was given to him.

He only lived two years longer. He had gained an enormous amount of country for Russia. Besides the land of the Tartars, and part of Poland, he had sent people into Finland and across the Ural Mountains. And they had conquered that land of snow and ice and stunted trees.

Ivan had made great friends with Venice and Germany and Greece. Better than this, he had sent for all sorts of European workmen to teach the Russians. You remember

that his wife was a Greek princess. Because of this many Greeks had come into Russia, artists and statesmen and learned men. They had brought with them wonderful old Greek manuscripts which made the first Russian library.

Ivan was always very courteous and polite to his guests. A Venetian ambassador once said, "When I was speaking to the prince, I respectfully stepped back, but the Grand Prince always drew near and gave particular attention to my remarks."

Ivan was rather a hard master to the people of Russia, although he had freed them from the Tartars. His punishments were cruel, torture and whipping with a whip of leather, the knout, which he invented. He laid heavy taxes on the poorer people, and made them pay a fourth of all they had—of their sheep and fowls and eggs, and all their goods. He was the first sovereign of Russia who burned and hung heretics.

So when he died the people said of him, "He has delivered our land from the yoke of the Tartars." And for that they were grateful, for it was a great deliverance. Yet Ivan was not the greatest sovereign of Russia, and in one way he had done her harm. For he had taken away her right to rule herself, as had taken away the bell of Novgorod. Do you remember the dead and the living water? Ivan was the dead water. He healed Russia's wounds, and made her whole once more. But he did not

give her spirit and life; he made her ready for these to come. And they came in the days of the great Czar Peter.

When Ivan was dead, Vassili, his son, reigned. He went on with his father's work much in his father's way. Only he was not so cautions and so ready to wait. He began war more roughly than Ivan.

One day he sent for the magistrates of Pskof and put them all in prison. Then he went up to Pskof with a large army, and laid siege to it. Poor little My Lord Pskof! It was of no use for it to try to hold out. Very sorrowfully the men of Pskof were forced to yield. It was with tears and sobs that they told Vassili they would submit to him.

Then Vassili took away their great bell, and Pskof's freedom was gone. Pskof mourned, and said, "An eagle, with claws like a lion, has swooped down on me. He has taken my three cedars,—my riches, my beauty, my children."

Vassili conquered many of the provinces round. But for all his strength the Tartars made a great invasion into the land. They burned down the houses and the fields, and took away the people for slaves. At last, after hard struggles, Vassili drove them away. But where Ivan the Great won by cleverness and without a blow, Vassili won by strength and a bloody fight.

He made friends with Europe, as his father had done. At home he was even more of a tyrant than his father had been. Ivan always was careful to ask his boyards for their

advice, and he thanked them much for it. After that he acted as he had meant to act before. But if a boyard ventured to suggest anything to Vassili, Vassili bellowed out, "Hold your tongue, you lout!" Once when a boyard said that Vassili decided all questions shut up in his bedroom, Vassili ordered that his head should be taken off. So his boyards hated and feared him.

Vassili kept great state. His throne was guarded by young nobles in long caftans of white satin. On their heads were caps of white fur, and in their hands silver hatchets. These were great expenses for poor Russia.

Vassili reigned twenty eight years. He died without being mourned, though the people felt that he had followed out his father's plans.

The First Czar.

Sometimes I fear you lose your temper. You want to be head in a particular game, or you want for yourself what the others also want. How does the game ever go on peaceably? You go away most likely from the others to another room by yourself; and so they can continue their game happily without you.

That was like old Russia. The boyards of each prince quarrelled for the headship or for estates. And if one could not get what he wanted, and grew angry, he went away to another prince, and so the kingdom he left was at peace. That prevented many fierce wars and bloodshed.

But suppose that when you lost your temper you had no other room to go to, and could not get away from the people you quarrelled with. Then the quarrel would very likely grow worse, till the room was full of quarrelling and angry words.

That was like Russia when Ivan the Great had made it all one kingdom. Then the vexed, angry boyards had no other Russian prince to turn to. There were only enemies of Russia to go to, and that of course they would not do. For this reason there was much trouble through the reigns that followed Ivan's. The troubles with the Tartars were bad enough; and when troubles and quarrels at home had to be settled also, the king's task was hard. It was like driving a coach with horses that hated each other so much

that they kept jibbing away from each other. They had to be held in, and the coach to be driven at the same time. The people of Russia, when they heard that Vassili was dead, shook their heads, and said, "We shall have trouble now." For Vassili's sons were two quite little boys of two and three years old. The name of the eldest was Ivan, like his grandfather.

For a time peace was kept. For the mother of the two little princes was a clever and a brave woman. Her name was Helen, and she was almost as beautiful as her namesake, and very frank and friendly in her manners. For all that she was stern and determined. She kept down the boyards with a high hand; and she did not fear to imprison some in dark cells, or punish with the knout and torture. She built strong ramparts round part of the city of Moscow to defend it against the Tartars. But when she died trouble and sorrow came upon Russia. For Ivan was only eight years old. And the selfish, ambitions boyards rose up and cried, "Now is our time, while the prince is young." So they wrested the power one from another, and they used it evilly and cruelly, till the whole country hated the name of boyard, and longed even for a stern Czar.

Ivan began to understand their government, and he knew how they treated him. For he saw the boyards plunder the palace of its rich furniture and treasures. One even flung himself on the state bed with his boots in the embroidered arm-chair in brutal sport. Ivan, with his clever high forehead and dark eyes, watched all. None

dared to speak to him kindly, for fear the other boyards might grow jealous.

So Ivan was left neglected. No one taught him; but he loved studying and read alone. He read the Bible and the lives of the saints, and the stories of the old kings. Then he saw how great kings had been in days gone by. He saw, too, when foreign envoys came to his court, that he was set in a throne, and all the cruel boyards bowed before him. Then he said in his heart, "I will have real power some day, and break the boyards' rule."

At last the day came. It was at Christmas, in the year 1543, and there had been grand feasts and rejoicing. Suddenly Ivan sent to his boyards, and called them all to his great hall of justice. There they saw this boy of thirteen on his throne, and they wondered what he meant by his summons.

Ivan rose up, and in a fierce voice he said, "You govern badly and cruelly. You torment the people, and you wander from town to town, taking money and doing cruel acts. There are many guilty ones among you. This time I will only punish one for an example." Then he turned to his guards and said, "Seize the noble Andrew Chouiski."

The guards obeyed, and seized the boyard as he stood dumb with horror. Then Ivan bade them bring the hungry, fierce mouthed hounds out of their kennels, and let them loose upon him. And there, in the midst of the hall, they tore Andrew limb from limb.

Ivan did not rest there. He sent many of his nobles into exile. Round him he collected those whom he wished to help him.

Four years later he was crowned publicly by the archbishop. But he was no more crowned Prince, but he was crowned Czar.

Now *Czar* was a far greater title than *Prince*. In the Russian Bible Pharaoh was called the Czar, and the King of Babylon was called the Czar, and David. Also the Russians called the Emperors of Rome and Constantinople Czars.

At this time so many princes and grand princes were subject to the Prince of Moscow that he needed another title to show his greatness. So Ivan chose the greatest title he knew, and was crowned Czar.

This meant more than the name only. For the name of Czar was a holy name almost to the Russian people. You remember how holy they thought the Czar of Constantinople. Now, as I said before, they were beginning to feel the same to their Czar— that it was wrong to rebel, and that he was their great master in everything, and his will was law. Presently there grew to be many sayings about the Czar, as if he was the mightiest man of the earth: "Everything I have belongs to the Czar;" "God and the Czar will it: it must be done."

So the Czar Ivan reigned. But his rule was careless and cruel. You must remember that he was untaught and

ignorant. None had told him to be merciful and just. So he was violent and idle and gross. He loved to inflict suffering. He would sprinkle boiling water upon his dogs, and laugh to hear them howl and yelp; or he would punish peasants cruelly and needlessly.

But soon a change came. A terrible fire broke out at Moscow. It flamed from house to house, and passed on so quickly that seventeen hundred people were burned to death. Ivan fled to a little village near, and in terror he watched the hungry flames light up one part of the city after another.

Then the boyards whom Ivan had not favoured cried out against those who had helped him to rule. "Ivan's friends have caused this fire by their witch crafts," they said. "They have taken human hearts and plunged them in water, and with the water they have sprinkled the houses; hence the fire and all our miseries."

And the foolish, ignorant people, when they heard this, believed it, and grew full of wrath and madness. They rushed to the palace, and there, in the chapel they stabbed a noble. Then they marched on to the village where Ivan was, and it was with great trouble that they were repulsed, and Ivan's life was saved.

Ivan heard their angry shouts, and his heart was full of terror. For the fear of death came upon him, and he felt that he was guilty before God, and that he could not cry to God for mercy when he had shown none to men. Then,

with bitter tears, and in great terror, he vowed that from that time he would live a good life.

Then he chose two men to help him to govern. One was a priest, Silvester, and the other a noble, Adachef. They were clever men, apt to govern, clear of sight and wise of mind. Under their rule the land had rest for two years.

And Ivan married happily. His wife was Anastasia, of the family of Romanov. From her people the kings of Russia were to spring. And she was pure and mild and gentle beyond most women, Ivan loved her dearly. And she taught him what none had ever taught him yet,—lessons of mercy and purity and justice.

And the day was coming when Ivan and the Russians should win themselves glory by a mighty siege. That siege is sung of still in Russian songs.

Now the men of the great Tartar city, Kazan, on the banks of the Volga, had not yet chosen their king. For they had to pay obedience either to the Czar of Russia or the Khan of the Crimea. At last, after many disputes and much talking, they determined to be the subjects of the Czar Ivan. So Ivan sent them a boyard to take their oaths and rule them.

But there were men in Kazan who hated Ivan, and desired to belong to the Tartars. These told the ignorant people that the Russians were marching against them to

slay them. Then the people in terror shut the gates of the city and barred out the men of Moscow.

Then Ivan swore a great oath, "I will make Kazan yield." So he sent his foot-soldiers with their rude cannons down the river Volga in their boats, while the cavalry followed along the banks.

Then the Russians sat down before the city. The soldiers built their little huts of branches, and covered them with straw and heather. And the horsemen with their high saddles and rich trappings fought boldly with the men sent out from Kazan, and the foot-soldiers shot at them from the "city that walks,"—long wooden walls that they set up to protect themselves.

Day after day the Czar offered terms of peace to the men of Kazan, and day after day they answered, "We will make no peace." Then to terrify them Ivan hung up his prisoners on high gibbets before the city. But the men of Kazan shot arrows at them, crying out, "It is better they should die by the hands of their countrymen than by the unclean hands of Christians."

But the Russians began to suffer terribly. For great storms destroyed their ships, which held the food and the shot, so that the men went hungry, and the cannons could not be used. But Ivan would not yield.

Then the sorcerers of Kazan took their stand on the walls with robes girt up, and made strange, weird signs, and called down curses on the Russians. And long floods

of rain came on the Russian camp as if in answer to their spells,—such floods that the soldiers' huts were swept away, and the men fell ill and died. But Ivan sent for a holy Cross from Moscow, and then, so said the Russians, the rains stopped, and the sorcerers' wiles were of no avail.

Ivan used other means also. He sent for a German engineer, who taught the Russians to dig under the walls of Kazan to make their foundations weak. And at length an hour came when Ivan was praying in the church, and the deacon read, "There shall be one fold, and one shepherd." And at that moment there was a great crash in the city of Kazan. For the high walls of wood and brick tottered and fell.

Then with the cry of "God with us!" in marched the Russian army, each man straight before him into the city. Then there was work for their long swords. And the streets flowed with blood, and rang with cries and screams, till the slaughter was so great that Ivan himself was moved with pity. And he said weeping, "They are not Christians, but at least they are men." So great was the slaughter that the Tartars were mown down by hundreds. And they sing songs still of the horror to this day.

"There
The power of Kazan with its fourfold gates,
From the prison windows our maidens fair
Talk of us still through the iron grates.
Ah! the black day hath come down on Kazan,

Ah! was ever a grief like this?"

But the Russians gloried. For it was the first time that they had avenged themselves on the Tartars, and the first time that the Christians had shown themselves mighty conquerors of the Mohammedans.

So the Russians took possession of the city, and in the place of the mosques they built Christian churches. And the glory of Ivan and his victory was spread throughout the Russian land. That was in the year before Queen Mary of England came to the throne.

After that there were many wars, and the Russians won themselves glory. For they conquered the great Tartar kingdom of Astrakhan, so that every where the Tartars bowed their proud heads before the men who had been their slaves.

Then, like the great sovereigns after him, Ivan wished to open a window into Europe. And for that he had fierce wars. He fought with Poland and Sweden, and with the sword-bearing knights, who wore white mantles and red crosses, and carried European weapons finely wrought. Yet though Ivan could not subdue them utterly, he won glory for Russia.

But these bright times were not to last. For Ivan's strength was soon to be spent on a far more weary war at home. He was growing jealous of Adachef and Silvester, his clever councillors. And one day an evil voice said to

him, "If you wish to be a great emperor, do not rule by the help of men who are cleverer than you."

So he grew more and more suspicious of them. And one day he fell ill, and then those around him who had obeyed for fear, and not for love or faith, showed themselves as they were. They quarrelled among themselves as to the new emperor, and they would not swear allegiance to Ivan's son; and Ivan said that Adachef and Silvester were among them.

Only a few boyards gathered round Ivan's bed, while he lay sick, and to them he said slowly and painfully—

"When God shall have worked His will on me, do not, I pray you, forget the oath that you have sworn to my son and me; fly with him to some strange land, wherever God will lead you."

Then he turned to the brothers of his wife and said, "'Why are you afraid? Do you think that the boyards will spare you! You will die the first; die then rather, since you must die, for my wife and son."

But Ivan did not die. Slowly and very hardly he struggled back to life. And his first deed was to banish Silvester and Adachef. But those days were written in fire on his heart, and from that time he had no more faith nor trust in the boyards round him, and he ruled them with a rod of iron, so that men called him Ivan the Terrible.

And though for a time none were put to death, the court of Ivan was teeming with boyards who hated his rule

and could not abide his service. And, as I said, they had no other Russian prince to flee to. At length a Russian boyard played traitor to his country sooner than remain a servant to Ivan. His name was Kourbski; he fled to the Poles, and from there sent a messenger with a letter to the Czar.

Ivan was told of it in his palace. And he came out, with his eyes full of fire, and his terrible iron staff with its sharp point in his hand, and he met the messenger on the Red Staircase. Then Ivan bade him read the letter, and as he spoke he raised his staff and with it nailed the man's foot to the stair case as he stood.

Thus ran the letter: "Czar once glorified by God, who now hast been unveiled to our eyes with a soiled and leprous soul like the soul of a heathen, I have a few words to say to thee. Why hast thou put to death the valiant warriors given thee by God? Why hast thou reddened the porch of thy temple with the blood of the martyrs? Dost thou deem thyself immortal, Czar? Canst thou escape the righteous Judge, Jesus our God?"

So wrote Kourbski, and as Ivan heard it his heart grew fierce and hard. All night in the palace were heard stealthy footsteps, and now and then a cry. And before many nights were over Ivan had nothing to fear from the friends of Kourbski, for they lay dead.

Yet Ivan felt that he could no longer rule as he was with traitors round him. So with his friends and servants and treasures he left Moscow, and went to a quiet country

village. Then he wrote to the Archbishop of Moscow, and to him he said, "The nobles and the clergy are unfaithful to me, I cannot trust them, and I will rule Russia no longer." But to the common people he wrote, "I blame you in nothing."

Then there was confusion and great trouble in Moscow. For the people feared that the boyards would come into power instead of Ivan. For Ivan had governed them justly, and more mildly than the kings before him, and they loved him for his justice and for the glory he had won in war for Russia. And the boyards and clergy feared the people, and dared not try to rule over them in Ivan's stead.

So at length all agreed to ask Ivan to come back and rule again. And they went to him, humbly beseeching him. Then Ivan came back at their request. But he changed the government; he put the whole country under the rule of the boyards, except a part which he governed alone. Only he kept this right, that he himself might punish traitors as he willed.

Then Ivan the Terrible began his reign of terror. The vexed boyards were plotting and making attempts to slay secretly by night; and Ivan fought them with the weapons of torture and the knout, and death painful and full of horror. Hardly a day passed that many did not suffer death; in one day fifteen hundred men of Novgorod were

slain, and before Ivan died he dared to ask the prayers of the Church for the souls of nearly four thousand victims.

He could no longer trust his subjects. The last words he said to his sons were, "Be ever on the watch against your subjects." That is a sad government where the nobles and the king watch each other like treacherous, deadly foes.

Yet Ivan did not rule the Russian nation hardly. To them he was merciful and just, and made good laws for them. And he did much for Russia.

It was in his reign that Siberia was first discovered. The Cossack Jermak with a band of men crossed the low wall of the Urals, and terrified the fur-clad Fins by the sound of his guns. He went through the vast plains of snow, conquering east to west; and when he came back he told the Czar that Siberia belonged to Russia.

And for the people of Russia Ivan did much. He was the cleverest man in the whole land. He wrote books, and he was the first to bring in printing. The people thought it was a wicked, magic art.

He too began to make friends for Russia among the countries of Europe. In his reign the English first came to Russia. Three ships were sent by King Edward VI to discover what land lay in the northern seas. Two were wrecked, and only one came to land. The captain of that ship was astonished to find that he had reached the land of the Czar. "For," said he, "I have found Russia at the

North Pole." After that many Englishmen travelled in Russia, and were surprised to find how great a country it was. One said with astonishment, "The Russians are not wild heathens after all, but Christians, and civilised."

Many European workmen and artists came to Russia in the time of Ivan. You remember the German engineer at the siege of Kazan. By their help Ivan did much to make Moscow beautiful. He finished building a stone wall round part of the city, which was called the Kremlin.

At last his reign drew to an end. He had had seven wives and a son, Dmitri, whom he loved dearly. But in one of his passions he struck this son with his iron staff, and the blow was so hard that his son died. Great and fierce was the sorrow of the Czar.

One day he fell ill. He called in the help of witches and magic herbs, but it was all of no avail. And at length Ivan the Terrible lay dead.

What had he done? He was cruel to his boyards, but he had done much for Russia. When he died the Russians owned three times the land they had owned before. He had helped to make Russia a mighty country, and paved the way for the great Czar Peter.

Sledging Through Mucovy.

It is very difficult always to know exactly how other people behave and what they do. It took a very clever man many years to observe enough about the habits of worms to write a book about them. So it takes longer still to observe the habits of human beings, as they are more interesting than worms. And it becomes harder and harder the longer ago they lived. However, in spite of all that, I mean to take you a fresh journey across Russia, to observe the ways of the Russians. There was a clever Englishman who took that kind of journey in the days of Ivan the Terrible, and his name was Fletcher. So we must look with his eyes at the Russians.

This time we will travel, not in a balloon, but, as the Russians travel, in sledges. And we will suppose it to be the wintertime, and that we are travelling south to Moscow. The roads, you see, are covered with snow, and full of holes and great ruts and snow-drifts. Look at the ten horses which drag our sledge; they are ready to start. Perhaps it seems a great many horses to drag only three people,—you and me and our driver, but the roads are so bad that we could not do with less.

Here we go, bumping and jumping and shaking over the rough roads, worse than the jolting of any English cart. Now the jolting has stopped for a little, for here you see the snow has frozen over smoothly, like a sheet of glass,

and we go flying along. That is delicious, though the wind cuts like a knife.

Look, there is a little village in front of us. See how it is built. It looks like half a long street, with a row of houses on one side only, all joined together, and all of wood; and the houses are only one story high.

Look, there is a woman running out of that house with a live chicken in her hand. What does she want? She wants the driver of our sledge to kill it for her, because she may not kill it herself, as she is only a woman. In Russia they think very little of women at this time. She would tell us that her husband often beats her, and that she obeys him as a slave obeys her master. She does not love him the less for that, for she thinks it is all right. There is a funny old Russian proverb that says, "I love thee like my soul, and I dust thee like my jacket." Ivan's friend Silvester has lately written a book called "Household Customs," and all he says about wife-beating is, "Do not beat your wife with too thick a stick, or one that hits an iron point."

Now we will ask her, in return for killing her chicken, if we may not go into her house and see it. As she goes in front of us you can see she is dressed in a dull grey cloth; her best gown is blue, or red, but she only wears that on holidays. Here we are inside the room. There is very little furniture. Do you see that long shelf running round the room about six feet broad? That is where all the family sleep, unless they are ill, when some times they sleep on

the stove in the corner. The stove, you see, is square, and built of brick. In the corner stands a curious little picture of the head of the Virgin, that is their icon or sacred picture, and a little lamp burns before it. But I am sorry to say that the picture is so dirty we can hardly see what it is meant for.

Now come out again into the street. Let us stop that man coming along, and ask him how he lives, and what work he does. He is a peasant, and has a master, for whom he works four days in the week, so that he has only two days left to dig his own field. He thinks it hard, and does not love his master, but he is very patient. But he thinks that the great friend of the peasants is the Czar,—for the Czar rules the nobles who rule him.

Ask him what taxes he has to pay. Well, first of all, he has to pay the tax on his fire, and then a tax on his corn, and a tax on the bath-house; and Russians, you know, cannot do without a bath- house. Sometimes the year is so bad that he cannot pay them, and then dreadful punishments come upon him.

He is taken and brought before the Starost, who is a governor over the owners of a hundred ploughs; and because he is poor and cannot pay, he is sentenced to have the punishment of a debtor. He is taken to a public place, in the middle of the village or town, and then his caftan is taken off, and he is tied half naked to a post and beaten for three hours with a rod. This goes on every day for two

months, and he spends the rest of the day in prison, till at last, if no one pities him and pays his debt, he is sold to be a slave, and his wife and children hired out for servants. If it is thought that he has stolen any thing, or broken the law in any way, he is brought up before the same Starost and questioned—and not only questioned, but tortured, to make him confess; and the torture is whipping with the knout—a whip made of twisted strips of leather—or roasting at a fire, or having splinters run in under his nails. After that sentence is passed on him. Supposing it were the first offence, he would only be beaten more with the knout. But if it were the second offence he would be sent to the governor of the province, who would sentence him to death. He will tell you that he has often in the village town seen the cart going along to the place of execution, with prisoners seated in it, their hands tied together, and a lighted wax taper stuck between them. Sometimes they are hanged, sometimes beheaded, sometimes put under the ice, and so drowned.

All the peasants, you know, have not masters for whom they work, but all suffer under the same law. Some own their own land.

The peasants are not as a rule very good men, though they are patient. They drink a great deal, and are cruel and brutal to each other. And they do not keep their word, and often tell lies.

But we must get into our sledge and drive on again. In the spring all the great white stretches of snow and the frozen streams are quite gay and bright. Then all the village people come out and hold their festival, and make flower wreaths and dance and sing.

Look at that little crowd of peasants on the road before us. What are they doing? They are waiting, they tell us, to see the Russian army, which is going to cross that road today. We will watch too, for it is a sight worth seeing.

Don't you hear that noise of tramping and drums in the distance? Here they come. But they do not look like a regular army—more like a crowd of soldiers off duty, for they are not marching in line and in step, but just walking along anyhow. The whole army, I must tell you, is divided into four great companies, or legions, and each legion has its standard. The only order the soldiers keep in marching is that they keep near their own standard. When they meet the enemy then they form into bodies of horse and foot, and charge as they are ordered.

Here come some of the common horsemen. They are dressed in the long caftan, as usual. They have high saddles, and carry only a bow under their right arm, and a quiver and sword at the left side. One or two have daggers and javelins. Just think, many of these very men were at the great siege of Kazan. That man there is a captain, as you may tell by his coat of mail and the little brass drum at

his saddle bow. He beats on that when the charge is sounded.

The man with a gorgeous saddle of cloth of gold is the general. His bridle is set with all manner of pearls and precious stones, and the brightness of his shining steel armour makes one's eyes ache. The edging of it is of ermine fur, and he has a helmet on his head.

Look at those four horses fastened together with chains and with a large board laid on their backs. On the board, as you see, lies a huge drum which it takes eight men to beat properly. Round the big drum march the rest of the band with brass trumpets.

Here come the foot-soldiers, walking along anyhow; some so footsore and weary that they can only limp. Each has a rough sort of gun in his hand, very large and clumsy, though it only shoots small bullets. Look at their backs as they pass, and you will see a hatchet slung across their shoulders, and they have swords by their side. They do not often charge, but they are put in ambush, or else they go in the "castle that walks."

There is the "castle that walks," though you would not think it, particularly as it is riding now. Do you see those three loaded carts coming along, loaded with such long pieces of timber, sticking out so far that you can only see the horses' legs below? When the enemy is seen far off, or when the army is besieging a city, those pieces of timber are fitted together till they form two long walls which are

placed about three yards apart. There are loopholes in the wall, and the foot-soldiers stand between them and fire through them. I hardly dare tell you how long Fletcher says they are, for I do not think you will believe it. He says they are three miles long.

All the soldiers, both foot and horse, are carrying their own food with them. The common soldiers have bacon and dried fish or meat, and flour which they make into cakes. Look how badly fed and sad and wornout they look. For they have been forced to come to war, and to leave their children behind with no one to look after them. And they will bring no money back to them when they go home, for they are never paid, and there are no rewards for them, however bravely they fight. And they suffer terribly often from cold and hunger. And so they think war a cruel, dreadful thing, and think nothing of the glory they gain for Russia. They die patiently, dumb and stolid, and never ask for mercy.

Before they are quite gone, I want you to notice two different bodies of men. Do you see those swarthy, dark-skinned men, with small eyes set far apart? These are a Turkish tribe which Ivan has conquered. He pays them to fight for him; he was the first to do that. The second is that troop of Russians marching rather better than the rest of the army. They are called the Streltsi, and are what we should call the standing army. That is, they are soldiers all the year round; they are not peasants called up when they are wanted. Ivan has just formed them into a regiment,

and they mostly live at Moscow near the palace. Do not forget them.

So the whole army passes by. It is an army that has done glorious deeds. But it is a sad sight too.

Now we will come on quickly. Wrap yourself up well in the furs, and mind your nose particularly. Fletcher gives a pitiful account of how some people looked, who did not wrap themselves up carefully, when they got to Moscow. "Many travellers," he says, "are brought into the townes sitting dead and stiffe in their sledges. Many lose their noses, the tippes of their eares, and the balles of their cheekes." Of course you know why he spells so oddly; it is because all this is so long ago, in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

Here we fly quickly through another village, but it is all desolate, with weeds growing at the door steps and choking up the windows and silent houses, like a city of the dead. Why is that? There was great illness in this village and no doctors, and many died, and then the owner of the property is a hard man, and put many others to death. And in the cold winter nights hungry howling wolves and bears came out of the woods and ate others. And the rest fled from their village for terror. So it is with many villages.

Those bears are a dreadful trouble, even in the summer, when the days are hot and bright and long. The women know that who go to gather strawberries. For

Bruin is very fond of lying in the places where strawberries grow, and sometimes he meets the women there, and then—.

Now you must not think that Russia is always cold and desolate and dreary. In the spring, when the white robe of snow has melted away, and the earth looks out again, then there are such bright colours on the country, and the woods of fir and birch are so fresh and sweet-smelling, and the pastures and fields so green and well-grown, as if they had shot up in the night—there are so many flowers, and such noise of birds, especially of nightingales, who seem to sing more sweetly here than in any other country, that you will not easily find a more pleasant place. At least that is what Fletcher said, and he was by no means overfond of Russia, and had been there a great deal.

But see, we are no longer in wild white stretches of wood and plain. We can see hedges rising up above the snow marking out the fields. And a little way in front of us is the most beautiful sight; high rising hills, and on them bright white stone houses and walls and gleaming roofs, all blue and green and red, and glittering domes of all colours with shining gold stars on them. What is that? That is Moscow, the great city of seven hills, the holy city Moscow.

First, we shall pass through a ring of white-walled convents. For Moscow is like an almond with its kernel split in two.

First, we are going through the skin of the almond. The very outside part of it is this ring of white-walled convents. And the rest of the thickness of the skin is woods and gardens and wide marshy roads. On each side of the streets stand wooden houses of the peasants and the Streltsi, and here and there larger houses of the noblemen. Moscow was burned down so often that the house builders set up a good trade, and kept ready-made houses, so that you could go and choose your house at their shop.

At last we come to the two parts of the kernel. One is the Kremlin—that is, an enclosure in which stand the Czar's palaces, and many great churches and monasteries; the other is an enclosure in which stand the noblemen's houses, and other churches, and the shops. We will drive up between the two into that great wide space. That is called the Red Place. Sad, dark things happen there sometimes. Look at that marvellous church to your left. Ivan built that in memory of the taking of Kazan. It has domes and turrets of all forms and colours, some lozenge shaped, some like scales of fish. It looks like a great magic dragon lying asleep.

Now in through the gate in the wooden wall, into the enclosure of the noblemen's houses and the shops, which they call the Kitaigorod. Look at that man carrying little gilt images of saints; let us ask him whether he will not sell us some of them. But he does not answer; he is looking round uneasily. Why does he not spread them out to show us properly?

Ah! that is because he is afraid that there may be some great noble walking about near, and that this noble may take it into his head to seize upon his images, and take them off without paying for them; and if he does that, the poor owner can do nothing, for the thief is a nobleman, and he is only a peasant.

Does that sound fair and just to you! and do you think that the Russians are likely to trade among themselves, and with other people? No, indeed; and there are many unfair doings besides these. Sometimes the Czar Ivan obliges the people to buy corn from him at his own price, and to buy from no one else till the Czar's storehouses are empty. Sometimes he sends his officers to buy furs or fish very cheaply from the northern men, and then sells them again at a high price. When there is a fair in the town, the merchants who bring goods to sell have to show them all to the Czar's officers; and if these think the Czar would like any of them they take them away and only pay what they wish. Trade is not good in Russia, and no wonder.

Look at that number of horses and sledges and carriages standing before the door of that large house. The horses are pawing the ground, and out-riders on their backs are cracking long whips; and all round are standing numbers of bare-footed slaves, not Russians, but dark-skinned Turks. That noble man is going out hunting, and so we will go in and look at his house while he is out. There he goes with a long beard and flowing dress. Now come in and upstairs; look at the wall as you pass; it is of wood, but

the logs are cunningly notched together, and moss is stuffed in between to keep out the air.

Now come in. The door is low and large, and we find ourselves in a long low vestibule. This door leads to the men's part; another door further on leads to the women's part. For the women are kept very carefully, and not allowed to go out, except in a litter with curtains drawn all round. For it is thought wrong that any man, except their husbands and relations, should see their face. When they are ill, and the doctor comes, there are holes made in the curtains for their hands and tongues, but he may not see their faces. And yet if they die, the doctor is often put to death. There are not many doctors in Russia.

There is very little furniture in the rooms. The stoves are covered with painted tiles, and there is tapestry in the dining-hall. Would you like to hear how that nobleman spends his days?

He plays cards a good deal and chess, when he is not hunting, or he goes to look at a bear-fight. Fletcher tells us how horrid that looks, and how the bear comes straddling across, and how tight he can squeeze the man who fights him.

Then, too, this nobleman keeps jesters, who amuse him with their jokes, or sing him old songs about Alexander Nefsky and Ivan, and all the old heroes. He does not care at all for books, and in the evening he eats an

enormous supper with sometimes as many as seventy dishes, and drinks himself drunk.

His wife and daughters live even duller lives. They sew a good deal, and often go to church. Also they spend many hours in dressing themselves in their rich embroidered dresses, with hanging sleeves and huge gold buttons, and in doing up their hair with soft silk handkerchiefs and rich jewelled caps, fur-edged, and in putting in their earrings and bracelets. Also they paint their faces white and red, which they think looks lovely, and they wish very much to get as fat as possible.

Of course all are not like this. Some are more sensible, and cleverer. But we must not stay longer. Come out, and come across to the Kremlin. Look, all the people have their best dresses on. Let us ask them why. It is because the English ambassadors are coming to see Ivan the Czar today, and so all the people are ordered to dress in their best.

Now come along the unpaved streets, deep in snow. Here is the wall of the Kremlin. It is in the shape of a triangle pointing northwards, and along the south side is the little river Moskowa, frozen hard now. Look, how many towers in the walls,—eighteen of them.

Take off your hat as we pass under the gate, for it is the gate of the Saviour, and is a sacred gate, and none may pass under it covered. Here we are inside. Look at that great church with its wonderful painted domes; that is where

the Czars are crowned. Inside you might see tawny gold pillars, and wonderful pictures; but the windows are only loopholes, too small to see through. And there are the palaces. The Gold Palace and the Palace of Facets, and many others.

But listen to the noise of feet behind us. It is the English ambassadors coming to the Palace of Facets. Let us follow them, and slip in too, and we shall catch a glimpse of Ivan the Terrible.

Here we pass into the great hall. Look first at the tapestry round the walls, rich tapestry, and the golden bright dishes; for if you look at Ivan first, you will never take your eyes off him. Look at his chair on the dais; that is called the throne of Solomon, and it is rich with gold. All round it stand young nobles, richly dressed. And supporting it there are clockwork lions which roar. You can hear them now.

Now look at the Czar himself, with his crown on his head, and his sceptre in his hand. Look at his face, his bright, piercing eyes, and his terrible stern mouth and dark eyebrows. That is a face which you can never forget.

Now come away, for we cannot wait to hear the speaking. For it would take me a whole page to write down even the proper name and title of Ivan the Terrible, and he will have it all, every jot, or know the reason why. Come home now, back to the nineteenth century, but do not forget our look at Muscovy.

Serfdom and Pretenders.

Now Ivan the Terrible had two sons. Feodor was the elder, Dmitri the younger. Feodor's name sounds soft and sweet, and not very strong. This Feodor was like his name.

But Feodor had a brother-in-law named Boris Godounov. And Boris was strong and clever and very ambitious. He had Tartar blood in his veins, and Tartar fierceness and cunning. So it came that he got the power into his hands. No one could approach the Czar except by the help of Boris. And it was Boris who sat in state in the great hall of the palace, and received the envoys of foreign kings.

Now Boris said in his mind, "I will be Czar after the death of Feodor." Three people stood in his way. One was Dmitri, Feodor's brother; the others a cousin of Feodor's and her daughter.

Then Boris looked at these with eyes full of evil and dark intent. And with soft words and gentle promises he prevailed on this cousin and her daughter to come and live in Russia. But presently when men asked, "Where is Feodor's cousin?" they heard she was in a convent. Soon after her daughter died rather suddenly and was buried. Then men began to say dark things as to how she had met her death.

Now only Dmitri, the young prince, stood between Boris and the throne. One day the great alarm-bell of the

palace rang out suddenly. Dmitri's mother and friends rushed out into the court. There lay Dmitri on the ground, dead, with his throat cut. At the sight Dmitri's friends grew full of rage and suspicion, and they seized Boris's friends who were there, and put them to death.

When Boris heard of that he sent his men down to find out, so he said, how Dmitri had met his death. These said boldly, "The prince has died a natural death, and has not been murdered." After that they put to death Dmitri's friends for killing the friends of Boris.

So the last hindrance was gone. Boris had only to wait for Feodor's death.

Boris ruled for Feodor well and wisely in many ways. He made war in Poland, and was victorious. But the people never loved him, for they whispered one to another, "It was by Boris's order that Dmitri was slain." So although Boris drove away with a mighty hand a great band of Tartars that came up to the gates of Moscow, yet the people hated him.

But one great thing which Boris did, not a good thing, but a very bad one, was that he made the Russian peasants serfs. But though it was a deed that brought sorrow and misery on the land, yet in some ways it seemed good.

In the time of Ivan the Great, when he was trying to throw off the Tartar yoke, he got help from the nobles—help of money and men. Then to reward them he gave them land.

But this land was of no value unless it was dug and sown and planted. And for that the nobles needed peasants who would live on the land. And the more peasants there were to cultivate the land, the more valuable it was.

So the rich nobles began to try to have as many peasants on their lands as possible. And to persuade them to come, they promised them advantages of different sorts. Then the peasants left the smaller nobles, who were not able to promise them anything, and went to the rich ones.

So the small nobles found themselves very poor. Their land was of no use without labourers. And it became almost impossible for them to provide any soldiers in time of war, for they had neither men enough, nor money to arm them.

Boris Godounov saw this difficulty very plainly. He saw that the army suffered for it, and the small nobles suffered. So he began to think that he would solve the difficulty by settling the number of peasants for each estate, and then by making a law to forbid them to move from one master to another,—in short, by making them serfs. Another reason for his doing this was that he would by it gain the friendship of the small nobles. The rich boyards hated his power too much ever to be his friends.

So in the year 1590 the Russian peasants became serfs. Eight years after that Feodor died. He was the last of the race of Ivan.

Who was to reign? Who but Boris Godounov.

At first he made as though he would not take the crown. That was his cunning. He waited till the whole nation should ask him, in order that when he was once king he might have nothing to fear. The nobles, who felt that no other could be king, said to the people, "Feodor wished Boris to be king, and hung a gold chain round his neck. Remember, too, his good ruling and his skill in war."

Then the nation sent to beseech him to reign, and Boris reigned. He had gained his end at last. His heart swelled with pride, and he hoped to be the first of a long race of descendant kings. But though he knew it not, bloody hands were to wipe out the last trace of Boris's family, as Boris's bloody hands had wiped out Ivan's children.

His reign was glorious. He fought well with Poland and Turkey and the Khan of Siberia. His fame spread far and wide, till the European sovereigns tried to make friends with him.

Boris sent an envoy to England to ask for the help of Queen Elizabeth against Turkey, and to reprove her because she had already helped Turkey, "For," so ran Boris's message, "the Queen should help Christian kings, and not infidel Mohammedans." When Queen Elizabeth

received his envoy she rose to listen to him. And when he had ended she bowed her head and asked after the health of Boris.

Boris invited many artists and generals and learned men to his Court. He built the tower of Ivan the Great, and had a bell cast for it, so large that it was called the Queen of Bells. He sent also young Russians to Europe to learn arts and sciences there.

But a sorcerer had foretold that Boris should only reign for seven years; and the end of the seven years was drawing near. Great troubles came upon the land. There was a fierce revolt of the nobles, and much bloodshed. Then a frightful famine came upon the land, and after that a plague. And the hungry peasants and servants of the exiled nobles formed bands of brigands, and went about robbing and plundering.

And men said, "These are signs of great evil to come upon the land." Suddenly a report arose, and spread swiftly from mouth to mouth, "Dmitri is alive after all, and he is coming to conquer Russia."

A young monk had been living at a monastery on the White Sea. One day he said to his fellow monks, "Do you know that some day I shall be Czar of Moscow?" At that Boris ordered him to be shut up in prison. But he escaped, and wrote to the people of Moscow, saying, "I am Dmitri." After that he joined the Cossacks.

Then he began to collect followers round him. And many were ready to come because of the usurper Boris. And all the peasants, who were full of wrath at Boris's deed in making them serfs, were eager to join this pretender and depose Boris. The King of Poland, too, ordered his nobles to help Dmitri.

Gradually in Poland Dmitri gathered an army of Poles and of banished Russians. And in 1604 he marched over the frontier into Russia.

Boris sent an army against him. But the soldiers said to each other, "What if this should be really Dmitri?" So they would not fight their hardest, and though the pretender was beaten, he suffered little loss. And all the country began to rise as he came near. Then at this moment of danger Boris died.

The moment he was dead the soldiers refused to fight for a Godounov; and Dmitri marched unattacked to Moscow. Then those who befriended him in the city arose and killed Godounov's wife and sons. So ended the line of Boris Godounov.

Then came a time of trouble and of change.

The false Dmitri reigned at Moscow. He was kindly and gentle. But he cared little for Russian customs and Russian ways. So gradually his men grew discontented with him, and longed for a really Russian king.

A party of them agreed to murder him. Their leader was Chouisky, a boyard. And one morning early the false

Dmitri heard the sound of the clanging of bills, and looking out from the palace he saw Chouisky and his men entering the Kremlin armed.

Then he tried to flee; and to save himself he jumped out of a window on to some scaffolding; but he missed his footing and fell. Then Chouisky's men seized him, and proclaimed to the people, "This is not Dmitri, but a pretender."

Then they killed him. And in ghastly mockery they laid the body with a mask on its breast and bagpipes to its mouth, to show that the Czar had used witchcraft to deceive the people.

After he was dead the men of Moscow chose Chouisky as their Czar. He was one of the descendants of Rurik the Norseman.

Then came a fearful time of deceit and bloodshed and misery. One man after another arose and declared that he was Dmitri, or a son of Ivan the Terrible.

One of these was called the Touchino Rogue, because he had set up his camp at Touchino, near Moscow. Round him gathered many thousand Poles and Russians. He gained town after town, until it seemed as though he would take the whole of Russia.

But the brother of Chouisky the Czar was a brave and a noble man, and to save the Russians from their troubles, he asked the King of Sweden to give him help. Then, with a large army of Swedes and Russians, he marched into

Moscow. He fought against the Touchino Rogue, and it seemed that the victory was on his side. But just at that moment he died. Some say he was poisoned.

After that Chouisky was not Czar much longer. For the Touchino Rogue marched on Moscow, and took it. And he forced Chouisky to become a monk.

So ended the reign of the last descendant of Rurik. Men said that, on the night before his fall, great wailing had been heard at midnight in the Church of the Kremlin. Then a ghostly voice read out a mass for the dead, and at its end the sounds of wailing rose again, and died away.

After Chouisky's fall, Ladislas, the son of the King of Poland, was chosen Czar. But only by the Moscow nobles, not by the Russian nation. Soon after the Touchino Rogue died. Then the friends of Ladislas remained his friends no longer. For they had only chosen him that the Touchino Rogue might not reign. And they began to say one to another, "Can we have a Pole and a Romanist to be the Czar of Russia?"

So there were revolts, and great battles between the Poles and the Russians. One night flames shot up and reddened the sky above Moscow. For the Poles had set it on fire to burn out the Russians. Then at the news of the quarrels in Moscow false Dmitris and pretenders rose again in great numbers, so that the whole land was full of strife and blood.

And the people of Russia were in misery as dark as in the darkest Tartar days. And it was the worse because it was the Russians themselves who were the authors of the war and the misery. And none knew to whom to turn for help, or how peace could ever come back to Russia.

Then in the midst of the misery the Russian priests resolved to help the land to help herself. So the abbot of the Troitsa Monastery sent out priests from town to town. And they bore this message to all the people: "It is for you, people of Russia, to end this war and trouble, and choose a Czar who shall reign rightfully and bring peace." They told them, too, of a vision that a good man in Novgorod had seen. He had seen in the night two saints, who came and spoke, "Let the Russians arise and repent of their sins, and their sorrows shall have an end."

Then a solemn fast was held throughout the land, and all took part in it, down to the very children. So for three days the Russians humbled themselves before God, and prayed that, at the prayer and striving of her people, peace might come back to Russia.

Then a mighty assembly was held at Nijni Novgorod, on the river Volga. And there were gathered merchants and peasants, and all who longed for the good of Russia, and they waited breathlessly to hear what they should do. And the priest stood forth, and said to the people, "Stand ye fast by the holy faith, and fight for love of our fatherland."

Then stood forth the butcher Minine, and he spoke in words straight and brave, that braced the hearts of the men who heard him. These were his words: "If we wish to save our country Russia, we must spare neither our lands nor our goods. Let us sell our houses, and put our wives and children to service. Let us seek a man who will fight for the faith, and march under his banner."

And the assembly, as they heard his words, felt that they were good. And in a steady soberness of purpose they sent men to find them a leader.

And a leader was found, an old Prince Pojarsky, a man full of courage, who had fought and suffered for Russia. Then the rest of the men formed themselves into an army, strong and brave, each man wishing to save Russia or to die, led by the prince and the butcher Minine.

On they marched to Moscow. And there they attacked boldly and patiently. No force could hold out against the brave nation, and the Poles gave in, and opened the gates.

Then in solemn order in marched the Russian army. First went the priests with icons and crosses. And from the Kremlin to meet them came the Arch bishop of Archangel, and in his hand he carried the holy picture of the Virgin, which the Russians loved so well; and as they looked, it seemed to them a sign of the favour of God and the peace that should come.

So the Russians had freed Russia; and peace had come back to her through the love of her children. That was a great deed of a noble nation.

Then in solemn assembly, and with lawful ceremonies, they chose their Czar. And their choice fell on Michael Romanov, son of the great and well known family.

So in the summer of that year he was crowned Czar, and his descendants are reigning still. For a change that a nation makes is not to be unmade.

Gaining Strength.

But young Michael Romanov had not come to an easy life, or a kingdom at peace. For all over the wide land of Russia were Poles and Cossacks, and bands of hungry peasants turned robbers. The Swedes, too, had taken the city of Novgorod and other cities. Worse than this, the boyards began again to plot and be jealous, and quarrel for power. And Michael was only sixteen.

But the love of country that had brought a lawful king helped the Russians through their troubles. David killed first the lion and bear, and then he did not fail to kill Goliath. The Russians had put down the false pretenders, now they turned to kill giant enemies of the country.

Michael was the more unhappy because his wise father Philarete was captive to the Poles, so that he could not advise him. However, Michael did his best. He sent a messenger to England, and persuaded King James to send them an envoy to help them to restore peace. This envoy persuaded the King of Sweden to make peace, and give up Novgorod and other cities. For Russia had been like a garden left without an owner. Many people would come in and pick flowers; so they had taken away Russian property. Now the owner had come back, many gave up what they had taken.

But there was one thief that would not give up his spoils. That was the King of Poland, who said that he was

Czar of Russia. Michael went to war with him. But after a bit peace was made, and they exchanged prisoners. So Philarete, Michael's father, came back to Russia.

Then better times began. Philarete showed the jealous grasping boyards that they must behave like Christian men. During the time he was alive, Russia began to make friends with many European countries. When Fletcher had come to Russia in the time of Ivan the Terrible, he had been quite surprised to find that the Russians were Christian; for he had thought they were heathen barbarians. Now European countries thought of Russia as almost one of themselves.

One splendid act of the time of Michael was, that he assembled the Russian people to decide upon great questions.

Presently war broke out again with Poland. For the Polish king died, and Michael thought it was a good chance for him. So he sent an army into Poland. But the generals quarrelled so much, and knew so little about war, that the Poles conquered the army twice. Then Michael made peace, and it was agreed that the Russians should pay money and Ladislas should give up the title of Czar, and promise to try to gain Russia no more. Then men hoped that was the end of wars with Poland; but alas! it was not so.

Michael did much good for Russia by inviting artists and merchants and workmen from all countries to come

into Russia. Only he would not allow tobacco, for the Russians thought it was wrong. Books were written, and schools founded. So when Michael died, Russia was beginning again to be one whole country.

When Michael died, Alexis his son became king. He was easy-tempered and good. People said, "Even in his greatest rages, the Czar never goes beyond kicks and cuffs," and that was great praise. He was weak, and let his ministers govern him. However, the minister who got power over him was learned and clever.

It was still very hard to govern well. For the Russians were poor through their long miseries, and were hardly pressed by taxes for the wars. So they were ready to revolt, and did revolt; and it took a clever man to deal wisely with them.

Happily for Russia, the Poles were in such trouble at home that they could not think of fighting any enemies. And the cause of their troubles was the same cause as that of the Russian troubles—that they were always fighting each other.

They fought for the sake of their forms of religion. The people who lived in two of the provinces of Poland, called Little Russia and White Russia, were Russians and Greek Christians, while the Poles, who really governed the country, were Romanists.

These Poles hated the Russian Greek Christians, and would not give them fair judgment, and were often cruel

to them, and tried hard to make them become Romanists. When the Russians could bear it no longer, they ran away and joined the Cossacks in the Ukraine. The Ukraine was a kind of wild pastureland, and the Poles to get it cultivated had promised thirty years' liberty to any one who would go there. The people who went there were called Cossacks, and they grew up free and bold, and fought bravely, galloping about on their horses. And when the Russians ran away and joined them, they would not give them up again to their masters. At that the Poles and Cossacks went to war.

Presently Alexis joined the Cossacks, and helped them, and then a weary war went on for many years, till at last, after thirteen years, peace was made, and it was settled that the Cossacks and part of Little Russia should belong to Russia.

But the Russians did not know what troublesome subjects they had got, though they were soon taught, for the Cossacks rose up under a great captain called Stenko Razine, and tried to get free from Russia, and make a kingdom of their own. Stenko Razine was killed, and the revolt stopped, but the Cossacks know wild songs about him to this day.

During Alexis' reign the Russians began to learn more and more. There was a clever priest, whose name was Nicon, who taught them much, though he made them very angry.

He corrected many mistakes in the Russian Bible, and altered a few customs of the Church. Because he did this, the people who loved their old ways became discontented. They would sooner have died than have spelt words right when they had been used to spell them wrong, because they did not understand, and thought that Nicon was wickedly altering the Bible.

Then all who did not hold the doctrines of the Russian Church entirely began also to make a disturbance. Alexis took the side of Nicon, and was foolish enough to punish and put to death those Raskolniks, as they were called.

Many Russians began to be learned, and to write books. They wrote about how Russia was wrong, and what she ought to do to put herself right. They all said that the Russians were still ignorant and barbarous, and that they ought to get learning and civilisation.

One man came to Russia, called Kriganitch. There were three things he wanted to do. First, he wanted to write a Slav Grammar, so that the Russians and other Slavs might speak correctly. Secondly, he wanted to write a true history of the Slavs. Thirdly, he wanted to keep them from being deceived by other nations. He is the first of the Slavophils—that means, of the lovers of the Slav race. After that there were many others who wished to join all the Slavs into one great nation, with a language of their own.

Now, for the very first time of all, the Russians legan to have theatres and act. They acted plays out of the Bible; and very funny they must have been, for they did not know how to act or speak. Still, their acting was a good thing, and gradually, as the people learned more, the acting grew better.

It was in Alexis' reign that an envoy was sent to England, and had very funny adventures. For he got to London in the very middle of the great rebellion, when the king and the Parliament were fighting. "Where is the king?" asked the Russian envoy of the merchants at the port.

"We do not exactly know," they said, "for there has been a war with the king. The king wished to rule after his own will, and Parliament could not allow that. The Parliament, you know, is made of two bodies of men—one is the nobles, and the other the men chosen by the common people."

When the Russian envoy heard that, he could not understand it at all. For in Russia, as you know, the Czar's will was law, and there was no parliament to say him nay. So he went on saying that he must see the king. "Have you a letter for the Parliament?" they said, "No," he answered, "I have nothing for the Parliament; the Parliament must send me at once to the king."

When he found that they were not going to take him there, he wanted to go away, but that the Parliament would not allow.

Next year he was brought before the House of Lords, which he called the assembly of the boyards.

There he made a very angry speech, and complained that they had not let him see the king. The chief "boyard" was very polite to him, but the envoy went back to Russia ill pleased, and so was Alexis when he heard it.

Next year, when he heard of the beheading of Charles I, he forbade English merchants to live in the inland towns of Russia.

In 1676 Alexis died.

His son reigned, called Feodor, but of his reign there is little to be said. He had a fierce war with the Turks about the Ukraine, but he conquered. The chief thing he did was to found a school at Moscow, where Latin and Greek and theology were to be taught. Now we will leave him and go on to Peter the Great himself.

The Great Czar: Travels and Troubles.

The Great Czar! Who was he, and why was he great? Perhaps some day you may go to Russia, and, if you do, travel northward towards the Gulf of Finland. You will go through miles and miles of forest and morass, dark and dank and lonely, and suddenly you will burst upon a great magnificent city, like a jewel cast away in a marsh.

And round it flow the blue cold waters of the Neva, and it stands up, gorgeous with granite palaces, lofty and high. And in the midst of the great square stands a vast statue—a man on a horse, standing on a huge block of granite, and looking straight out to Europe across the Gulf of Finland. There it stands, though the waters of the Gulf have rushed inland and roared round it many times.

And that city is St. Petersburg, the window into Europe, and that man is Peter the Great, its founder. And his mind was huge, like the statue, above that of other men, and his perseverance, like the granite, standing firm for ever. And as he worked for Russia he ever looked out to Europe, till he won her glory abroad, and made her take her place in the rank of the nations once and for ever.

Yet if you had lived then you would not have felt certain that Peter would ever be really Czar at all, though he and his half brother, a poor idiotic boy called Ivan, were crowned Czars.

For Peter had a step-sister, by name Sophia. Some say she was a noble woman, full of love for her country, some that she was vulgar and bold and fat, and had a moustache like a man's. All agree that she was very clever.

However this may be, the Streltsi, who were full of rebellion, made up their mind that Sophia should help to rule Russia. So they marched against the Kremlin with cannons, crying out that "Peter's friends have killed Ivan, and we must take vengeance."

And although they saw Ivan alive, they plundered the palace for a week. They looked under the beds and the altar, and killed any they found in hiding. At last they agreed to be peaceful if Sophia was to reign till Ivan and Peter grew old enough to rule themselves.

So Sophia reigned, and either from good or bad reasons she was very glad to reign.

Peter grew up a strong tall boy, with bright eyes and an eager mind. He did little lessons, but he loved to read of the old Russian kings and the battles they fought.

One day he happened to go into an old store house of rubbish. In the corner was a boat turned bottom upwards. Now Peter, who had lived inland, had never seen a boat before. So he asked, "What is that?" And they showed him. Then he jumped for joy, and after that made many boats and sailed in them. Do not forget that little old boat. It was the grandfather of the Russian fleet.

Now all this time Ivan was growing more weakly and idiotic. The Streltsi, when they saw the brothers, said one to another, "Ivan is a poor idiot, but Peter will make a fine Czar." Besides that, they did not like being ruled by a woman. So one day they came to Peter and said, "We will not serve Sophia any longer; you shall be our Czar." So Peter sent Sophia away to a convent, and there she lived till the day of her death.

Now that Peter was Czar he could do what he had a mind to. And above all things he longed to see the sea and the mighty ships. So he sailed down the Dwina in his painted barge till he reached the great city Archangel, on the Icy Sea. Then he stood on the seashore, and watched the great green waves rise and come breaking in foam with strong sweep along the beach. And when he saw that he could not speak for wonder.

Many days he passed there, sailing and making ships with his own hands. He would not be called Czar, but only Skipper Peter.

While he was there the great merchant ships came in to fetch furs and hemp and tallow.

But Peter's heart was full of sorrow when he saw that there was no Russian ship among them. Then Skipper Peter vowed that Russia too should have ships. Now read how the Czar Peter kept that vow.

There was one great difficulty. Where were the ships to sail from? You remember how few doors the Russians

had, and how the harbours on the Icy Ocean were locked half the year. For the rest, the Swedes held all the doors on the Baltic, and the Turks held the Black Sea.

Now the Russians ever hated the Turks, and loved to fight them; and so Peter, bold as brass, declared aloud to all his men, "We will fight the Turks and conquer the ports on the Black Sea, and Russia shall have a fleet."

So he led his army against the mighty city Azov, on the Black Sea. But it was built all round about with walls strong and thick. Peter worked hard among his soldiers, and filled shells and bombs like any other man, and shouted and fought boldly. But it was of no use. There was no fleet to attack Azov by sea, and the Russians were forced to go home again. But Peter was not a whit abashed, and they made a long procession into Moscow, though all they had to show was one poor prisoner.

Then, as he saw he could not do without ships, he set to work at once to make them. He was in such a hurry that they were all built of green wood. Besides that, many workmen ran away on the sly, and there was a great fire in the dockyard. Yet Peter worked on. And at last a few ships were made, very shabby and clumsy; but Peter did not care at all, and set sail down the Don in good heart. Then the Russians made a breach in the city walls, and fought bravely; and at length the city had to beg for peace, and the Russians had conquered.

You are surprised, and so was all Europe when they heard it. And they began to think that Russia was worth considering after all. As for the Russian army, they made another much grander procession into Moscow, under green arches, with pictures and inscriptions,—all the officers, in new uniforms, sitting in gorgeous carriages.

"But where is the Czar?" asked all the people watching. Where was he, do you think? Marching among the common soldiers, in the neat light dress of a German ship-captain. The old Muscovites shook their heads and said, "What a want of dignity! how shocking!" Little they thought that Peter was so great that it did not matter if he looked great or not

What Peter did next shocked his people still more. He sent fifty young nobles to Venice to learn shipbuilding.

More than that, he himself took a journey into Europe. For he saw that Russia was behind the rest of Europe, and determined it should be so no longer.

He went quite quietly, and would not be called Czar. First to Prussia, where the Germans were much surprised to see how clever and how shy and how bad-mannered he was all at once.

Then to Holland to learn shipbuilding. He worked like a common sailor. One day, when a noble wanted to see him, the shipmaster called out, "Peter, why don't you help the others to lift that beam?" Peter did it without a word. He learned other things in Holland,—paper-making, and

how to pull out teeth, which he enjoyed practising on his courtiers. But he found out that in Holland they only made ships by the rule of thumb, and said he could only learn rightly in England.

So he went to England. He would not go to see King William III, because he said it was a waste of time.

Then he left England, and was going to Venice, when he heard such bad news from home that he had to go back at once.

What was happening? It was the Streltsi again. They had had great sufferings. Azov had been a glorious victory for Peter, but after it the poor soldiers had been separated from their wives and children, and sent to live there to keep the city safe. They thought that it was all the fault of the Germans, who were Peter's friends. They sent great complaints to Moscow of their treatment, and this was part of what they said, "Moscow is full of horrors, and Germans are coming there who shave their beards and smoke tobacco, which is a sin." For the Russians thought it wrong to cut their beards. Then the Russian nobles sent an army against them, and took many prisoners, and wrote to Peter to tell him that the Streltsi were rebelling.

When Peter got back he found that Moscow too was very nearly rebelling, for they too hated Germans. Peter was angry and stern. He feared that Sophia was at the bottom of this rebellion.

He had all the Streltsi sent one by one into the torture-chamber. That was a ghastly place. Some were beaten with rods till they died, others roasted over a slow fire, and others beaten with the terrible knout.

He had great gallows put up all over the Red Place. And the Streltsi were brought out two and two in carts, back to back, with tied arms, and lighted candles in their hands. Their wives and children ran by the carts crying, and the people of Moscow stood still with pale faces, and cursed Peter under their breath. Then for three months the bodies hung swinging in the wind, and the heads on tops of pikes, as a warning to the people of Moscow from the great Czar Peter.

Then Peter determined that he would try to bring in European customs and manners.

The first things he tried to alter were beards. No one in Europe had beards, so Peter ordered the Russian nobles to cut theirs off. Some did not like it, and one even dared to come to dine with the Czar with his beard on. Then Peter caught hold of his beard with one hand, and a knife with the other, and off it came,—not very pleasantly either.

With the people it was a different thing. The merchants and the serfs said that the Bible said that man was made in the image of God, and as a beard was part of the image, it ought not to be touched. Peter was at last

forced to allow them to pay a tax if they liked instead of cutting off their beards. That was hard on the poor.

The long caftans were the next things to be shortened. Any one who tried to come into the town with a long caftan on was forced to kneel down, and the police officer, with a large knife, cut the caftan short to the knees, like the little woman and the pedlar whose name was Stout. Some laughed, and others were vexed.

The third thing he did was more important. You remember how the women in Ivan's time were allowed to see no men, and even put out their tongues to the doctor through a hole in the curtain. Peter found, when he travelled in Europe, that men and women there met face to face. So he resolved to have large parties, at which men and women were to meet, and he forced the nobles to have these in turn. At first they did not succeed very well; chiefly because all the ladies were very shy and strange, and sat in a row on benches round the wall, and got very red if a man spoke to them. Presently, of course, they got used to it.

I tell you these little things that Peter did to show you how he was determined to make Russia like the rest of Europe, and how he thought he could do it all by laws and rules, however much the people disliked it.

One other thing you must remember. Peter would not let his courtiers pay him slavish respect as before. If they tried to kneel before him, or bowed very low, he beat them

till they stood straight again. For he thought that it was not good for the Russians to behave like slaves.

But what Peter now really wished with his whole heart was to have a European army. Two things stood in his way; or rather, one thing in two places. The first was the Cossacks of the Don, and the second the Cossacks of Little Russia. Peter watched his chance.

Presently the Cossacks on the Don revolted. Then Peter took terrible vengeance on them. For he sent his army there, and these took the Cossacks, and killed hundreds of them, and tied the dead bodies on boats and sent them floating down the Don to strike terror into the hearts of all who saw them. After that the Don Cossacks gave him little trouble.

The Cossacks in Little Russia had a very cunning captain called Mazeppa. Some day you will read a poem called Mazeppa's Ride. Mazeppa was like Peter, in wanting to make Little Russia a kingdom of his own. But there were two people who objected to this. One was Peter, and the other the King of Sweden. Mazeppa was very clever, and for a long time he managed to make both Peter and the King of Sweden think that he was on their side. But at last a day came when he heard that Peter and the King of Sweden had gone to war, and Peter wrote to him to tell him to bring his troops to fight the King of Sweden.

Then Mazeppa, after thinking a little, got into bed, and sent word to Peter that he was very ill.

Presently the news came that both armies were coming close. Mazeppa then knew he must make his choice, so he got out of bed and marched with his army to join the King of Sweden. When Peter heard this, he marched against Mazeppa's capital, and took and burnt it, and killed some of the people of the city; others he took away to work for him; and so broke up their tribe. So that was the last of the difficulties gone in the way of making his army great.

But who was this King of Sweden?

He was as great and as strange a man in his way as Peter was. One day one of his generals tried to persuade him not to carry out a certain plan, because it was extraordinary. Then King Charles answered, "Yes, we must do exactly what is extraordinary; that is the way to win fame and glory."

When he was a boy he had been rough and rude, and had thought it a great joke to throw cherry stones at his counsellors and smash the furniture. Later on, he got wiser; and he was always honourable and brave. He was like an old sea-king, and loved only fighting and glory. But he never spared himself any more than he spared his soldiers.

So you may imagine that he was a dangerous enemy for Peter, because he was so fierce and so daring. His army,

too, was far better than Peter's,—the greatest army in Europe at the time.

But the great Czar Peter feared nothing, and so he did not fear the King of Sweden. He was thirsting to get harbours for Russia, and made up his mind to take from him a great port on the Baltic called Narva.

The Russian army came marching up, 63,000 of them, and Peter arranged them in order of battle, for he heard that the Swedes were close.

But he arranged them very badly, in some places only a single line deep. Behind them was the wall of earth that guarded their camp. There they waited.

Presently it began to snow, and the snow fell thicker and thicker, till it was like a thick white veil, hiding everything from them. Suddenly there was a cry, and a shout of terror from the front rank, for quite suddenly and quietly through the blinding snow the Swedes had crept up and were upon them.

The soldiers in the rear, not knowing why they cried out, thought that their officers had betrayed them, and began to turn upon them and kill them, and then ran away as hard as they could run.

Only Peter did not run away. He, and a few men with him, made a sort of wall in front of them with the baggage wagons, and fought bravely.

But soon, looking round, they saw that they were quite alone on the field. Then they knew it was of no use to try to fight. So, sadly and with heavy hearts, they came to terms; and the Russian army straggled back in disgrace to Moscow.

But Peter's heart was not heavy for long. He was too full of hope. The King of Sweden went off after the King of Poland, who was helping Peter, and while he was away Peter had cannons and guns made out of the bells of the churches, and drilled his soldiers.

A year after Narva the Russian general actually beat some of the Swedes in a fierce battle. The bells of Moscow rang all day, and the Swedish guns and banners were carried about the streets. Peter shouted out, "Glory to God! One day we will beat the Swedes."

And at last they took Narva itself.

It was a glorious time for Peter.

That was not the end of the war. Peter went on helping the King of Poland against Charles, till Charles, to put a stop to it, determined to march into Russia, kill Peter, and make Russia his own kingdom.

When Peter heard that he drew in his breath for fear, in spite of all his boldness. For he was busy with the Cossacks, who were rebelling. So, rather bitterly and reluctantly, he asked for peace. But he might have spared his pains, for Charles answered, "I will treat with the Czar in Moscow."

On marched the Swedish army, and the Russians fell back before them. But, happily for Peter, a more mighty enemy was fighting against the Swedes. That was the terrible winter cold. So cold it was, that the very birds in the air fell dead. The Swedish soldiers were badly clad, and had very mouldy bread to eat, for Charles was in too great haste to be prudent. Hundreds and hundreds fell down and died, and still Charles marched on, while the Russians hung about his track like wolves.

At last he reached the town of Pultowa, and there he stayed to wait for the Turks, who had promised to join him. He felt dull, and so he attacked Pultowa to pass the time.

The Russians drew near at last, and then Charles turned on them. The Swedes came on at a furious charge. Charles had hurt his foot, and was dragged in a litter by horses, but he was with them. As they came galloping on, the Russian horse-soldiers gave way in terror.

But the foot-soldiers were braver, and they came forward, and planted their pikes to stop the Swedes. Presently more came on, and cut the army of the Swedes in two.

Then the Russians took heart, and charged gallantly, and the Swedes fled before them. Charles himself, proud Charles, was forced to gallop away on a horse.

The day was won. The news spread over the whole of Europe from town to town. And men said to each other,

"The Russians have beaten the Swedes; Russia must be a mighty nation."

And Peter was glad at heart and triumphant, for he felt that now Russia had proved herself strong enough to stand among European nations.

This was in 1709.

The Great Czar: His Reforms.

Peter set to work to make his people better and more civilised, but it was not an easy or a pleasant work. For the people loved their old ways simply because they were old, and, being ignorant and foolish in many ways, they thought that the Germans had got power over Peter to make him change old customs.

Now Peter brought in many good things. He taught the people to till their land better than they had been used to do. He taught them also better ways of making shoes, and ships, and many other things. But the people grumbled, and said, "Old ways are best."

One thing he did which vexed them very much. He changed the beginning of the year from September to January, so that they might count their year like the other European people. The peasants thought that this was very wrong, "for," they said, "apples are not ripe in January, so Eve could not have been tempted then." And they thought that Peter was contradicting the Bible, and called him the Great Antichrist.

They made up a fairy story, which they repeat now. They said that the Czar went to the castle of a witch in Norway. The witch fried him, and then threw him into prison. Then she was going to put him into a barrel full of nails and roll him into the sea, only somehow he escaped.

But he never came back to Russia, and the Czar who pretended to be Peter was, they said, really a German.

But when Peter went to war the people suffered terribly. For their children were carried off to be soldiers, and their money was taken to pay for the soldiers' arms and food. These poor peasants did not want the glory they won. What they wanted was to live at home happily with all their friends round them. So they hated Peter, while they liked the Czars who made no wars and wanted no men for soldiers. And of Peter they said, "Since God has sent him to be the Czar we have no happy days. The village is weighed down with providing roubles and half-roubles." And the women wailed, and cried, "He has taken all our husbands to be soldiers, and left us to weep all our lives long."

Another thing that Peter did made the peasants still more unhappy. There had been three sorts of peasants,—those that were free and owned their own land, those that had to pay half they got to their masters, those that belonged to the land and were bought and sold with it. Peter made these three sorts all alike. He arranged that all should be bought and sold with the land they lived on. That was a hard and unjust measure.

The rest of what Peter did was very good. He did much, as I said, to help the people to manufacture things better. He built schools, too, and taught in them

geography and history and languages, and how to manage a ship. Latin and Greek he thought were of no use.

Then, too, he built hospitals, and would no longer allow deformed babies to be killed. Besides this, he kept order in the streets of Moscow, and ordered that people should not hit each other, or push each other into the mud.

But one of the reforms that gave him the most trouble was the reform of the government. There was one governor for each town and province, who settled everything, and settled it very badly. This Peter altered for the better. It is too long to tell you exactly how. Only he arranged that these governors were not each to settle everything in their province, but there were to be different sorts of governors—one for the criminal law, one for money affairs, and so on.

At the head of all was a council made of nobles. You may tell how rough they were by hearing what rule Peter was forced to make. He had to order them not to cry out, or thump each other, or call each other thieves.

Peter did not interfere with the Mirs at all. That was very wise of him, and showed his greatness.

When all these arrangements were settled, he had a great deal of trouble in making his officers do their duty. For they were very fond of stealing, and did not judge fairly, but judged in favour of those who gave them most money.

Peter was very anxious that fair judgment should always be given; and if he found any of them taking bribes, he had them up before his court, whether they were nobles or peasants, and there he beat them with the knout, and some he hung. You must remember that whatever mistakes Peter made, he did mean to give Russia a good government, and to have all things fair and just as far as he could see.

One day Peter actually began to dictate to one of his nobles a decree, saying that he would punish any official with death who even took the value of a rope as a bribe. But the noble, instead of writing, said, "Has your Majesty thought as to what will be the result of this order?" "Go on writing," said Peter, who was very obstinate. "Do you wish to be left quite alone in Russia?" said the noble; "we all steal,—some more, some less, but more cleverly." Peter laughed, and did not go on.

Peter was no easier a master to the nobles than to the peasants. He made strict laws about their lands, and forced them to serve either in the army or navy or law-courts for many years.

The work that Peter liked best of all was his plans for the city St. Petersburg. Directly after the battle of Pultowa he wrote to one of his generals, saying, "I feel as if the first stone of St. Petersburg was laid." The first stone had really been laid about six years before. You know what the country was like. The great Neva separated into four

branches, besides which there were numberless little rivers running into it. But the land did not look at all fit for a city, for it was all marshy islands, with dreary dull plains about it, and dark forests stretching away on each side. But we know why Peter wanted to build his city there; because he wanted a window into Europe. He ordered labourers to come, and, as they had no spades, they had to dig out the earth with their nails or with sticks, and carry it in their long caftans. When that was done great stakes of wood had to be driven in close to each other, for the marsh was not firm enough to support a house. The poor workmen slept in the open air, and often had not enough food to eat, so that they died by thousands. This was in 1703. Peter lived in a little wooden house by the water's edge, and wrote home. "Oh, oh I am so happy; I am in paradise."

A few years later Peter visited it again, and this time it was flooded, so that all the houses were many feet deep in water. Peter was very much amused, and said, "It is quite funny to see how people sit on the roofs and trees, as they did in the time of the deluge."

To get the streets paved he obliged every boat that came to bring some stones; and to get houses built he obliged each of the great nobles to build a stone house there.

The streets were not lighted for many years, and wolves wandered in them at night. There were a great many fires, and many robberies and murders.

Peter used to spend busy days there, getting up to settle his affairs with the ministers at three o'clock in the morning, and then seeing how the shipbuilding was getting on, and often working at his lathe till eleven o'clock, when he had dinner. After dinner he went to sleep for an hour, as most people do in Russia, and in the afternoon he walked about to look at the work. In the evening he went to some of his assemblies, or stayed at home with his family, and went to bed about ten. The palaces he had built were rather mean little places, for he liked low rooms and disliked smart furniture.

Peter had a good deal of trouble in making St. Petersburg the capital. The people had got so used to trading with European merchants at Archangel that they did not like to change, particularly as the roads to St. Petersburg were very bad. Besides that, they were afraid of the Swedes taking their ships if they sailed down the Baltic. Peter, to alter this, had a canal cut to join the Neva to the Volga, and he put a tax on everything sold in Archangel, to persuade the people to come to St. Petersburg instead.

Another difficulty was that the nobles all hated St. Petersburg. It was cold and ugly and uncomfortable, and a long way from Moscow. They all hated going in boats, and there was nothing to amuse them—no old churches and relics and historical monuments—as at Moscow. Besides which, in order to save wood, they were not allowed to heat their bath-houses more than once a week, and as

Russians love nothing more than baths, this made them very cross. They all hoped that St. Petersburg would be deserted. But Peter took pains that it should not. He had gardens laid out, and forced people to come and live there till there were about a hundred thousand there. He knew that it was of great use to Russia to have a window to look at Europe.

You must remember that all these changes were made gradually, while the war was going on with Sweden. They are only put together to help you to remember them.

Now we come to the second part of Peter's reign, from 1709 till 1725.

They were not very happy years. There was a war with Turkey which ended sadly, though it began very happily. The Russians were always eager to fight the Turks, and so the great army marched against the mighty Constantinople full of hope.

But the Turks fell on them fiercely, and the army was almost destroyed. And the proud Czar Peter had to ask for peace, and to give up Azof, his first great conquest. Also he was obliged to destroy his fleet on the Black Sea—that first little fleet which he had built with such hope and such pains so many years ago. That went to Peter's heart most of all.

In 1717 Peter took another journey into Europe, and a very different one.

In his first journey he had been almost a boy, and a boy who did not know European customs. People had looked at him rather as a curiosity which ought to be put under a glass case, or as a strange beast which might bite. Now he was the great conqueror of the Swedes, and had the largest army in Europe. Yet in one way he was the same old Peter still. For instead of calling on the French princes he went and enjoyed himself at a coachbuilder's.

While he was away he made peace with Sweden. By the peace Russia at last gained her window to look at Europe, and she has never lost it since.

Next year Peter was obliged to come home sooner than he had meant to, again because of bad news.

This was the trouble. He had a son called Alexis, who Peter hoped would be the next Czar. Till he was nine years old his mother had the teaching of him, and she hated Peter's new ways, and taught him to hate them.

Soon after Peter divorced her, and then put Alexis under the charge of his own sister. He meant to teach him well, and gave him foreign tutors. Only he was so often away from home that he could not look after Alexis much, and so Alexis made friends among the people of Moscow, who hated the changes that Peter had made.

Also he did not care for his father much, because they felt so differently about many things. Peter loved activity, and liked to work with his hands, and particularly liked ships and seafaring. Alexis was quiet, and rather lazy, and

very fond of reading, but he hated active work, and ships above all. Once, when he was forced to go to see a ship launched, he said, "I would rather be a galley-slave, or have a burning fever, than go to it."

Peter sent Alexis to travel abroad, hoping that he would be interested in learning foreign languages and how to govern. But Alexis would not try to learn, and once fired a pistol at his hand so that he might not be taught to draw. Sometimes he would take medicine to make himself ill, that he might not have to do unpleasant things.

He did not live a good life. He was very weak minded, and his friends led him into bad living and drunkenness. He married, and was happier for a little, and Peter hoped better days were coming. But soon he grew careless of his wife, and even let the rain come through the roof into her room without caring about it.

She died two years after her marriage. But the day after she died a son was born to Peter by Catharine, his second wife.

Peter felt that it did not matter much now if Alexis was idle and obstinate, because he now had another son who could be Czar. So he wrote a long letter to Alexis, and said, "You know nothing of military affairs, and you have a bad and obstinate character. How much I have scolded and beaten you for it! but it was all of no use. If you do not change, I will deprive you of your right to the throne."

When Alexis read that, his counsellors told him to say that he did not care about being Czar, but wished to become a monk. "That will keep you safe," they said, "and the monk's cowl cannot be nailed on your head."

Alexis thought this good advice, and wrote his answer to Peter. Peter did not quite believe him, but it was just at this time that he was starting on his journey to Europe.

As soon as he was gone, Alexis began to lay his plans, for he was longing to be Czar. He fled to Vienna, and thought that the Russians who hated his father's changes would help him.

Then the news of his flight was sent to Peter, and Peter came back to Moscow. He was stern and angry, and he sent messengers out after Alexis, who caught him and brought him back.

Then he came before the Secret Council. He, and all who Peter thought were plotting with him, were tried by torture, and some were horribly put to death.

Peter sat there, calm and stern, and in his presence sentence of death was passed upon Alexis. But Alexis died before it was carried out, for he was weakly, and the torture had told upon him.

So ends a painful chapter of Peter's life. We cannot tell quite how hard he meant to be upon Alexis. There is no doubt that he too suffered in seeing his son suffer. Yet we cannot tell what things the Great Czar would not have

done to uphold his authority, and so make Russia more powerful.

Peter did not live much longer. One day at St. Petersburg he saw a boat in distress, and jumped into the water to save it. He caught a chill, and grew worse so rapidly that he was not able to say whom he wished to succeed him.

So in 1725 the Great Czar Peter died.

German Influence.

Very likely at some time in your life you have admired some people very much, and tried to be like them. You admired them, first of all, for good qualities, which it is good you should try to imitate; but have you not sometimes gone past that, and imitated their little tricks of manner, even if it was better you should not have them?

That is what the Russians did with the Germans. Peter the Great was a sensible and wise man. So he only imitated from the Germans things good and worth imitating. But the Czars who came after him foolishly tried to imitate all German ways, and gave the Germans too much power, as you will soon see.

The first to do this was Peter's German wife, Catharine. The little baby Peter had died, so after much quarrelling Catharine became Empress. She was a clever woman, but a cruel one. Many of the Russians said to one another, "It is not right that a woman should reign; we will not swear to obey her." When Catharine heard that she was angry, and sent and killed them.

During her reign a great Russian, called Menchikof, who had been great under Peter, gained more and more power. Catharine only reigned two years. When she lay dying she said that Peter, the son of Alexis, was to reign after her.

Peter II was only twelve years old, and he was a delicate, weakly boy. A council of nobles ruled for him, and Menchikof, in particular, looked after him. He made Peter live in his house, and chose a German tutor for him. But Peter hated study, like his father Alexis.

Menchikof did not remain long at Court. One day when Peter gave a present of £150 to his sister, Menchikof took it away again, and said, "The Czar does not know how to use money properly." Peter was angry at that, and soon afterwards sent Menchikof to Siberia.

But when Menchikof was gone, Peter was almost more miserable than before. For all the nobles quarrelled for the power, and tried to gain Peter's favour by giving him hunting-parties and other pleasures. Yet they never did what he told them. One day his aunt Elizabeth complained to him that she had no money given her. Peter answered sadly, "It is not my fault; they never do what I tell them."

Then Peter's favourite sister died, and he was lonely and miserable. He fell ill of the small-pox, and all the time he tossed about in fever on his bed he kept crying out, "Get ready my sledge; I want to go to my sister." And it was not long before he went to his sister; for he grew weaker and weaker, and died.

I have told you quite shortly about Catharine and Peter, because their reigns did not matter to the Russian people. You must think of a nation, with its classes of poor

and rich, as of a growing tree. It is the common people, who dig the ground and work with their hands, that are the roots. Through them the rest of the tree is fed and lives. The nobles and rich people are like the leaves. Now you see that the roots are more important than the leaves. If the roots die there can be no more leaves,—the tree is dead. But the leaves of one year may fall and die; the tree can live still for a while if the roots are alive. Now as soon as poor Peter was dead, a very strange thing almost took place. You know how Ivan the Great and Ivan the Terrible, and again Peter the Great, ruled the Russians by their own will alone. The Russian nobles knew that too, and they thought it a bad thing, as indeed it was. But what did they think was better?

There was once upon a time a hole in a city wall, so the townspeople all collected to settle how it should be mended. First came a carpenter, and said, "Wood is the only thing that is good for the mending of town walls." Then up spoke a smith, and said, "On the contrary, iron is the right thing." Last of all spoke a shoemaker, and he said, "Wood and iron are all very well in their places. But the real thing to mend a wall with is leather."

The Russian nobles were like these tradesmen. "Emperors are all very well in their place." they said, "but the men who ought to be ruling the country are the nobles." Then they said to each other, "We must ask some one to be Emperor who will be so glad of our help to come to the throne that he will promise at once to agree to any

laws we like to make." So they chose a princess named Anne. She was the daughter of the poor idiotic Ivan V, Peter the Great's half-brother. She was tall and ugly, with a gruff voice and a sour face.

Then these nobles drew up a paper of four rules, which Anne was to swear to obey. The first rule was that there was to be a High Council of eight nobles, and that the Empress was to do nothing without their advice. Secondly, that she was not to make peace or war, or impose taxes or appoint officers, without the consent of the Council. Thirdly, that she was not to put a noble to death or take away his property without a regular trial. Fourthly, that she was neither to marry nor choose her successor without the consent of the Council. The paper ended, "And if I break my word about these laws, I forfeit the crown of Russia." And Anne read the paper, and wrote her name, and sealed it with her seal, for she said, "It is the will of the people."

When the Russian people heard of it, they were much troubled. And one said to another, "What will happen now? We shall have eight Czars instead of one." Then Anne sent to them to say, "Come to the great assembly in the hall of the palace." Five hundred men collected there, and listened breathlessly. For they hoped that Anne might have refused to sign the paper.

When they heard that she had signed it, their hearts were full of woe. And all over the hall there was a low

murmur, and all trembled. But they dared not speak for fear of the nobles, and silently one by one they signed the paper.

But they did not go quietly home. They determined to tell Anne that the people wished her to reign as the old Czars had reigned. And they sent messages to her by children and by her maids-in-waiting.

Then one day Anne sent to her council of nobles, and said, "Come to the hall of the palace." And when the nobles entered the hall, they saw there hundreds of clergy and of the deputies of the people. And at the sight of them these raised a cry, "We do not want the Council to rule her. Let her will be law, like the will of the old Czars."

Then Anne rose up, and said, "Was it then not the will of the people that I should put my name to these laws?"

And they all cried out, "No, no." Then Anne turned to the nobles of the High Council, and said, "You have deceived me."

And she did not let them forget that they had cheated her. Slowly and cunningly she made them suffer for it, one by one. She banished some, and tortured some, and some she put to death. And so their plan was ruined, and their attempt foiled.

But though the Russians had feared lest they should have eight Czars, their one Empress, Anne, brought in an evil rule. She was cruel and coarse, and it was in her days

that the Germans came into power and taught the Russians their bad habits.

Anne chose a German called Biren for her friend. He was a coarse and vulgar man, and drank and swore. With him came other Germans like himself. So they ruled the land, and they forbade the Russians to print certain books, and banished and tortured and taxed them, till only Russians would have borne it.

Often when the poor peasants were working in the fields, the soldiers would come in and drive off their cows and sheep to pay the taxes. And the peasants went home in bitter sorrow to the hungry children, who could get no milk. Sometimes the peasants themselves were taken off to be soldiers. For there were two wars going on, one in Turkey and one in Poland. The war in Turkey was a terrible war, for the Russians lost many provinces. The soldiers had long marches without food or water, and many died from sickness.

You must not forget that Peter the Great had also taken many peasants to be soldiers, and that the people were taxed for the wars he made. But he did also many good things for them: he taught them shipbuilding, and good ways of trade, and made them friends with Europe, Anne did none of this. She only taught the nobles to look at vulgar German plays, and to spend much money on dress, and to drink themselves drunk every night.

She enjoyed making game of the Russian nobles. Once she made them gulp down balls of pastry, and crouch like hens sitting on eggs to amuse the Court. She forced them all to dress in hideously bright colours,—green and blue, and yellow and purple. She built a theatre, but the only plays she had acted in it were plays in which there was a great deal of hitting with a stick, like clowns in a pantomime. And though that may be amusing for a little, it is not all one would wish to see.

Gradually the Russian nobles grew to hate Anne and her German friends more and more. And they said to one another, "We will do all we can to get rid of these Germans and their ways and manners."

Anne reigned for ten years, and all through her reign the people grew more and more discontented. There were famines and bad harvests, and the people said, "That is because a woman is reigning." And some said, "Remember the proverb, Cities governed by women do not last: walls built by women never grow high."

But before the discontented people arose to fight Anne died. When she lay dying, she said to Biren, "My great-nephew, the baby Ivan, is to be Czar when he is old enough, and you are to rule for him till then. Fear nothing."

But Biren had sharper eyes than Anne; and he saw that there was much to fear. He saw the dark looks of the nobles as they muttered to one another, "Shall a German

rule us?" And the father and mother of the baby Ivan said, "It is we who ought to rule in our son's name." So it came to pass that one night when Biren was asleep, soldiers came into his room and dragged him off to prison. Soon after he was sent to Siberia.

Then the father and mother of the baby Emperor were left to rule for him. But they quarrelled so much that they could decide upon nothing, and left all the nobles to do as they liked. The little Czar's mother, who was also called Anne, was so lazy that she would not dress herself, but lay on a sofa all day with a handkerchief over her face. No one was much grieved at that, for she was of as much use on a sofa as anywhere else.

One person was very glad that Anne was so lazy. This was a woman of whom we have already spoken.

She was the daughter of Peter the Great, that aunt of poor little Peter II who complained to him that she had no money. She was now twenty-eight years old, and tall and pretty, and very clever. She was merry and active, and loved riding and rowing. Anne was too lazy ever to go out-of-doors, so Elizabeth went alone in her sledge. And as she went she would speak to the soldiers about the streets, or go to their houses and drink whisky with them. Often she stood godmother to their children.

By degrees they became so friendly with her that they would even climb up on the back of her sledge and whisper in her ear. They were not her only friends. She

made friends with the French and the Swedish ambassadors. Then gradually the soldiers said to one another, "Why should not Elizabeth be our Empress?" Then very quietly they and Elizabeth made their plans.

So one cold October night in 1741, when it was quite dark, Elizabeth slipped quietly out of the palace and went with three friends to the place where the guards lived. "My children," she said to them, "you know that I am the daughter of Peter the Great." Then they answered, "Mother, we are ready; we will kill them all."

Then they marched across to the palace and took the gates by storm. And they laid hands on the baby Czar in his cradle, and on his mother and father, and lodged them safe in prison. Then next morning a great meeting of the people was called, and to them it was proclaimed, "Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great, is Empress."

So Elizabeth reigned.

This was a great change. It was not one of the changes that mattered little.

The other changes had been simply as if one master after another had been teaching the nobles the same lesson. Now the lesson changed. The new mistress, Elizabeth, taught them something quite fresh.

For instead of teaching them to think as the Germans thought, she taught them to think as the French thought.

The Russians did not know at first what she was going to teach them. Only they were glad to get rid of the Germans. They preached sermons against them, and called them evil names. The first Russian who had his books printed, Lomonossof, wrote poems to Elizabeth, and said she was like Noah, because she had saved the Russians from a flood—of Germans—that would have destroyed them; and like Moses, because she had led them out of the land where they were slaves—to the Germans. Lomonossof's verses were not very good, but you shall hear more about him presently, for he is worth remembering.

Then Elizabeth reigned. And she reigned well and wisely. She made her name great in Europe without very much loss of men or money.

First she took Finland, the land of granite rocks and icy pools, from the Swedes. At that the Russians rejoiced, for they had always wished to have Finland. Elizabeth did not leave it empty, but sent there Russian labourers aud fishermen, so that they built houses, and lived there.

Then she gained glory in a very long war that was going on in Europe, the war of the Austrian Succession. For she sent an army to help Austria, just when peace was being made. So the army struck not a single blow, but marched back again to Russia, looking large and well ordered, with much blowing of trumpets and beating of drums. The people who watched it said, "How large and how fine the Russian army is! Russia must be a strong country."

But the war that really made a difference to Russia was a war between France and Prussia. Elizabeth decided to help France. So a Russian army marched into Prussia, and won a great victory. After that French nobles came constantly to St. Petersburg, and Russian nobles went to Paris. And they learned more and more to think like the French.

That was an excellent thing, because the French were a very clever nation, and just now far advanced. Many books and plays, and poetry of all sorts, were being written. Besides that, they were the most highly civilised and well-mannered nation in Europe.

They taught the Russians many things. To begin at the smallest, they taught them to be clean. For Elizabeth sent for French inspectors, who went round from cottage to cottage, and taught the peasants to keep their sacred pictures clean. Better than that, they tried to teach them not to get drunk, Elizabeth made a law that every one who was drunk should be beaten with the kuout.

In one way she was unwise. For she persecuted people because of their religion. In that she might have taken a lesson, even from the reign of Anne.

Elizabeth made the punishment of criminals much less severe than it had been before her time. She would not have any one put to death, and torture was very seldom used. But in this too, as in many reforms, she could not manage to be entirely obeyed. Often the executioners knouted the people so severely that they died. It was the French who taught Elizabeth to be gentle.

She did much to make the towns beautiful and well ordered. They had narrow, dirty streets, paved with wooden beams. At night there was very little lighting, and sometimes tame bears, belonging to the people in the town, prowled about and did much damage. Elizabeth began to change that.

Also the houses were small, and badly built and dirty. Elizabeth invited French artists and sculptors, and they built many better houses, and taught the people how to build them. In St Petersburg Elizabeth had a winter palace

built. Better than that, she encouraged trade, and founded banks for the first time.

But the best thing that the French taught the Russians was learning. Elizabeth built many schools and colleges. The most famous was the University of Moscow. It was a mean little place at first, but it grew great, and now many learned men are educated there. Elizabeth obliged the children to go to school, which was an excellent thing.

Best of all were the books that the French brought in,—books of essays and history, and plays and poetry. The Russians read them eagerly, until their own minds were full, and then their own ideas began to grow. It was like sowing seed in the ground. The seed falls in, and takes root and sprouts, and the plant in its turn bears seed. So the Russians in their turn began to write books.

That brings us back to Lomonossof.

He was the son of a fisherman who lived upon an island in the Icy Sea near Archangel. When he was quite a little boy he used to go out fishing with his father, and spend days and weeks on the sea.

But he was so eager to learn, that whenever he was at home he used to go off to an old clerk of the church near, who taught him to read and write. When he had learned all the clerk could teach him he said, "How can I be a learned man?" At that the clerk shook his head and said, "To be a learned man you must know Latin. That can only be learned at three places, and Moscow is one."

Then Lomonossof made up his mind that to Moscow he would go. He read all the books he could get hold of—a Psalm-book, a Grammar, and an Arithmetic.

One day, when he was seventeen, his chance came. A long train of wagons full of fish was going to Moscow. "Here's my chance," thought Lomonossof. So he got into one of the wagons, and went to Moscow.

When he reached Moscow, without friends and money, he did not know what to do. But a clerk who knew him happened to see him, and by a great deal of trouble sent him to school.

Then he was happy. He learned so hard and so well, that after six years he was sent to Germany. By that time his school-fellows began to think much of him. At first they called him "the great booby who wanted to learn Latin."

In Germany he was often hungry, and without money. There he began to write poetry. It was not very good poetry, but it was the first time that a Russian had tried to write poetry according to rules. He was the first to teach the Russians a good metre. And he wrote a book of rules for writing poetry.

He did not live a good life, and often got into trouble. But little by little the Russians began to see how clever he was. At last he was made Secretary of State. And when he died many great men came to his funeral.

But his great and best deed was the encouragement he gave to the peasants to get learning. For they saw how great he was, and how small he had been. Not very long ago a Russian poet wrote this. It is supposed to be spoken to a peasant going to college:—

"Are you dirty and barefooted?
Are you cold and poorly clad?
Never mind, for such a journey
Many famous men have made.

You will learn how from Archangel
Once a peasant lad there came,
Who by God's will and his own will,
Got him wisdom, got him fame."

There is not time to tell you of the many other Russian writers—of Soumarokof the dramatist, and Prince Kantemir, and Trediakovski, and the others. But when Elizabeth died in 1762 the greatest work she left behind her was the Revival of Russian Learning.

Court Manners.

I dare say you have often felt as if fairies were real people—more real than many of the kings and queens and old men you read about. Yet you know that these existed, and you do not know that fairies exist. What is the reason that the fairies are more real to you than the real people?

I think the reason is that you have made a picture to yourself of the way the fairies live. You know the little things about their lives. You know about their wands, and how small they are, and how they drink dew, and dance, and can hide in flowers. So knowing those little things makes you feel as if fairies were real.

I want you very much to feel that these Russian kings and queens are real people. So I will tell you, as you have often been told of the fairies, where they lived, and how they amused themselves, and what they ate and drank.

First for the houses. Elizabeth built at Moscow a palace, called the Winter Palace. It was of stone, and very handsome, with rooms many and large. But all the other palaces were very small and mean and uncomfortable. They were of wood, and the wood often grew rotten. So many mice and rats lived in these palaces, that when there was a fire, as often happened, hundreds of rats and mice came running down the stairs to get away.

With the Empress Elizabeth lived her nephew Peter and his wife Catharine, of whom we shall soon hear a great

deal. These had separate rooms from the Empress, but they often dined with her. Each noble family who lived at Court had four or five rooms for themselves. Sometimes they dined alone, sometimes with each other, sometimes with the Empress.

The rooms were often hung inside with tapestry of different colours and rich cloths. For furniture there was first a stove, covered with painted tiles, and then beds, chests of drawers, and tables much like ours. The windows were badly fitted in, so that the rooms were draughty, and Catharine often caught cold.

This was how they spent the day. When they were in the country some got up very early. Catharine used to get up about three o'clock in the morning and dress like a man, and go out in a boat shooting wild ducks or hunting. Peter was always an hour or two later, for he was very particular about getting his breakfast properly. Then at twelve o'clock they had dinner. They ate pretty much what we eat now, only it was badly cooked. Peter was very greedy, and once made himself ill on stewed oysters. After dinner they went to sleep for an hour or two, and after that listened to music, or saw plays, or played cards, or went to a masquerade ball, or drove out, or sledged, or walked, or rode. Side saddles were just coming in, but Catharine rode like a man. Then came supper, and then bed.

These masquerade balls were very grand. The Empress had them about twice a week. She used often to

make all the Court ladies dress up as men, while the men dressed like women. Elizabeth's everyday dress was very quiet—of grey and white.

The courtiers were very fond of going to the play. There was a band of French actors who lived at Court and acted about twice a week. They acted in a covered place that was used for a riding-school by day.

Some of the courtiers were learned, clever people, and these read a good deal, though almost entirely French books. They went to church often. The Empress had a beautiful choir of singing-boys. At certain times of the year there were great festivals, when, besides singing, they had sports of all sorts, and dancing, and many presents were given away.

But the most unfortunate thing that could happen to a courtier was to fall ill, for people knew very little about illness in those days. They could hardly pull a tooth out. Once when the Empress had a stroke, and lost the power of speech, they thought that she had fallen and bitten her tongue. And although, as I said, there were great draughts in the houses, the baby Emperor was almost stifled with heat. The room was very warm to begin with; then he was wrapped in flannel, and laid in a cradle lined with fox-furs. Over him was a counterpane of quilted satin, lined with wadding, and over that one of red velvet, lined with black fox-furs. Poor child! The manners of the Court, though they were much improved from Anne's time, were not

good. Once a young courtier was very rude to Catharine, and so to take her revenge she and a maid-of-honour got several strong rods, and tied stinging nettles round them, and then went to his room and beat his hands and legs and face. Strange manners for the palace of a king!

In more important affairs the management was still very bad. Once the State Treasurer had to come to Catharine privately to borrow some money, because the Empress wanted some and he had none to give her. Think what people would say if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to borrow money secretly to pay for the Queen's dresses!

So the life of the Court went on, quite as real a life as your life now.

When Elizabeth was dead her nephew Peter was proclaimed Emperor, according to her will.

He was a foolish, almost idiotic man; but his wife Catharine was clever and keen beyond most people. He hated Catharine, and often wished that she was dead, and behaved cruelly to her. When he was angry he screeched like an eagle. He used to amuse himself by playing with a cardboard fortress and toy soldiers. Now and then he had an execution and a funeral.

When he became king he wished in all things to do the opposite to what Elizabeth had done. For he hated her because she had been strict with him. So he fetched Biren back from Siberia, and made friends with the King of

Prussia, whose portrait he wore in his ring. Once he said, "If the King of Prussia bids me, I will make war on hell with all my army." That made the Russians very angry.

Catharine resolved to let things be so no longer. She had many friends, for she never lost her temper, and always remembered that every one might be of use to her. So one day when Peter was away she and her friends went down by night to where the guards were stationed. These agreed to support her, and they marched against Peter and took him. And they said that he must swear never to be Emperor. He took the oath "as quietly as a child being sent to sleep." He had only been Czar a few months.

Then he was sent down to a country house with his violin and his toys. Four days after he was dead. Catharine said it was a cold that had gone to his brain.

Catharine the Great.

As soon as Catharine was safely sovereign of Russia, she called a mighty council.

She sent messages to the provinces to say that the nobles and the townspeople and the soldiers and the Crown peasants were to elect one man for each province. These men were all to meet at St. Petersburg, and there to talk about the laws and how they ought to be altered, and about all that ought to be done in the kingdom.

When the people heard it, they held their breath for wonder. For it seemed as if Russia were going to rule herself.

So these men all came up to St. Petersburg. Some were in grand dresses of many colours, some in dirty sheepskins. Some rode in carriages, others trudged on foot or went in jolting, jogging carts. There were six hundred and fifty-two of them.

Then Catharine met them in the great hall of the palace. She gave them each a medal with a portrait of herself on it, and underneath the motto, "For the happiness of each and all."

Then she told them her will as to the matter of the changes they were to make. These were some of the things she said:—

"The nation is not made for the sovereign, but the sovereign for the nation. Liberty is the right to do all that is not forbidden by law."

The great assembly began to talk very eagerly, for they longed to work for the good of Russia. The merchants said, "Much should be done to rule the towns better and to increase our trade." The nobles said, "We have not our full rights." Best of all, many said, "The serfs ought to be made free."

They did not say that at once. One said, "The masters of serfs ought not to own them, but only to look after them." Then another answered him, "If that is done, then it only remains to set the serfs free."

That was a great question. Many essays were written about it. The best essay which held that the serfs should be freed was sent to Catharine.

But just at this moment war broke out with the Turks. Then the assembly could sit no longer, for the men were forced to be busy with the war.

Catharine thanked them all for their work, and said, "You have given me hints for all the Empire. Now I know what I ought to do."

But the time for her doing it had not yet come. Catharine and three sovereigns after her were to die before that great work of freeing the serfs was done, before the great nation of the Russians was to be free from the blot of slavery.

Now for Catharine's wars.

Catharine's wars divide into two parts, according to the nations who were her friends at two different times. The first half of her reign she was friends with Prussia and England and Denmark. That was called the System of the North. Later on she was friends with Austria and France.

The war began in Poland. Catharine and the Russians were watching Poland as a cat watches a mouse, ready to spring the moment it tries to run away.

And Poland did try to run away from the power of Russia, and take for its king the Duke of Saxony. But just as a cat would put down its heavy paw as quick as lightning and catch the mouse, so Catharine sent an army into Poland, and made a Polish noble called Stanislas king. That is, she called him king. But when the Assembly or Diet of Poland met to make laws, she told them what laws to make, and sent her men with muskets to stand round the hall of meeting and see that they obeyed her.

Stanislas did not like that. He was a good and clever man; he wished to do away with the Poles' bad government, and give freedom to the serfs, and let them make their own laws. But I do not think he could have succeeded, even if all the Poles had joined him, for besides greedy Russia, the Prussians too were watching to see what they could get.

Now perhaps you know what happened before you are told. How can that be? How do people sometimes know

that there will be a great explosion, and a certain rock will split into pieces? Because they know that there is dynamite and a lighted match there. So they know what happens before it happened. Poland split into pieces like the rock.

The party who supported the Dake of Saxony collected in different places bands of soldiers, and came marching on one town after another. At that Stanislas asked the Russians to help him, and the Russian army came in, and war began.

Meanwhile the other countries in Europe made little plots to draw away the Russian army from Poland; for they were afraid that the Russians would take Poland altogether and grow too strong. Therefore they persuaded the Turks to attack Russia.

So a great Tartar band came galloping over the south of Russia, burning houses and killing the peasants. That was awkward for Russia when the army was engaged somewhere else.

But Catharine had the heart of a lion. She said to her generals, "The Romans never minded how many enemies they had, they only asked where they were." So part of the Russian army marched down boldly to where the Turks were, and won a great victory. They were always glad to fight the Turks, who were really Tartars.

The war went on, and two years afterwards the Russian army took the Crimea, and burnt the Turkish fleet.

The Austrians did not like that news very well, for they were afraid that Russia would grow too strong. Also the provinces that Russia had taken were close to Austria.

Then the Prussians proposed a selfish and evil plan. That was, that Poland should he divided into three parts—Russia, Austria, and Prussia should each have a part.

Catharine was forced to agree to this plan, because if she had not consented, Prussia and Austria would both have declared war. And the Russians could not fight Poland and Turkey and Prussia and Austria all at once, whatever the Romans used to say about their enemies.

So in 1771 Poland was split into three pieces. That was called the First Partition of Poland.

That is the end of the first half of Catharine's reign.

Now for the Court and the life of the nobles. Catharine was doing a great deal for it, just as her husband's aunt, Elizabeth, had done.

She set up schools for the children of the nobles and rich merchants, and said many clever things about education. There were foreign teachers in her schools, and French was thoroughly taught. That is a very important thing to remember.

In one way it was a bad thing, for it separated the nobles still more from the people. For the nobles talked French, and read French books, while the people could do neither.

But in another way it was very good. For the French were writing and speaking then to persuade people to treat every one well, because all were human beings. These books said that, just as a noble and a peasant had an equal number of eyes, ears, and legs, so they ought to have equal rights, and one ought not to rule over another.

It took a long time for these ideas to get far down into the Russians' minds. You are taught not to be selfish, but if you want anything very much you sometimes are selfish. That is because the idea of unselfishness has not got down to the bottom of your mind yet. It takes a long time for ideas to sink in, us it takes water a long time to soak into a clay soil.

Catharine was a very clever woman herself. She made friends with the Grimm who wrote Grimm's fairy stories. Also she made friends, among others, with a clever French philosopher called Voltaire, who was full of these ideas about liberty.

Catharine loved to collect round her witty noble men. She talked so cleverly to them that they were delighted. She wrote books also. One was called "The Grandmother's A B C." That was stories out of Russian

history for her two little grandsons to read. Besides this she wrote plays, and a dictionary, and other little books.

But the life of the Russian people was going on very differently to this Court life.

For in the year 1771 there was a terrible plague in Moscow. One after another the people fell ill and died, until a thousand died every day, and the dead bodies lay about the streets unburied.

Then the poor ignorant people, who were very superstitious, thought that the holy image of the Virgin might have mercy on them if they prayed to it. So they all crowded round it, pressing one upon another, wild with fright.

When the Archbishop saw this he wished to take away the image. For many were crushed to death in the press, and many who were just falling ill gave the plague to the people they touched.

When the people heard it they grew very angry. "The Archbishop does not believe in God," they said. "Let us go to his palace, and ask him why he forbids us to pray to the Mother of God." Then they rushed to his palace, and broke open the doors, and seized the Archbishop and killed him.

When the news came to Catharine she sent a body of soldiers with musketry and cannon to break up and send away the crowd; and they did so. But they could not break up and send away the thoughts in Catharine's mind. For

she saw that the vast Russian people were ignorant and strong.

That revolt was only like a few heavy raindrops before the storm; a great storm was gathering. For the Russian people were about to rise up with a leader of their own—they alone, with no nobles or priests to help them. That was the first time they did it, and they have never done it since.

Down in the south, above all, the people were miserable. They were mad with seeing the Turks burn their houses, and their children being taken away for soldiers. They began to say to each other, "Why should we be so miserable and our masters so happy? Why should we pay taxes and they go free?" And there was no answer to that "Why."

So gradually there began to collect together a great army. There were Cossacks with their horses, eager to fight and get free, and Raskolniks who were persecuted, and Turks that were discontented, and hungry peasants with thin faces. What a crowd to see! A whole people making an army!

And who led them? They did not want to rush into the well-built houses where the nobles lived, and, each man for himself, to take the rich furniture and the good food and the money. They wanted to find some one who might have a right to be Czar. So the clever ones among them began to pretend that they were Peter III and Ivan VI; and

the peasants believed one after another, till at last arose a greater than all, and his name was Pougatchef the Cossack.

He had been for months and months in the dark prison of Kazan, dungeons with little light, dank and foul; and then he had been sent across the Ural Mountains into the bitter wintry land of Siberia. And from there he had escaped, and he came back to Russia and said, "I am Peter III; follow me!" And three hundred followed him.

So he raised his banner, and marched against a fortress, saying, "I am come to punish my wife and son." But he did not take the fortress. Why not? Because the fortress needed no taking. For the soldiers inside, when they saw him coming, said, "This is Peter III; let us join him." So they took their officers and bound them, and unlocked the gates, and threw them wide open. And Pougatchef marched in, and he hung the officers from the battlements, and joined the soldiers to his army. At that sight all the vast body of the peasants and Cossacks came to join him, and he marched on through Russia northwards to Moscow. And on his way all the fortresses yielded, and the peasants joined him, and the news was brought to Catharine as she sat in her palace at Moscow.

Then Catharine grew troubled and dismayed, for she feared that soon Pougatchef would be at Moscow. And she saw how the men of Moscow were beginning to say one to another, "Why should not we too rise and join

Peter III?" Then she sent an army in haste against Pougatchef; but the soldiers at the sight of him gave up their officers, and turned and followed him. So it happened many times. And Catharine's heart grew full of fears.

Then she called one of her great generals, Bibikoff, and sent him with soldiers against Pougatchef. And Bibikoff went with a bold face and brave words; but he said to his wife quietly, "It is not Pougatchef whom we have to fight, but the discontent of the Russian people. This evil is great and terrible; ah! all will go ill." Yet he met Pougatchef, and fought a fierce battle; and Pougatchef was beaten and his guns taken, and his men fled this way and that. Then, in the midst of victory, Bibikoff died.

But Bibikoff's officers gave chase to Pougatchef like wolves; and they tracked him down rivers and through forests. And Pougatchef fled in a lordly manner, for he took fortresses on his way, and hung their commanders. But the soldiers came after him, and he knew it.

And at last a great general joined Catharine's soldiers; his name was Souvorof, and we shall presently hear more of him. He was bold and quick, and daring and dogged. And he followed Pougatchef as if he would follow him for ever. And at last he caught him. And Pougatchef's arms were tied, and he was brought into Moscow, and then hung in the Red Place on a high gibbet, that all the people might see. Then, when their leader was dead, all the

hungry, sorrowful men went back to their homes, and were miserable. That was in 1773.

But Catharine would no longer let the Cossacks live in camps; and she took the camps with her army. Many Cossacks ran away to different parts, and others entered Catharine's army. Then Catharine sent for Germans, and for other labourers; and these went to the grassy steppes, and dug the ground round it all into beautiful black-earthed fields, and built neat little villages where the old Cossacks had galloped about and lived in tents.

Yet Catharine's heart was sad for these discontented people. And though the nobles said, "It is impossible to free these ignorant peasants," and Catharine agreed, yet she wished honestly to give them better government and fair justice. There was a sad old Russian proverb that ran in her head, "We cannot seek justice from God, His dwelling is too high; nor from the Czar, for his dwelling is too far off."

So Catharine had courts of justice at many new places, that the place of justice might not be so far off. Only for the peasants owned by nobles there was no court at all. There were no laws for them. It was difficult even to prove by law that a noble might not kill his serfs.

Yet Catharine, like Peter I, wished to do every thing for the good of the Russian nation. But it takes a very wise and keen mind to see always what the good of a nation is.

Catharine never persecuted any one for their religion. At the great meeting at the beginning of her reign there were Mohammedans and heretics, and people of all religions.

Catharine founded a large school for the serfs' children, and she also provided more doctors than there yet were in Russia. She herself was the first person in Russia to be vaccinated. She gave her cloak, her muff, and her pistols to the doctor who did it. He was an Englishman, and his family have them still; and I have seen them.

Daring the last half of Catharine's reign she was friends with Austria.

The war with Turkey went on. The Russians conquered the little three-cornered island of Crimea, with its high cliffs and fine trees and wonderful mines. That little three-cornered island has a long story.

After that the Russians made a plan about Turkey, which the Austrians also agreed to. This was the plan.

"It would be well," they said, "if, between Russia and Austria, there were a kingdom that belonged to neither, but that would not fight with either. Let us take away provinces of Turkey, and make a kingdom out of them. Perhaps we may even take Constantinople, and, in that case, all Turkey shall be one kingdom," Then the plan pleased them so much that they ended, "The first king shall be Constantine, the grandson of Catharine."

Little Constantine, who was quite a baby, was given a Greek nurse. All the ports on the Black Sea were filled with soldiers, and built round with strong walls. Sebastopol was built. You have heard that name.

More than that, a large arch was built, and on it written, "This is the way to Constantinople."

The Turks grew frightened before the Russians had finished their preparations. Quite suddenly they declared war.

The Russians were surprised, but they marched out with the Austrians. A fierce war began; for this time the Turks were afraid that they were going to be driven out of Europe, so they fought their best.

But one morning, when Catharine woke early at St. Petersburg, she heard far off a low distant growl; and she knew it was the Swedish guns.

Now the Swedes were quite new enemies to Russia. For Sweden had been weak, and split up into parties, like Poland.

But just lately a new king, Gustavus, had come back, from France, where he had been educated. He called the Senate together, and made them promise to obey the king. Besides this, he had said there was to be no more torture; and he had shut up the Cave of Roses. That was a horrible hole full of frogs and worms and slimy toads, where the criminals used to be put. That had pleased the Swedes so much, that they were eager to serve and obey him. So now

they were marching under his banner to take Finland, the land of granite rocks.

Then there was great trouble; but Catharine collected armed peasants and sent them against the Swedes.

After a while the Sultan of Turkey begged for peace. Catharine was only too glad to grant it, for her money and soldiers were going fast. So peace was made.

All this made the Russians love and honour Catharine more and more. For they hated the Turks.

And Poland? Poland was like a poor stag hunted down by dogs trying in vain to save itself.

Stanislas was doing his very best while Russia was busy with the Turks to make Poland free and happy. He built schools, and invited clever men to Poland, and tried to teach them common-sense and love of their country.

But one unlucky day he went a little too far. For he called a free meeting of the Poles, and arranged that Poland should be ruled by a senate of her own nobles and deputies from her own towns—that she might rule herself. And that news was brought to Catharine and the Prussians, and they were furiously angry, and each sent a great army into Poland, and they took possession of it.

Worse than that, she called a Diet, and as before set soldiers round the hall, and the Prussian general sat in a chair next the king with his hand on his sword. The members were to agree that Poland should be divided

between Russia and Prussia. All the night they sat there silent, but in the morning, when their enemies would wait no longer, for fear of worse they consented, and came out weeping into the streets. They made one attempt to win back freedom. For the peasants rose and armed themselves with scythes, and joined the nobles, and they fought bravely and fiercely against the Russians and Prussians—and Kosciusko led them, as you will read by and by in another book. But it was of no use. They were terribly beaten by the large armies of their enemies, and the Russians took Prague.

So ended the freedom of Poland. Yet a time was coming when they would fight the Russians again fiercely, and march even to the Holy City, Moscow.

This is almost the end of Catharine's reign. There were great troubles in France at this time—the time of the French Revolution. You know how the poor oppressed people rose to get liberty, and, in their ignorance, only got a worse bondage. You know how they beheaded thousands on the guillotine, and at last killed the king and queen.

Catharine was afraid, when she saw this, that the Russian peasants would do the same. So she would no longer allow books to be written on Liberty, nor let the Russians go into France. Also she opened the letters of Russians whom she had suspected.

But one day Catharine was found lying insensible in her room. That evening the news began and spread through Russia that the great Catharine was dead. This was in 1796.

Paul.

Now we shall hear how the Russians won themselves glory in the eyes of all Europe, though they lost much, and what happened to them once in dark snowy nights on the top of high mountains.

The new Czar of Russia thought a great deal of himself. One day he said to his minister, "Know that the only person of importance in Russia is the person I speak to, at the moment I am speaking to him." He was of a bad temper, too, and sour. His mother had made him obey her like a child, though he was forty-two years old; she would not even allow him to teach his own children. Besides this, he remembered well how his father had died suddenly; and, when he thought of it, he began to suspect dark things about his mother. So gradually he grew to hate her, and all she did, more and more; and when she died, and he became the Czar, he determined to act in all things contrary to what she would have willed.

And besides this, Paul had had a great trouble. He had loved dearly the wife whom he first married. But she died, and after her death he found out that she had not loved him really, but had only feigned love. And from that time he distrusted all his friends, and his temper grew sharp and bitter.

So he made foolish and despotic laws, and that made the nobles discontented. He forced their carriages to

stand still when he passed, and he made all his subjects, both men and women, throw themselves on their knees in the snow and mud before him. He would allow very few books or plays to be published, and would not even allow European music to be brought to Russia. Neither would he let many foreigners travel and live there.

But the serfs and peasants were happy, and praised the good Czar. "Thank God," they said, "he no longer takes so many of our men to be soldiers."

While they were rejoicing Paul was writing to the kings of different countries, and saying to them that Russia had been engaged in ceaseless wars, and that he would now give his people the peace for which they sighed. And to France he wrote, and said that he wished to live at peace with her, and to stop the war that was wasting Europe.

Then he set himself to reform the army; but though there was much to reform, he did not do it. For he only took his own advice, and that advice was poor. He put all the soldiers into Prussian costume, with pigtails and powdered heads, and shoe-buckles and gaiters, and heavy uncomfortable caps, instead of leaving them their own comfortable, useful dress. Souvorof, the old general, shook his head one unlucky day, and said, "There are powders and powders! Shoe-buckles are not gun-carriages, nor pigtails exactly bayonets. We are not Prussians, but Russians." When Paul heard that he was so enraged that he sent Souvorof away to a little country

village. Souvorof was very happy there, and he rode a cock-horse with the little village children, and on Sundays and Saints'-days he rang the church bell for service, and then read the Epistle, and gave the choir singing-lessons. He knew well enough that when Russia wanted him he would be fetched back again; and so it turned out.

Now Paul, above all things, hated the French Revolutionists and Napoleon Buonaparte. He did not mean to go to war with him until he was obliged, but that time was not far off.

For Buonaparte was gradually coming nearer and nearer Russia; and in one French harbour a fleet was being quietly built, and very quickly. When Paul heard of that he feared that the Black Sea would be attacked. Day by day his fears grew and grew, and at last he agreed to join the other European nations against France. So he sent his fleet to the Turkish and English fleets, another great body of Russians to Holland, and a great army to fight in Switzerland. When these great wars were decided on, there was one man whom Paul needed. So he had to put his pride in his pocket, and write to Souvorof to ask him to come back as commander. "You, Souvorof," he said in his letter, "you have no need of glory, but Russia has need of you." Souvorof left his village, and came back, feeling very proud and full of confidence, and he was sent at the head of the largest number of troops to Switzerland to join the Austrians.

The Austrian general met Souvorof, and asked him what his orders were, as to where he was to march, and what he was to do. "These are my plans," said Souvorof, and showed him a blank paper signed by the Czar. And he would say no more except, "I am marching on Paris; when I am there I shall restore the throne and the altar."

Then when he rode in front of the long lines of Russian soldiers, he gave them their orders, saying, "A sudden glance, rapidity, impetuosity. The van of the army is not to wait for the rear. Musket-balls are fools; bayonets do the business."

Then bloody battles were fought by the Russians and their allies against the French in all parts. Some day you may read of all these yourself. Now I want to tell you of the great march of the Russians.

Souvorof had gone with his army into Italy, and there he had won glorious battles, and besieged great towns. Another Russian general was in Switzerland, and he heard that Napoleon was coming down on him, and it was arranged that Souvorof should lead his army across the Alps to join them.

So, on the 21st of September, Souvorof set out. He had first to mount the St. Gothard Pass, which you may have heard of. So his men toiled up there very slowly, because the Austrians had forgotten to order enough mules to carry up the baggage. At last they got to the top.

Then they went on slowly, through cold mist and fogs and clouds that hid the way. And below them were precipices that went down straight hundreds of feet below, like graves waiting for them, and the noise of torrents was in their ears, and above them were great masses of rock and ice that sometimes broke off and came falling down upon them. Still they went on, led by the splendid old Souvorof. On they went, hoping that they would join the Austrians and all would be well. And they little thought that some of the Austrians had been conquered, and others had fled, and there was no help for them.

And gradually round them the French gathered in, and they held the road before and behind, and on each side. And when Souvorof reached a little town among the mountains, he heard that the Austrians were conquered, and he knew he was caught in a trap.

But his courage never gave way. And he turned fiercely against one band of the French, and forced his way through them, while another troop kept off the rest. And at last, with few men, battered and beaten and wornout, he reached a place of safety. And when men heard it, they cried, "Souvorof's retreat is better than a victory."

The Emperor Paul, as you may imagine, was very angry with the Austrians, and he wrote to them fiercely, and demanded compensation. The Austrian Emperor said he was much grieved, and tried to make matters

straight again; but just at that moment unlucky news came to Paul. He was told that, at the siege of a certain town, the Austrians had made active peace with the French, and would not allow the Russian flag to stand on the battlements of the city.

Then Paul grew so angry, for he thought he was being despised, that he broke off his alliance with Austria. Soon after he quarrelled with England, and then a new and a dangerous friend began to come in. This was Buonaparte himself. With his clever keen eyes he had been watching Paul's doings, and he was determined to make friends with him. So he flattered Paul, and sent back all the Russian prisoners without exchange and in new uniforms, and he offered to do a great deal that Paul would like. So gradually he got himself into favour, and presently the Russian nobles were astonished by seeing pictures of Buonaparte hung on the palace walls, and hearing Paul call out his health to be drunk at table.

But Buonaparte had only made friends with Paul because he wanted to use him, and so presently he proposed a great scheme to Paul, and it is lucky for us English that the scheme was not carried out.

One morning the Ataman of the Cossacks of the Don received a letter from the Emperor Paul, and this was what he said: "The English are going to attack me, but I must be beforehand with them. It is only four months' march to India; and thither you and your army must go. All the

treasures of the Indies shall be yours, and great glory and honour."

The Ataman was, as you may think, much surprised at this news; but he assembled his Cossacks, and they began to march. On their way they had to cross the Volga, and the crossing was very dangerous, for the winter was over, and the whole river was full of solid masses of ice drifting to and fro.

However, they tried to cross it, and the first regiments had just reached the further bank when news came to the army that the Czar Paul was dead.

The plan was all over. The Cossacks went back home. Buonaparte was in a storm of rage and hate against England, which he now hardly hoped to conquer; and he said with bitter curses that Paul had been murdered. So the time was over when France and Russia were united.

Was he murdered? Some say so, by five nobles secretly at night. Anyhow, he died after a reign of five years.

Wars and Glory.

When Alexander, Paul's son, made his first public appearance as Czar, the Russians rejoiced to see him, and hailed him gladly. He was tall and very majestic, and with a noble, sweet face; and his manners were gracious and winning beyond most men. And his mind was clever and eager, for he had been taught and trained by the wise Catharine; and his heart was full of ready sympathy and a generous will to make his nation happy.

All the way from St. Petersburg, on a journey that he took later, the road was lined with men eager to see the Czar. One captain pressed forward crying out, "Make way, make way; I must see this prince of peace."

So his reign began gloriously with freedom and peace. For he took off the bands of laws and rules, and let the Russians free. Again, he said they might travel in foreign lands, and read what books they liked. And he took away the punishment by torture, and the secret court that Paul had established. And all the Russians said, "Now freedom has come back to the land; this is indeed a prince of peace."

So for a little matters went smoothly and well. But it could not be so for ever. For anything that is a great task is a difficult task; and to set a nation free cannot be done at ease. For the Russians were like children that had been sitting for long in a dark room without air. It was not only

that the door must be unlocked, that the children might walk out; but they had to be gently lifted up, and their cramped limbs taught to walk, and their eyes used to the sunshine and the brightness.

So difficulties came. Alexander might say that all should be judged justly, peasants and rich alike; but the judges had long learned to be dishonest, and to take bribes, and give unjust judgments, and Alexander's word did not make them fair and just at once.

In Moscow there lived a clever, shabby man, in small rooms, up many flights of stairs; and the room was untidy, with crumbs strewed about for birds, and he himself wore a ragged dressing-gown. But yet, for all that, his mind was clever and keen. He watched Alexander's work, and then he wrote this fable:—

"The Sheep could not live in peace because of the Wolves, till at last the rulers of the beasts interfered to save the victims. So they called a council, of whom more than half were Wolves. And why not?—for there have been Wolves who have walked quite quietly past a flock—when they have eaten enough. They met in a thick wood, and at last they made this law: 'As soon as a Wolf shall disturb a flock, and begin to worry a Sheep, then the Sheep shall be allowed, without respect of persons, to seize it by the scruff of the neck, and carry it before the court to be judged.' But," said Kriloff at the end, "though the law is all

that could be wished, yet I have noticed that, in spite of it all, the Wolf is sure to carry off the Sheep."

Poor Sheep! Poor Russian peasants, in spite of Alexander's good laws!

And Alexander's great plan of making the serfs free was a plan which could not be made and carried out between a morning and an evening. And when Alexander saw difficulties growing and gathering, he began to be a little discouraged. And at the same time he began to long to make a great figure in Europe, in the wars that were going on, and to think more of the glory of Russia among European countries than of her happiness.

And so, like many other people, he grew a little tired of his plans; for, though Catharine, his grandmother, had taught him many things, she had not taught him to be as patient and as firm and as steady as she was herself. And Alexander and his young friends, who were like himself, began to fall into a habit of talking over their plans and doing no more. And though they often said to each other, "Russia is a land of slaves, and this should not be," they did nothing to free the slaves.

At one time it seemed as if Alexander might wake again. For a young noble called Speranski came to Court, who was bright and eager, and full of a steady purpose. He set to work to carry out plans for the freedom of Russia. But it was all of no use. The Wolves of course disliked him; and the poor Sheep themselves thought he meant them

evil instead of good. So it happened that he was sent away to Siberia, and his work for Russia was over.

But we must hear about these wonderful European wars which took Alexander's mind away from his people; and these were the

Napoleonic Wars.

It was a fierce time of war for the Russian people. Every bit of it is interesting. Some day you will read all the heroism and the gallant deeds. Now I can only tell you it very shortly.

The peace, as you may think, did not last long, for Alexander hated the French nearly as much as Paul had loved them.

The same day that Napoleon was made Emperor, Russia declared war with France. It was a noble war, to help Europe to its rights. Alexander had friends on his side. There were Sweden and England, and Prussia and Austria. Part of Alexander's army went with the three first. Alexander himself and his young officers took more to join the Austrians at Olmütz.

There was a splendid company of famous men: Koutouzof, the mighty general; Miloradovitch, of whom men said, "Whoever follows him must have a spare life;" and Bagration, who was known for dogged bravery. On the night before the battle there was rejoicing and great hope. "It seemed to us," said one of the officers, "that we were going straight to Paris."

But under the dark sky, on the tops of the opposite hills, lay the vast hosts of Napoleon. They too had their famous men, and the great Emperor was there himself. Between the armies was a deep valley full of lakes.

This was the plan of the allied armies. Koutouzof and some Russians were to march down and attack the right wing of Napoleon's army. The dogged Bagration was to keep back the left wing. The Imperial guards were to stay on the heights.

When the sun rose he only lit up the mountain top with his rays. Down below in the valley the clouds lay heavy and white.

Napoleon watched Koutouzof and Bagration go down on each side with their men till the clouds hid them from his sight. And his clever brain understood their plan.

So as soon as they had gone, he said to his soldiers, "March down, and scale the opposite hill." The charge sounded, and the French rushed down. Presently the Russians were horror-struck to see French uniforms come climbing out of the fog.

Then there was a fierce fight; but the Russians could not stand against them. Alexander had to turn and gallop off; the French had won the day.

Down below in the valley there were shouts of distress from the Russians. For the French, victorious, had marched down upon them. They found the Russians lost

and bewildered among the lakes. Some were shot down by French guns, others drowned. Only Bagration retreated.

So ended the great battle.

Then Alexander and the Russians made peace, and went home disheartened. Their army was destroyed, and they had failed utterly, and they had not delivered Europe.

But it was not to be the end of their struggle. Alexander again called the Russians to war. This time they were to fight in the land of Poland, that old enemy. The Russian and Prussian armies alone were to meet Napoleon, for Austria was crushed.

So at last the Russian army met the French in the town of Eylau. The snow was falling heavily, so thick that it hid the foes, and a terrible battle was fought. Part of the Russian army lost their way in a snowstorm, and when the veil of snow lifted they were right in front of the yawning cannons of the French.

But they fought on bravely, thinking only of the glory of Russia and the freedom of Europe. But at last a shout told the front ranks that a French troop was marching round to their rear.

Then they feared that they would be surrounded, and in the darkness of the night they retreated.

But it was a horrible sight that the sun shone upon next morning,—the white snow all covered with heaps of corpses and pools of blood, so that even Napoleon was

sickened at the sight. His army was so much broken that he too fought no more battles for a time, but he was not idle.

The Russians asked for help from Europe. Some countries would not, others could not give it. So Russia went on alone for a time.

But soon her hopes were crushed. For the Russian general got penned in by the French in a narrow angle of a river. Napoleon was delighted when he saw it, and he said, "It is not often one catches the enemy in such a fault."

And they suffered for their fault, for the army was mowed down like corn before the scythe, and only a few broken fragments came straggling back to Russia.

Then Alexander met Napoleon on the banks of the river, that they might agree together as to what was to be done, and as to whether Alexander could still help Prussia. So they met—the great Emperor of Russia and the conqueror of Europe—in a boat on the river. And there they talked for two hours together; and all the time they were talking, the King of Prussia on the bank pushed his horse with eagerness into the stream, so eager was he to hear what he might not hear.

But at last the talk was over. And it was agreed that Alexander was to help Prussia no longer, but was to help Napoleon; and that a Grand Duchy of Warsaw was to be founded in Poland. That was the end of the first war with Napoleon.

When the Russians heard that, they were furious, for they said that it was a treacherous and cowardly deed to give up Prussia to her enemies, and they cried aloud that the days of glory for Russia were past. But the peace that the Russians felt so shameful did not last long. Meanwhile Russia had many wars with England and Sweden and Turkey. The war with Turkey was to take from her certain provinces; the others to help Napoleon, that he might fight in Spain, while Russia kept Europe quiet.

Russia took away Finland from Sweden, at the cost of great suffering to the Swedes. But now the Russians were so displeased with the peace that they cared nothing for it. "Poor Swedes! poor Swedes!" was all that they said.

Two things were working ill-will between Russia and France.

The first was Poland. Napoleon had made what he called the Duchy of Warsaw a kingdom of his own by itself. He made the serfs' and nobles' children go to school together, and in all things taught them equality.

One day the commander of the Warsaw army called himself "Commander of the Polish army."

"There is no Polish army," said the Russian commander. "The Emperor of the French may call his troops what he likes," answered the other.

Then the Russians saw plainly that their old foe Poland was growing strong again.

Another thing was that the trade of the two countries was suffering. Russia could no more buy and sell with England, for they were at war. That great discontent throughout the land of Russia.

Also Alexander did not want the Russian money to go out of the country. So he forbade the Russians to buy French silk or china; and if any one brought these things in they were burnt. That made Napoleon so angry that he said, "I would rather have had a slap in the face."

Just at this time Alexander sent away Speranski, who loved Napoleon's laws. Then, seeing Napoleon was getting angry, he collected the Russian army.

There was talk and treating for a time, but at last Alexander said to them, "Rise, all of you! With the cross in your hearts and arms in your hands, no human force can prevail against you." And the Russians arose rejoicing, and marched out.

But it was a vast army that was coming against them—as if a whole continent was sweeping down upon them. There were Grermans and Spaniards, and Italians and French, and at the head old clever generals, who knew war well. The Russians call it still "The army of twenty nations."

But Alexander, fearing nothing, with his soldiers and Cossacks and armed peasants, settled down near the Dwina to wait for the Grand Army. Round them they built earth ramparts.

Then Napoleon came marching forward. At Wilna he stopped for four days, and then the Poles met him, dressed in white, red, and violet ribbons, the Polish colours. For they thought that the day of their revenge had come.

Then Napoleon began his great march into Russia. But as he came on, his heart began to sink. For the roads were bad, and the army was too large to be well managed. Also he could not come up with the Russian army. For, as he marched forward, the Russians fell back. And, as they fell back, they burnt the villages on their way; so that, when the Grand Army came there, they found no food or shelter—only smoking ruins.

Napoleon began to be still more uneasy. And the Russian army, too, was growing discontented, and longing to fight. Alexander wisely sent Koutouzof, the old general, to take the command. "Koutouzof is coming to beat the French," said the soldiers to each other. And wily Koutouzof said to them, "Who, with such soldiers, would think of beating a retreat?"

At that they took heart, and, though they went on retreating, they felt that they were marching against the French. And at last they paused, and faced round at Koutouzof's orders, and fought a battle against the French; and it was a bloody battle, long and terrible. And at the end, all that even a Pole could say was, "Napoleon has succeeded; but at what a price!"

Then Koutouzof and his army retreated slowly till they stood on the hills from which they could see the white walls and coloured domes of Moscow; and there he called a council, and said to them, "What can we do? If we stay here to defend our holy city Moscow, the French will destroy us altogether, and the land is lost. But can we leave Moscow to be destroyed?" Then one general said one thing, and one another, but none could agree; and at last Koutouzof said, "Here my head, be it good or bad, must decide for itself." And then he sent the order, "The army is to retreat through Moscow." But he himself did not retreat through Moscow, for he could not bear to enter the city, and he went round the walls weeping.

Then, inside the city itself, at the sight of the retreating army, there was tumult and questioning. And the clever governor of Moscow, Rostopchine, persuaded the people, first, that Napoleon was a rogue and a cutthroat, and that though he promised the serfs freedom he would give them death, and then that they had better leave Moscow to assemble together, and arm themselves outside. So many left Moscow, and the city was half empty when Napoleon reached the hills where Koutouzof had been, and the Grand Army marched in.

So in the cold September of 1812 Napoleon marched up the Red Staircase, where the Czars had stood, and into the palace of the Czars; and the French Emperor was in Moscow.

But it was not to be so for long. First a fierce fire broke out in the city. Who lit it, no one can quite tell. The houses became blackened and ruined, and the Kremlin itself was almost burnt.

For thirty days they stayed at Moscow. But all the thirty days the men died off by hundreds. There was no food anywhere, and the starving men began to eat their horses.

Napoleon had hoped that the serfs would rise and join him. But instead of that they joined in small but fierce bands, and prowled round the houses. When they met a French soldier they killed him. Napoleon's hope was leaving him. There was only one way to go.

So at last he gave the order to retreat out of Moscow. Before they went they laid mines under the Kremlin. As the last stragglers of the Grand Army passed out of Moscow there was an explosion, and the Tower of Ivan the Terrible tottered and fell, and many gaps were made in the walls of the Kremlin. That was a barbarous, foolish insult.

The Grand Army went marching slowly homewards. It was colder than ever, and the starved and naked men died by hundreds.

Meanwhile the Russians, full of hope and joy, hung about the rear of their enemies; and now and then there was a skirmish, and once a French flag was taken and brought to Koutouzof. And at that Koutouzof threw his

cap into the air and cried, "Hurrah! hurrah for the brave Russian soldier!" And then he told them a little fable of Kriloffs, how a Wolf once got into a kennel and tormented the Dogs. But when he wanted to get out again the Dogs drove him into a corner, and kept him there. The Wolf said, "What is the matter, my friends? I came to see what you were doing, and now I am going away again." But up came the huntsman, and said, "No, friend Wolf; you are an old rascal with grey hair, but I am also grey and as clever as you." [And at that Koutouzof lifted his cap and showed his grey hair.] "No, Wolf," he said, "you shall not go as you have come, for I have set my Dogs upon you."

At last the Grand Army reached Wilna, where they had been before so glorious and so triumphant. There they rushed starving into the houses for food.

But the sound of cannon was heard. The Russians were upon them.

Then hastily, with fear, the Grand Army fled. But they left behind them thousands of sick and wounded. A terrible fate happened to those; for the Jews in the town, fearing both French and Russians, threw these poor men out of the window, or kicked them to death. When the Cossacks marched in they too were thirsty for revenge, and they massacred the sick and wounded, till the streets flowed with blood.

That night, after the slaughter, thirty thousand corpses were burnt on piles of wood. So ended the march of the Grand Army.

But one defeat does not bring peace. So Alexander found. He was furious at the burning of Moscow, and he resolved to make peace with Prussia, and fight against Napoleon again.

Then war began again. Once there was a treating for peace, but nothing came of it. After that Austria joined Russia and Prussia and Sweden, and they called themselves the Coalition.

The Russian soldiers were full of desire to win. At one battle even the drummer-boys asked for muskets that they might fight. That was the first battle that the Coalition won. Alexander rejoiced, and gave medals to all the soldiers.

But the day was coming near when France and the Coalition should settle who should rule in Germany. The armies met Napoleon himself at the head of his host. Then was fought the Battle of the Nations, and the nations were victorious against the single conqueror.

And Napoleon, the great Emperor, retreated across the Rhine.

Then the Russian troops wondered where they would go next. They longed to march into France itself, as Napoleon had marched into Russia.

So they waited for days while Alexander and the others debated it. At length Alexander put out this declaration—

"Your heroism has led you to the banks of the Rhine; it shall lead you still further; you shall cross the Rhine."

So they crossed the Rhine, feeling that they were freeing Europe. "For," said Alexander, "the glory of Russia is to hurl her armed foe to the ground, but to load with kindness her disarmed enemy and the peaceful people."

They had one check on the way. For the army split into two parts to go different ways to Paris. Napoleon took advantage of that, and attacked first one and then the other. Then, for a time, they paused and treated for peace. But nothing came of it, and they marched on again. At length, after fierce battle, the people of Paris agreed to depose Napoleon; and Napoleon was forced to resign, and was Emperor of the French no longer. Then the Allies sent him away to the island of Elba.

Then there was a meeting of all the European Powers at Vienna. For it was necessary to make a great redivision of Europe, as if it was fresh land freshly conquered. It was as if a rude hand had rubbed out all the dividing lines in a map, and the thing had to be done again from the very beginning.

At first there was great disturbance and quarrelling, but suddenly news came that made them agree to deal quickly with the question. For Napoleon had escaped from Elba.

Then in haste they settled. All that concerned Russia was that she was again to have a third part of Poland. Then Alexander and the Allies prepared their armies. But just as they were about to march on Paris, news came of the Battle of Waterloo and the taking of Napoleon.

Still Alexander marched to Paris. There he found Blücher, the Prussian general, oppressing the citizens, and treating it like a conquered city. Alexander put this right, with the help of our Duke of Wellington. Next came the great question of the government of France. It was clear that the Bourbons were too weak to rule.

Then there was great grasping and quarrelling among the nations. Russia alone was noble, and asked least of all. England was the next most generous.

At last it was settled. The Coalition was to govern France for three years to establish the Bourbon family. France was to pay a tribute to the divided among the Powers.

After that Alexander left Paris for Russia. On his way back he settled Polish affairs. Here too he behaved nobly. He told them to form their Assembly, and gave them his brother to be their head. And he said to them, "Gather around your banners to defend your country. The Emperor has seen already your courage in war."

They were to have a senate again of bishops, magistrates, and town deputies. Then Alexander went back, having done a great and unselfish work.

Alexander had made himself glorious in Europe; but he himself was changing, and becoming less noble day by day. For on all sides round him the nations of Europe that had suffered slavery arose and cried out, "Give us freedom." And though Alexander's mind taught him that they were right to cry out, yet he feared that the Russians too might rise, and he did not feel that he could guide them rightly.

And beyond this, he had a minister at home, named Araktcheef, who tried to teach him that tyranny was the best law. He forbade the Russians to write what they liked, and he would not allow science to be taught, because he said it contradicted the Bible. And he sent away the foreign tutors and teachers, and would not allow the Russians to go and learn in Europe.

And he did another thing that made the peasants angry. For he arranged that the soldiers were to live about in the different villages, and to help the peasants when war was not going on. And in return for that the peasants were to support the soldiers' families during time of war. That pleased no one, for the soldiers did not like double work, and the peasants did not like working for the soldiers.

By degrees the Russians grew more and more discontented. And they began to make plans and to form secret societies of their own. And the aim of these societies was to make serfs free, that the Russians might rule themselves, and that the Czar's word might not be their

law. And one Society wrote a book, called the *Catechism of the Free Man*, and a code of laws. And these were bound up into a book, in a green cover; and from that the Society was called the Society of the Green Book.

Some of the men who belonged to this were clever and good men. They had travelled to Paris and heard all about liberty; so when they came back to Russia, and saw the Russian serfs treated like slaves, their hearts burned within them, and they said, "This ought not to be so." And one said, "When I think how God has given the Russian people such splendid qualities—a rich and strong language, and a character that is tender and clever, and quick to forgive—and I think that perhaps this splendid nation may die without bearing any fruit, then my heart nearly breaks."

But all this time Alexander was growing more timid, and more afraid of true liberty. And one day he did an act which shamed all the Russian people, and awoke them to cry out against him.

In Turkey the Bulgarians were being oppressed more and more. And at last they rose and cried for freedom, and looked to Alexander for help. And Alexander would not give it. No; he looked on while the Christians were ill-treated and tortured and slain. And he would give no help, though the voice of his nation cried out against him.

Then great evils came upon Russia. There were famines and a fire, and a terrible flood at St. Petersburg,

when the waves of the sea came dashing over the land, and carried off wooden houses whole, with men in them, and whirled carriages and horses away in its flood, and carried a ship of the line into the great marketplace, where it rested. And the Russians that heard of it said, in awestruck voices, under their breath, "The wrath of God has come upon us; for our Czar has let the innocent suffer, and not raised a hand to help them."

And Alexander himself? He was growing sad and sadder day by day. And he sat alone for long hours, and thought of his great plans for Russia, and how the land was full of rebellion and discontent, and evil ruling. And his heart grew sick within him at the thought. And, as a last blow, he heard that there was a society of men who had sworn together to kill him. And that knowledge was the bitterest he had to bear. For he had meant to do so much for Russia.

Soon he fell ill. And even as he tossed about in fever he kept crying out words of unrest and misery. So he died in the year 1825.

Yet the Russians did not forget how he had made their name glorious in Europe.

The Iron Emperor.

When next you go out in the budding-time, look carefully at one of the buds on a tree or a flower. There it is, with its green sheath closely folded round it. But inside, the leaves are growing, little by little, unfolding and pushing against the sheath. Presently there will come a crack in it, then bit by bit the flower's leaves will shoot out and the sheath fall off.

That is like Russia. The people are closed up tight, and working to be free, gradually going towards it. You would never think of putting your hand over the sheath to keep it on when the leaves were trying to break it off. But the Emperor we are coming to now put his strong hand over Russia and kept her down. So he hurt the people, as you would bruise the tender, growing leaves. And it was of no use. Soon after his hand was cold and dead, and could hold the sheath on no longer, the leaves burst out—Russia became free.

His name was Nicholas. And at the very beginning of his reign he might have seen how the people were longing to be free.

For this happened. Nicholas had an elder brother, Constantine, who of right would have come to the throne. But Constantine some years before had wished to marry a Polish Countess. And because he was a king he could not

do this without giving up his right to the throne. So he gave it up, but only Alexander knew it.

Therefore when Alexander died, Nicholas took the oath to Constantine, and made his soldiers do so. At the same time Constantine took the oath to Nicholas. Then for a whole month there was confusion about these oaths.

Then the Society of the Green Book, who were waiting eagerly, said to one another, "Now is our time; we will raise our men, and get freedom for Russia."

Then they said to the soldiers, "Nicholas is lying; Constantine is the rightful king. Follow us, and we will gain for you the rightful Czar, and freedom and a Constitution."

Then the soldiers, who were ever ready to rebel, followed them to Moscow. And they marched before the palace, and cried out loudly, "Long live Constantine!" And their leaders shouted, "Long live the Constitution!" and the soldiers took up that cry also. But they were so ignorant that they did not know what Constitution meant. So when one asked the other, "What is Constitution?" "Oh, that is the wife of Constantine."

When Nicholas heard the shouting of the soldiers, and the cries of the mob round them, he came out, straight as a rod, in his uniform, with his closed stern lips, to speak to them. But they would not hear him. And when the old general Miloradovitch spoke to them, they shot him dead.

Then Nicholas, seeing that gentle words were no use, bade his men to fire on the crowd. At that the ignorant peasants were terrified, and fled all ways. Nicholas went back into the palace, and as he went he said to one of his men, "That is a sad beginning for a reign."

Next day the leaders were brought up for trial. Nicholas was not unmerciful. Five of them only were hung. But as these were led out to suffer death, they said, "We die gladly for our country." And when the people heard that they thought in their minds, "These men have dared to die for liberty;" and they thought liberty was something worth the having.

Then Nicholas the Czar ruled, and he ruled with an iron hand. He wished truly to govern Russia well, but he thought that to govern well was to govern sternly, and lay burdens of rules and laws upon the people. He thought that his will was to be law, whether it was unreasonable or not, and that the people had no right to be his judges.

So he drew out a new code of laws—laws after his own heart. He spent his time travelling to and fro about the country to do justice and hear causes. For he would not let the people speak through books, and tell him their wants. He was to settle what they wanted, and he was to supply their wants. He was to be like the nurse to a baby—not to give it all it cried for, for it was very likely wrong. But Nicholas forgot that the Russians were not babies, but grown men, and that they were wiser than he was, for they

saw that they wanted freedom. Nicholas said, "Such rebellious people would make a wrong use of freedom." But a voice was soon to say, "Slavery never taught men how to be free," and to that Nicholas had no answer.

When Nicholas was asked to settle where the first railway was to be in Russia, he took a straight ruler and ruled a line from St. Petersburg to Moscow. That was foolish, for it missed out all the chief towns. But Nicholas did not care. He had said it; so it was to be.

But for a while he ruled according to his will. And the nations suffered for it—Poland more than all. Constantine was her king. But he was stern and severe beyond measure; so the Poles grew discontented, and said to one another, "Why not win our freedom?—we are slaves."

So when the Diet met in the great hall at Warsaw, it dared to say that Nicholas was wrong. Then Nicholas in wrath sent and said that the Diet should sit no longer publicly. And the next year he came to see it himself.

Then, in a lofty voice and manner, he spoke in French to the deputies sitting round, not treating it as a Russian nation. Before he left the city that night, the minds of the Poles were bent to rebel.

Then, on a November evening, the boys of the military school marched to the fortress of the town. "We will fight for Poland," they cried; "give us cartridges." "Take them from the Russians," cried their leaders. At that they

marched upon the Russian barracks. The few soldiers fled in terror, and the Poles took their guns and ammunition. Then they marched to the palace of Constantine.

But Constantine was gone; he had fled for fear. Then the Poles were triumphant, and gathered a council together in the city.

There was fierce quarrelling and disputing. For some cried out, "Let us fight against Russia, and win back our freedom;" and others, "That is no use; we are not strong enough. Let us ask Russia humbly to give us free laws and reform."

So they sent, and asked Nicholas. But the Iron Emperor's answer came back, stern and firm— "Poland shall gain nothing by rebellion."

Then those who wished for war rejoiced, and they chose their leader, but he was a weak man, who knew little of war. Then they declared boldly that "the Czars of Russia had no right to rule in Poland."

Now came a time of fierce war and terrible bloodshed,—the Russians fighting against the Poles, and the Poles quarrelling among themselves. The Poles fought bravely, and at first gained glorious victories. But who can save a nation that is divided in itself? As Russia had fallen before the Tartars, so Poland fell before the Russians.

For in the streets of Warsaw there were quarrels between the Poles, and fights and bloody scenes. One

leader after another was set up and deposed. One party after another gained the upper hand, and ruled as it willed.

So the day came when the Russians climbed up the walls of Warsaw, and the hope of the Poles was over. They prayed for peace. And Nicholas gave them a hard peace. He took away the freedom of Poland for ever. There were to be no more Diets; no more Polish troops.

So the Poles were servants to Russia. And when Nicholas heard that all was quiet, he thought that things were safe and he could rule as he willed. But he did not know that his deed had only killed for him a weak enemy, and had roused up mighty enemies in Europe.

For the French people had felt great pity for the Poles. They had tried in vain to make their Government help them. Now that troubles had come upon them they helped them nobly. They built schools for their children, and gave homes to the Polish exiles. When Nicholas saw this he was angry.

And another nation was gradually becoming a foe to Russia. That was England. For in China and through Asia the English and Russians were each fighting to win the Asian tribes. And when one gained the other could not gain. So they watched one another with jealous eyes, like dogs that have each their own food, and would steal the other's if they did not fear to lose their own.

But Nicholas could not yet afford to make war on England, for troubles were growing everywhere.

Turkey, that great old enemy of the Russians, was the trouble nearest home. Nicholas had had a short war with the Turks about two points. First, he wished to help the Greeks, who were trying to win independence; and secondly, he wanted to gain freedom for the Christians in Bulgaria, which belonged, as you know, to Turkey.

Now the Turks were afraid that they would lose their power over Bulgaria. So they constantly agreed to treaties when they could not help themselves, and then broke them as soon as they got the chance.

Try to think of these nations of Europe as of different children living together. They have quarrels, and some join together against the others. Some are like strong elder children, some are smaller and weaker.

Just now, you see, France, one child, is angry with Russia, because she thinks that Russia has been very cruel to poor little Poland, who is like a younger, weaker child. And Turkey and Russia are quarrelling about the same sort of thing. For Turkey has been ill-treating the province of Bulgaria, which is weak and small, and Russia is angry about that. Also, quite secretly, she wishes to take Bulgaria for herself; and she would like to drive Turkey out of Europe altogether.

Because France and Turkey both were angry with Russia, they began to agree to join together against her—not openly, but they sent friendly messages to each other.

Russia saw that, and was afraid that if Turkey and France joined together they would be stronger than she was. So she thought she would make friends with England. But very foolishly she sent this message: "If England will join me, I do not care much about what the others think or do. I want to take Bulgaria for myself, and perhaps Constantinople too."

When England heard that, she was afraid that Russia would get too strong if she drove the Turks away and took their land. So, instead of joining Russia, she began to make friends with France and Turkey.

Just at this moment Turkey broke her word about Bulgaria. So Russia sent a large army into Turkey. That was as if one child struck the other a blow in the face.

Turkey did not strike back at once. There was a meeting of all the Powers—to talk about it, like a meeting of children to settle a quarrel. But it was of no use; Turkey demanded that Russia should take her army away at once. But Russia answered that she would not. England too told France what Russia had said about those "others," and told Austria and Prussia too. That made them all so angry that Austria and Prussia agreed that they would certainly not help Russia, while France joined England and Turkey to fight Russia.

Now you see how matters stood.

A terrible war began. For a time they fought near Turkey, but France and England did not mean to stop in

Turkey. The great English and French fleets, joined together, came sailing grandly into the Black Sea. When the Russian sailors saw them, they said to one another, "We must draw back; it is of no use to try to fight these fleets."

Then the Allies, who were rich in ships, sent some to sail up the Baltic, and there they fought and won. Others went up to the White Sea, and to the cold north of Siberia.

Meanwhile the Russians were fighting in Turkey, and they were trying in vain to take a Turkish city, Silistria. But they could not take it. And the Russian camp there was misery. For all round men lay dying of cholera and fever, and bad food. And no one knew on one night if he would see another morning. And men said to one another, "This cannot last; we must leave Turkey."

At last even the Iron Emperor Nicholas saw it too. And with a heavy heart he left Turkey, and sent to say that he was marching away into Russia. But it was too late. For already the great generals of the French and English and Turkish army had met together and settled, "We will not be satisfied with driving Russia away from Turkey. We will go on, and attack the Russian land."

So in September the great allied fleet sailed across the Black Sea. And thousands on thousands of soldiers landed on the little three-cornered island of the Crimea. So the Crimean War began.

I do not mean to tell you much about it. It is all too long and too full. Some day you will read it for yourselves.

The great town that the Allies had to take was Sebastopol. And in a splendidly courageous spirit the Russians set themselves to defend it. They raised ramparts round it of the stone of the island, and merchants and soldiers and sailors worked all at once at the great earthworks.

Meanwhile the Allies had won great battles:—the battle of the Alma, and the battle of Balaclava, with the glorious charge of the Light Brigade. It was a fierce and terrible war, and the slaughter and the deaths were ghastly.

But the great thing for Russia was that a great awakening was coming upon her. For every where the Russians were beaten, and in spite of their vast army they could not fight against the Europeans.

And why not? Because the government of the Russians was corrupt, and the Russian soldiers were not free men, but slaves. Everywhere, even under the iron hand of Nicholas, there had been theft going on among the public officers. And none could trust his fellow, or feel sure that he would be upright and honest. And the Russian soldiers had no free glorying in their country, for they were sometimes even beaten to make them charge more fiercely. The bravery which comes from fear of punishment can never match the bravery from love and desire to save a loved country.

So the whole Russian nation awoke suddenly and cried out for the freedom without which it was sick and weak. "All these years," they said, "we have not murmured at our taxes, or at our hard government at the hands of Nicholas, for we thought, although we suffered, that our nation was glorious among the nations of Europe. But now we see her despised and weak and conquered, and Nicholas is nothing but a petty tyrant."

Then the patriots and learned men of Russia helped to give expression to her cry. And they wrote books, calling on her to arise and break her fetters. Thus spoke one:—

"Arise, Russia! awake from thy long sleep. O Czar, thou wert to Russia as a god upon earth. Thou hast sought nothing but power. Thou hast forgotten Russia. But Truth has at length arisen."

And the Czar in his palace heard those words and that cry. And his lips grew pale with pain, and his heart was broken within him, that the voice of his nation should thus cry out against him. Still his mind was too rigid and too stiff to bend to new wants and fresh ways. "My successor," he said, "may do what he will; I cannot change."

But the heart of the Iron Emperor was broken, and he only longed to die. He went out in the bitter winds of the Russian winter, and so fell ill.

Then he sent to the cities of Russia, saying, "The Emperor is dying."

So died the Iron Emperor.

Freeing the Serfs.

And now for the last few years of which I shall tell you. When the Iron Emperor died, he left two heavy burdens upon his son. For the Crimean War was to be ended, and Russia was to have her freedom.

I cannot now tell you much of Nicholas's son, Alexander II. He had a hard reign, a heavy task, and a sad end. And he worked for the right, and you must honour him and pity him for his sorrows.

Inside the great city of Sebastopol there was fear and dismay. For when the men looked out they saw the French and English guns pointing their thousand black mouths; and when the officers counted their men they found they had lost 18,000 in the last month from the millions of bursting shells and bombs, and deadly gear. And round them were crushed roofs and broken walls, and dead bodies lying. So one September day at noon, when the sun was beating down, the French made a great charge on the broken wall of the city, and Sebastopol was taken. The Russians fled to the north of the Crimea with saddened hearts full of fear. Then throughout the land men knew the war could not last much longer. And it was only a few months before Alexander was forced to treat with the sovereigns who were his enemies. And peace was signed—a sad, hard peace for Russia. For she lost her right of protecting the Christians in Turkey, and her right to

hold the Black Sea and keep in it her fleet. So the cause for which Peter the Great and Catharine, and their successors, had fought and worked was lost.

Yet the Russians had not time to think or sorrow much for their defeat. For on the very day when Alexander announced to them that the war was ended and the Black Sea lost, he said also—

"Government and the laws shall be greatly reformed." And at that the people rejoiced, for they knew it meant—the freeing of the serfs.

Then all the voices that had been hushed for fear of Nicholas spoke freely, and they said, "We have to fight in the name of the highest truth. We must thank the war which has opened our eyes to the dark side of our nation's life." Now you may perhaps think that Alexander's work was easy when the nation's will went along with him. But it was a task hard beyond all that you can fancy. For the Russians were hoping for so much. All the serfs were saying, "Now we shall be quite free, and own our land we live on. That will be given us free." And they hoped and longed for a glorious freedom for themselves, and for freedom all in a minute.

Yet they could not have it. For how were the masters to be paid for the taking away of their servants and their lands? Those masters were a great difficulty. They made up their minds, and said, "We will not let the Czar take

from us our servants and riches without paying us for them. We will stand on our rights."

And another difficulty. The Czar had no men to help him. And this partly for a very odd reason. Each State official worked a good deal alone; often each had an assistant whom he chose—a kind of clerk. When the official gave up his post, this assistant often took his place. Now the officials generally chose assistants who were less clever than they were. Then when these assistants became officials they chose assistants less clever still, and so on, till all the officials were very stupid men.

And so you can understand how difficult Alexander's work was. For the people were expecting almost more than they could have, and the nobles were determined they should not have it, and there were very few men wise enough to help them to it.

And yet in spite of all that, Alexander did his work. I cannot tell you the names of the grand men who helped him to do it, and the difficulties against which they had to fight. They examined carefully as to what right the serfs had to the land they lived on. They told how the Russians had been free men, as you know, till the act of Boris Godounof that made them slaves, and how the land was theirs by right. And at last they made an end, and put out this decree, and the Emperor put his sign and seal to it. This is what it said: "On the 19th of October 1861, the peasants are to be free. They are to live on the land where

they now live, and to pay a rent for it to their nobles who own it, of money or of labour. But this rent need not last. They may buy their land from the nobles, and own it for ever; and for this end the State will lend them money."

So this Decree of Emancipation was read aloud to the peasants in all the churches.

And the Russian land was free.

History of Germany
In Words of One Syllable

by

Helen Pierson

The Old Race

In the old times there were wild and fierce tribes who dwelt in the North of Asia. There were the Celts and the Gauls, who went in to France, and some tribes known by the name of Deutch. The word Deutch means "folk." At times they had the name of "Ger"men, which means "war" men, or "spear" men. In our own tongue we style those who came from Holland, Dutch, and those from Germany, Germans.

The land at that time was full of marsh and trees. Here and there was a range of hills where streams rose and wound down to the swamps. Bears, wolves and elks ran wild, and it was the chief work of the men in these German tribes to hunt them. The men had their homes in rude huts, and all had the same rights in the land, where they grew their corn and fed their beasts. Their wives were for the most part strong and brave, and could go out and help in the field or in the fight. The men kept as slaves those whom they had borne off from their foes in war. They dwelt in bands, and each had a chief and some of them had kings. They knew naught of the true God, but had false gods. To one of these whom they thought all wise they gave the name of Woden. They thought he had two birds who told him all that took place on the earth. The sun and the moon were his eyes. He gave the sight of one eye for a draught from the well that makes man wise, and lies at the foot of the great ash tree of life. That makes the moon less

bright than the sun. He was a dread god, and they built up stone piles to him, and on one day of the week slew men and laid them on these stones, with a hope that this might please him.

Then there was the god Thor or Thunder, as some knew him. He was said to be brave, and when a boy babe was born they would make the sign of "T" on him, and in some tribes he would be laid on a shield and fed for the first time from the point of the sword.

All the gods were thought to be fond of war, but Woden was more strong than all the rest, and he had a hall to which they gave the name of "Valhall," where it was thought that the souls of the brave went when they were dead. "Val" means a brave death. This sort of death was not held in fear, for they were taught that they should go on in the world to come with the sports they held most dear in this life. They would hunt the boar all day and feast on him all night, and they would drink meed from the skulls of their foes. When men saw a star shoot they thought it was the track of fresh fire-arms sent to the brave in Valhall. As none went there save those who had met a brave death, men would rush on swords, leap from crags, or jump in streams to drown. For they thought there was a land of cold and gloom where there was no sun, and if they did not gain Valhall they must pass all the years of time to come in chains in that dark cold place. The Germans in those days told strange tales of sprites that were in the woods and hills and streams who kept a watch

on folks for good or harm. There were the Berg men who dwelt on the hills, and kept guard of the gold and gems that were hid there. They were said to forge strange swords that could not fail to strike home, and they gave them at times to those who were the most brave. There were elves too of whose tricks they told all sorts of tales. The Germans have still a great art in their tales for the young. Some of their old myths are read now by both old and young.

The first that we know of the Germans is when the Romans came to fight them. At a time when some wild tribes were at war with them, they sought the help of the great Julius Cæsar. He made a bridge of boats on the Rhine and came to their aid and drove out the wild tribes. He saw how brave the German young men were, so he got them to come and serve him. They were of great use to him. They were not dull, and they found they had a good chance to learn how to fight in the Roman style.

In the time of the Emperor Augustus he sent his stepson Drusus to try and take Germany and make it a part of Rome. Drusus built a chain of forts on the Rhine, and made three raids on the land. When Tiberius came he won a part of the land, and some of the tribes were friends to Rome, so that at one time it did seem as if the whole of Germany would be theirs. But Varus, one of their chiefs, was so harsh in his ways to the Germans that a young man by the name of Herman rose up and said that such things should not be borne. He met some of the young men of

his land in the woods at night, and they swore in the name of their gods to be true and brave and fight to be free. Then some one went and told Varus that a tribe in the north was in arms. He set out with his troops to put it down, but they had German guides, who led them into the worst part of the great woods. Trunks of trees were flung down in their path, darts flew thick and fast from the gloom, and at last when this had gone on for three days, and they came to a free space, there was a great host of foes drawn up to fight them. Then came a fierce fight in which most of the Romans met their deaths, and Varus threw his own self on his sword. Rome still did not want to give up Germany, and in time sent Germanicus, who made a march through these same woods. He found the bones of all the host of Varus, and he built them up in a pile and made a speech to his men, and sought to fire their zeal. But the horsemen of Herman fell on him, and put him to rout. The Germans would have won more if they had not been so full of greed to get the spoils. They drove the Romans back, but the next year they came once more and beat Herman and his men, and he had to fly on a fleet horse. But he was still brave and still kept in the woods, and now and then made a dash out and did the Romans all the harm he could. Once they had to fly to their ships to save their lives.

Tiberius, who was in Rome, heard that the troops all had great love for Germanicus, so he felt a fear of him, and sent for him to come home. He went, and left Germany in peace for a while. Herman, who had done so much for his

land, met his death at the hand of one of his own chiefs A.D. 19, when he was still a young man. His name is held in love with the Germans to this day, and in their songs they speak of their land at times as Herman's land.

At this time a great man came from Rome to note the ways of life and the laws in Germany. He was so struck by the truth of the folk and their brave hearts that he wrote of them and held them up to the Romans of that day that they might do like them. For the vice that oft comes with great wealth had crept into the court of Rome. His name was Tacitus, and you may read his books to this day.

Then the Huns, a wild tribe, came from the North and drove the Germans out of their homes for a time. Then the Goths came, and the Vandals, and they fought, and,—in fact, there was war most of the time. The folk thought of naught else, and all their songs told but of fights. There is one long tale in verse which we hear of in these days. It is known as the Neibelungen Lied. "Lied" means song, and it is a song of the times. False gods and real folks play a part in it, but for a long time it was all held as truth.

Karl the Great

The Franks were one of the German tribes, and had their home on the banks of the Rhine. They were great foes of the Romans, and got back most of the forts that Drusus had built. The most that we know of these Franks of that time is that they fought well, and there is naught to tell but deeds of blood. They went by the name of Christians from the time of Chlodwig, who had made a vow in a fight that if the God of the Christians would let him win the day he would serve him all the rest of his life. He did win, and so he took the name of Christian, but he did not lead a good life.

For a time the same king had the rule of Franks and Germans. These last still held Woden and Thor as their gods. In the time of Pippin the Short England sent good men to preach to the Germans and tell them of the true God. There was one known as St. Boniface, who did such a good work that they made him chief of the church at Mainz. At one place there was a great oak which was held as one of Woden's trees. St. Boniface found that those who went by the name of Christians still had fear of this tree. So he told them if Thor was a god he would take care of his own, then, at the head of his priests, he took an ax and cut down the tree, and the folks saw that Thor was no god. This good man met his death at the hands of one of the wild tribes where he had gone to preach in 755.

The son of Pippin is known as Karl the Great. The French call him Charlemagne. He has a right to the name of the "Great," for he was one of the best as well as the most wise of kings. He made war more for the good of his folks and to get their rights than for his own sake. He did all he could to make those round him wise and good. When he heard of a wise man who had learned much he sent for him to come to his court, and thus he had a kind of school there where he and his sons strove to lead the fierce young Franks to learn. He had not learned to write when he was young, and he strove to make up for it in his age. He took a slate with him at all times and would strive at odd times to learn the art, but he could not. But he had a fine mind, and knew how to make the best use of what he did know. All the German tribes had come to own him as king save the Saxons. They still held to the false gods, though Karl sent men to them to teach them the truth. They rose in a mass to fight him with a chief by the name of Witikind, and there was war with them off and on for three times ten years. Once Karl was in such a rage that he had a host of them put to death. Still they fought on till they had no more strength, and Witikind was brought to see Karl, and they made friends and took a vow to keep the peace from that time. The Pope Leo III sent for Karl to help him in one of his wars. Karl put the foe to rout and then went on to Rome. He got down from his horse and went with all his troops through the streets of Rome to the great church of St. Peter's. He bent to kiss each step of the

stairs as he went up, for the sake of all the good men who had gone up there. The Pope met him in the church while the choir sang "Blest is he that comes in the name of the Lord."

Karl won great fights with the Moors in Spain, but the wild folk of the Pyrenees rose on his troops in a pass there and cut off the most of them, with Roland, a brave chief, of whom songs have been sung to this day. He won so much that when he held his court he had the folks from all the lands round to come and greet him as their chief.

Pope Leo X came, and Karl made a third trip to Rome in the year 800, and was then made Emperor of the West. From that time he had the name of the Cæsar or Kaiser, which means emperor. Karl meant to leave his lands to his sons, but two of them did not live to be grown. When Karl fell sick he took his young son Louis to the church and made him swear to fear God, to shield the church, to love his folks, and in all things to make right the law of his life. Then he told him to take the crown and put it on his own head. Karl did not die till a year from this time in 814, and he left one of the most grand names that shine on the lists of fame.

Ludwig, the son of Karl the Great, who is known to the French as Louis, had not such strength or skill to rule as Karl. He was a good, kind man, but was led by his friends. He gave lands to his sons, but none of them were to make peace or war save by his wish. He wed a princess from

Bavaria by the name of Judith, who had one son, Ludwig. He had the wish to make a king of this boy. So he sent out a call to the folk of the land, and they met at Worms, where they set to work to carve out a throne for him. His realm was to have the name of Germany. This put Ludwig's own sons in a rage, and they rose on him and had all their own way for a time and drove out the Emperor. But the Germans rose and set him on his throne once more. He did not seem to bear his sons ill will, but gave them back their thrones. In a few years they were all up in arms once more, and all the Emperor's men fled from him and he fell in his sons' hands. The place was known from that time as the "Field of Falsehood." The sons were in hopes that they could make him give up the throne, so they got the priests to tell him that he must strip off the robes of a king and tell all the list of his sins to them. As he was a meek and mild man he did as they told him. He put off his robes and lay on a couch of sackcloth and read off a long list of his sins. He said that he had done much to stir up strife, and that he had been false to his word. But in the end the priests were so much struck by the emperor's meek ways that they laid their hands on his head to bless him. And then they gave him back his sword and belt. The worst of his sons had to come to him and say that he had done wrong, and felt grief at it. The kind old man gave him a kiss and sent him back to Italy. But there was more strife in time with the sons, till the good old Emperor was quite worn out and grew ill. He went to a small isle in the Rhine to die.

When the priest said, "Do you die at peace with your son?" he said, "Yes; but fail not to warn him that he has brought down my gray hairs in grief to the grave."

Karl II, one of his sons, and Ludwig soon went to war with Lothair, and when a peace was made his part of the land took its name from him, but in the course of time it came to be known as France. Ludwig II had a hard time with the men from the lands north of him, and with the place known as Hungary, from the Huns, who had first come there. There is not much else to tell of these times save small fights with these folk till the reign of Heinrich, of Saxony. He was not heir to the throne, but he was known to be a good and brave man. He had the name of Heinrich the Fowler, for they found him out with his hawk when they took the news that he was to be the king. He was wise and brave, and brought all the states of Germany to his rule. He made war on Hungary, but though he beat them in one fight, he had to make a truce for nine years and pay them a tax in gold all the time. But all these years he made use of the time to train his men. He taught his lords how to fight while they rode, and the men of low rank had to learn to fight as soon as they could hold arms. They had to meet each third day to train for fights. He saw, too, that the great need of the towns was to have walls round them so that the folk might have some shield from their foes. So he built towns and shut them in with strong walls, and he had one man out of each nine to live in these "burgs," which is their name for forts. All the fairs, sales of

all kinds and feasts had to take place in these towns, and the courts of law were held there. Stores were to be kept in case of a siege, and the folk from the farms round had to send in part of their crops to keep these stores full, so that these towns grew to be the strong holds of the land.

When Heinrich felt that his land was strong, he made up his mind not to pay the tax to Hungary. So the next time they sent for their gold he gave the men naught but a poor sick dog that had the mange. They sent troops into Germany in wrath at this slight, but he beat them. Then they lit fires on all their hills to call their folk to arms, and a great host came down on the Germans with wild shout of "Hui, hui!" which is their war cry. But the Germans, with Heinrich at their head, beat them and drove them back to Hungary. From this time the troops were all his friends, and he was known as Emperor. He won more fame in fights with more tribes, and made them all fear Germany. He meant to go to Rome to have his crown set on his head by the pope, but his folk could not spare him so long from his home. His death was in 936.

The Saxon Emperors

Otto the First had the crown put on his head in the church at Mainz in the sight of all the dukes of the land and a great throng. He had to stand in the grand aisle of the church, and the archbishop made a call on all who would have Otto for their king to hold up their right hands. Then they led him up the aisle and gave him a sword with which to fight the foes of Christ and a robe of peace. Then they put oil on his head, breast, arms and hands, and on his head the gold crown of Karl the Great. There was a great feast, and he had the dukes to serve him. But his reign was full of storms. The dukes were not his friends and his own son was his foe, but he was brave and wise and dealt with them in such a kind way that they were glad to serve him at last. He won a great fight with Hungary, and then the Germans said he must have the name of emperor. So they went to Rome and had the crown set on his head there. Things were in a sad state there. The popes had so much wealth and might that men fought for the place of pope. Otto did his best to set things right, but when he went home they soon fell back, and things were just as bad as they had been.

The realm of Otto was now near as large as Karl the Great's had been, for if he had less to the west and south he had more to the north and east. He had a right to the name of the Great, for he was good and just as well as wise

and brave in war. His death came as he kneeled to pray in a church, and was so full of peace that men thought he slept. That was in the year 973.

Otto the Second was so young when he came to the throne that all the great dukes thought they could throw off the yoke, but he soon brought them to terms. Then Lothair, King of France, went to war with him and swore he would drink up all the streams of Germany. But Otto said he would fill France with straw hats. The German troops all had straw hats on when they went to fight in the hot days. He put the troops of France to rout and laid siege to Paris. The king sent word to Otto that he would put an end to the chance of war and come out to fight him hand to hand. Otto said: "We have heard that the Franks set small store by their king and now we see it."

There was a peace made soon, and by it Otto held Lorraine. Then as Rome was in a sad state he set off for that land. One pope had just been put to death and a new one put in his place. Otto put down all strife with a high hand. He had all the chief men sent for to come to a feast in the great space by St. Peters and there all those who had part in the late strife, or who were not for peace, were put to death. He then went to take some lands in the south part of Italy that had come to him with his wife, who was a Greek. Here he lost the fight and had to fly for his life. He had lost his horse and had to make his way to the shore of the sea on foot. A Jew who met him gave him his horse and on this he made a dash for a Greek ship that took him on

board. He spoke Greek so well that they did not find out that he was a German. When they put in at a Greek port Otto stole off when no one saw him and swam to the shore. His wife was there, but she met him with scorn and said: "How you do fear the Greeks." Otto took this to heart and sought to raise new troops to help win his cause, but his health had been so much hurt in this fight that he grew so ill he sent for his chief men. They swore to him his son, who was but three years old, should have the crown, and so his life came to an end in 983 when he was still quite a young man.

Otto the III was brought up well and had learned so much from books that he had the name of the "Wonder of the World." He was brave and wise though he was but a youth when he went to Rome for his crown as emperor. He thought he would make Rome the chief seat of his realm. But his plans were cut short by death. He chose that his grave should be at Aachen, where was the tomb of Karl the Great.

Heinrich of Bavaria, who came next, and his wife were so good that they now have the name of saints. He gave so much to the Church in his time that when he is drawn he is shown with a small church the size of a toy in his arms.

The Franconian Kings

A host of the great men of the church, the German dukes and counts, all met on a plain near Mainz, on the banks of the Rhine, to choose a new king. The two Konrads, who were of the line of Otto the Great, were first, and they said they would bide by the choice of all. So the one who was first in age was the choice, and he is known as Konrad II. He had wars with both Hungary and Bohemia, but won in both. To make new laws was the great work of his reign. He was a shrewd man, but he did not gain the love of his folks. It is said that "no one was heard to heave a sigh when they heard of his death."

His son, Heinrich the III, was a young man of good looks and fine mind. He found his land at peace, but in the first five years of his reign he had some wars with Bohemia and Hungary. Bohemia had to yield, and Hungary gave part of her land to Austria. Then there was a great strife in Rome, for they had set up no less than three popes there. Heinrich took up his march for that place, sent the three popes off the scene, and put up one of his own—Clement II. In fact, though he had a short reign, he made no less than four popes, for each one did not live but a short time; so short that it was thought some sort of drug had been put in their food or drink to take them out of the way. At this time there was a new move in the Church by a good priest, who sought to raise it, and to make men lead lives

that were pure and good. He and the good men who were with him set to work to preach to all that which was known as "the Peace of God." By it men had to pledge that they would have no fights or feuds for the last half of each week. Heinrich took it up, and had all the Germans meet, where he made a grand speech, and told them he would say to all his foes, with a full and free heart, that he would look on them as his foes no more from that time. This was a great change to the German folk, and for the first time all was safe and at peace in the land.

But this peace did not last long. Heinrich found out that there was a plot to kill him, and at last, worn in health and sad at heart, he drew his last breath at one of his grand homes, and left the throne to his son, a boy of six years old. The empress was good, but not so strong that she could keep the great dukes in their place. She sought to bribe her foes by gifts of lands, but that gave them more strength to do her wrong. The Church lands, and all the posts of note and worth, were sold or made bribes in fear, and the Church grew more weak and bad. To check this the pope gave out that priests should not wed, and that from that time the priests should take gifts from no one; that a pope should be made by the vote of the chief priests in Rome who wore bright red robes and hats and had the name of cardinals. This was in the year 1059. There was great strife in Rome with the lords and rich men on this point. They sought to have a voice in the choice of a pope. At last it was

left to the empress. But Nicholas the II, the man of her choice, did not turn out to be a friend to Germany.

At home the empress had a sad time. She found out that there was a plot to kill her young son. Then there was a plot to take him out of her hands. This plot had its birth with some of the great men of the Church. Hanno, their chief, was at the head of it. He went to see the empress, and when they had a fine feast, Hanno took out the young prince to look at his ship, which lay near. As soon as the youth set his foot on the deck the men took up their oars to push out in to the stream. The prince, who was but twelve years old, sprang at once in to the stream. One of the lords sprang in, too, to save him, and both were like to drown, but at last both were got safe on board. The empress, who stood on the shore, wrung her hands with vain cries for help. Some of her friends did try to stop the boat, but in vain, and her boy was borne off from her sight. The young prince was left in the charge of Hanno, who was so stern and hard that he won his hate for life. The next priest that taught him was as much too kind and weak as Hanno had been stern. This man kept the boy in the midst of feasts and taught him not to trust the great dukes and lords. This prince was harsh and fierce to all folks when he came to rule them, but more so to the Saxons than the rest. His court was a place of great vice, and he was in strife with his folk most of the time.

The Saxons, when they heard that Heinrich had sought aid from the Danes, felt a new fear for their rights,

and rose up as a man and took up their march to the place where the emperor was at the time. They told him their terms, but he would not hear to them. Then they laid siege to the place, and Heinrich had to fly for his life with a few of his men. He sent out a call for help through all Germany, but not a prince or head of the Church came to him.

Just at this time, when he had lost all hope, the States on the Rhine, which had grown so strong that they thought they could cast off the rule of their priests, saw a chance to get more strength if they should give aid to the emperor. They had but few troops on hand, so the Saxons still won the day, and in the flush of joy they did some wrong acts. They tore down one of the grand homes of the emperor, the Church, and the place where Henry III had his tomb. This put them in the wrong, and so the emperor got a great force to fight them, and their land was laid waste with fire and sword.

So for a time it did seem that Heinrich the IV was safe, but there was a storm in his sky. The monk who had been the one to preach the "Peace of God" was made pope, with the name of Gregory VII. He was a man of strong will and wise. He had eyes that saw far in to the years that were to come and he left his mark on the Church of Rome that has not been lost from that day to this. It was his wish to raise the popes out of the old ways and to fix them in a sure seat that the will of kings or the fate of lands could not change. He thought of two ways to do this; one was to put down

bribes, and one to make a law that the priests should not wed. He thought that a man who had no tie of wife or child would give his life up more to the Church. This was made a law of the Church in 1074, but there were some who did not like it, and fought hard that it should not pass, so that it was a long time ere all the priests gave in to it. Then Gregory made a law that no place in the Church should be sold, and that all must come from the hands of the pope, and he sent word to Heinrich that this law must be put in force through all the land or he would turn him out of the Church. You may guess the emperor was in a rage when he heard this. No pope had been known to dare to speak in this way to the one who sat on the throne. Heinrich sent out a call for his folk to meet at Wurms, and there they gave out in the emperor's name that Gregory should be no more the pope. They sent word to the folks of Rome that they should drive him from the town. The pope did as he had said. He said that Heinrich was no more in the pale of the Church and its ban was laid on him. If his folks had felt great love for him he might have borne this, but most of them were glad to slight him. The Saxons at once threw off his rule, and when Heinrich sought friends to help he could not find them. In the mean time the friends of Gregory sought to take his throne from him and make a new king.

So at last Heinrich had to bend his pride and to give in. He sent word that he would yield and he went to see the pope in the worst time of the year, with his wife and child.

They were wrapped in the hide of an ox, for the cold was great. They were in a sledge of wood and had men to drag them. Gregory was in one of his grand homes when he heard that the king was on his way to him. Heinrich came with bare head and bare feet in the shirt of sack cloth which those wore who had great sins on their souls. The pope let him stand three days at his gates in the snow and rain ere he would let him in. Then at last, when he had made a vow to do as the pope said, he gave him the kiss of peace and led him into the church, where the two ate the bread and drank the wine in use by the Church to keep in mind the last meal of our lord. Heinrich was not to take the rule of his land till the pope had things to his mind, but by this time all Germany was in strife. At last Heinrich made a pope of his own and took up his march in to Italy and laid siege to Rome for three years. Gregory fled to the Normans, and his death came soon. His last words were: "I have sought the right, I have put down kings, and so I die far from my own home."

So Heinrich for a time won the day, till his own sons rose up to fight him. His son Konrad was at war with him till his death. All his hopes were then set on his son Heinrich, but he was cold, and hard, and sly. He knew how to hide his bad heart by a mask. He had gone with the foes of the emperor, as Konrad had. At one time when their troops were face to face, there was a truce. The emperor met his son and there they made peace. Tears were shed and the two made friends once more and set out for

Mayence, where they were to call all the folks to meet them, and set all the feuds at rest.

But this bad son had no real wish for peace in his heart. His kiss and tears and words of love were all as false as could be. For on the way to Mayence he got the emperor to go into a house to rest for the night. Then he shut the doors on him and held him fast. He would not let him out till he said he would give up the throne to him. He made the old man sign this, then he went to work to strip off his robes and turn him out on the road. The poor old man had no one to help him and was like to starve. He went to one of the priests to ask for some small place to serve in the Church. But this could not be, for he was out with the pope and the ban of the Church was on him. He had no food and had to sell his boots to buy bread. At last death took him, and his false son Heinrich did not live but three years more.

A New Line

When Heinrich V was dead and left no heirs, the Frank line of emperors came to an end and the great dukes of the land met at Mainz to choose a new king. Their choice was Lothar Duke of Saxony. He made haste to show that he was not at all like the Frank kings. He sent word to the pope to ask that he would give his help to this choice of the land, and he gave up at once all the rights that the old kings had had in the Church. This made foes of all those who held to the rights of kings, and so there was a great war once more. At this time, too, the counts and lords of the land made their homes as strong as forts, and did not fear the laws but led such lives as they chose. We hear much of those

"Days of old
When knights were bold—"

but we read that the chief way in which they were bold was that they would make raids on those who went by their strong holds and take all they chose from them. In short, they were thieves. From their heights they had a good view of the road, and woe to the man who rode by with aught of worth on him or with stores for those at home. It was short work to seize him, rob him, and cast him in a cell, or it may be put an end to him at once. The large towns had some show of law, and were more safe. The songs of the land were sung by men who went from town to town

or out where the strong holds lay, and they were sure that they would find good cheer and be safe. They had naught to steal, so they could sing their songs in peace. They were known as "Minnesingers." Lothar had a mind to have the crown of emperor set on his head in Rome, but as there were two popes at this time he could not get to the church of St. Peter's. Italy was split up in two bands, the Guelphs and Ghibellines, and they held St. Peter's and the castle of St. Angelo. Lothar could not drive them out, so he had to go to the church of St. John later on for his crown. Once more he went to Italy, to help put down some strife. He took with him Konrad of Hohenstaufer, who was a good and wise man, brave and kind to the priests and the heads of the Church. He was the head of the Ghibellines. The head of the Guelphs had the emperor's own child for his wife, so that he was fond of him. But he had the name of Heinrich the Proud, and won the hate of all, from the pope down, by his harsh, rude ways, and for his hard heart to all his foes who fell in his hands.

On his way home Lothar II grew ill and his death was in the hut of a poor man in Tyrol, 1137. Heinrich the Proud was sure he would be made king, but he had the love of no one, and so Konrad was the choice. There was a fight with the friends of Heinrich and Konrad at a place by the name of Weinsberg. This town is on the banks of the Neckar on a high hill. Konrad laid siege to this town, and at last those in it sent out word that they would yield. Konrad's terms were that they should give up the keys of

the place, that he would hold the men by the rules of war, but that the maids and wives might go out in peace, each with as much of her goods as she could bear on her back. The emperor and his troops were drawn up on each side to leave room for the dames, when they saw a strange sight. Each maid and wife, as she came down the hill, had a man on her back—each had brought what she held most dear. Some brought their sons, some those to whom they had bound their lives in the Church of God, and the young girls those who had their troth plight—all came with slow steps down the great hill. Some of Konrad's men were in a rage at this as a mean trick, but the kind heart of the emperor felt for these poor folk, and he let the men go free and gave leave to their wives to go back and fetch the wealth they had left there. This place is known to this day as "Woman's Truth," and in 1820 the Queen of Wurtemburg, with some of the rich dames of Germany, built a house there for poor maids or wives who have done acts that have shown love for their kind with no thoughts of self. This scene lives in German songs to this day.

When St. Bernard came to preach the Crusades Konrad was one who took the cross, and he went with 70,000 men. They went by the way of Constantinople, and in the wild hills of Asia Minor they were led out of their way by their guides and met with great loss from want of food. In their weak state they were met by the Turks and there was a hard fight, and but 7,000 left. Konrad, with what was left, went on to join the host of

Louis V of France. They laid siege to Damascus, where Konrad is said to have shown that he was a brave man. He is said to have cut off the head and arm of a Turk with one blow of his sword. But they could not take the place, and at last Konrad went home. His death came three years from that time, in 1152.

Friedrich I

Konrad III left one son, but he was too young to reign. So the good king told the dukes that they had best choose Friedrich of Suabia, who was the most near of kin. He was of the line of Hohenstaufen, in the prime of life, brave, keen and firm, but proud and fierce at times and with a will none could bend. He was a man of grand looks, with fair hair and blue eyes and a tinge of red in his beard, from which he got the name Barbarossa from the Italians. The first thing he did was to make each German prince sure and safe in his rights. Heinrich the Lion had Bavaria and Albert the Bear had Austria, at the same time he made them feel that they must serve him as king. In all he did he made plain that he had a strong will and men felt that he was born to rule.

Konrad the III had not had the crown of emperor at Rome, and thus he had not been held in much awe in Italy, so by this time the Lombard towns had grown strong and proud and did as they chose. The lords had their homes like forts on the heights and led lives like kings—that is, the kings of bands of thieves, for they stole from all who came by. Then there were some who had a wish to turn out the pope and set up a free republic.

Friedrich thought he had a call to set all this to rights. So he set out on a march by the way of the Alps in to Rome and set up a camp in the fields with his shield as a sign to

show that he was there to act as judge and to right all wrongs. The folks of Lodi came to ask his help to guard them from the folk of Milan, who had laid siege to their town and torn down the walls and made them leave their homes and live where they could. Friedrich wrote at once that the Milanese must give back Lodi, but the Milanese tore the emperor's note in bits and threw it in the face of the man who brought it, and most of the Italian towns took their part. The emperor laid siege to Milan and cut off food and drink from them, so they had to give in at last and swear to keep good faith with him and then he left them. But they did not keep their oath, for in a short time they rose once more and said they would serve the pope not the emperor. At this time too there were two popes and each had his friends. Friedrich took up one and said he was the true one, and he went once more to Italy to fight for him and to fix the Milanese who had been so false to him. He laid siege to Milan once more and made it yield. All the chief men came out with their flags to give up to him, and the great flag of the town, which was borne out when they went to war, and on which was wrought in silk and gold a cross with the Christ on it and St. Andrew near with his hands spread out to bless the folk. All these were thrown in a heap at the emperor's feet. The car which had borne their flag to all their fights was broke in bits and the folks wept so sore that Friedrich's stern guards shed tears at the sight.

But Friedrich did not melt. He told them they must bear what was just for their crimes. He had a court at Pavia to try them. And the court said that Milan should be made to bear all that they had done to Lodi. The walls must be thrown down, the ditch made dry, and all the folk made to go out from their homes and live as much as two miles off. Then they could not all live in one place, but must go in bands and each band to have a German chief to rule it. The folk went with what they could take of their goods, but most of their wealth fell to thieves. A tenth part went to the Church in Germany. Koln had for its share what was thought to be the bones of the Wise Men of the East, to whom the Germans at once gave the name of the Three Kings of Koln. Friedrich then was seen to wear the crown which he had made a vow not to put on his head till he had made Milan pay for all the wrong she had done. He then took up his march to Rome, from which Pope Alexander had fled, and he did his best to make it plain to all the towns of Lombardy that he was their good friend. But the days had grown hot and a pest broke out in his troops and cut off some of those near of kin to Friedrick and his best friends and a host of men. He had to go back to Lombardy, and there he found the whole land in strife. They had guards at each pass of the Alps so that he could not get on, and one night some men in arms broke in his room to kill him. He had just time to slip out of a side door while one of his knights took his place in his bed to take the death blow in his stead. But they soon saw that he was the wrong

man, and though in their rage at first the Lombards thought they would slay him, they could not help feel for him as a brave knight and a true friend, and so they did not take his life. Germany was by no means in a state of peace when Friedrich went home, but he had a strong hand. There is an old rhyme of the time which reads thus:

"Heinrich the Lion, Albert the Bear,—
There, too, Friedrich with the red hair—
Three lords are they
Who could change the world to their way."

He knew how to rule well and to found great towns, of which Munich is one. But all the time he had the wish in his heart to go back to Italy and gain his old might there, for he was proud and did not like to feel that they could keep him out. All the great towns of Italy had made a league with the pope as his foes. They had the name of the Lombard League, and they built a town and gave to it the pope's name—Alessandria. So once more Friedrich set out to cross the Alps to try and put down this league, but they were too strong for him. In his sore need Heinrich, the Lion Duke of Saxony and Bavaria, left him with his men. He said he was too old to fight, though he was not so old as the emperor. Friedrich met him and plead with him to stay, went on his knees to him, but all in vain. He paid no heed to the plea but rode off with his men. So Friedrich had to fight on as best he could. The Milanese came with the great flag of their town once more borne in its car, and the Guelphs won the day. The horse of Friedrich was shot

dead, and he, thought to be slain, so that his wife put on black for him. But he had found a way by footpaths to fly from his foes. But he had to make peace with Italy. He went to meet the pope at Venice, where the Doge with a vast crowd led him to St. Mark's church, at the door of which the pope stood with all his priests. The emperor kneeled to kiss the foot of the pope, and it is said was heard to say in a low voice: "Not to thee, but to Peter." But the pope heard him, and said: "Both to me and to Peter."

But at last all was made straight with the two, and they were at peace. The emperors were to choose the bishops, and all the lands of the Church were to be held in his hands. He gave Milan back to its folk, and then went home with his wife Beatrice. But on their way they had the new crown set on their heads, as King and Queen of Burgundy, a part of the land now known as Provence. As soon as Friedrich got home to Germany he held a court at Wurms, and sent for Heinrich the Lion to come there at once where they would try him. The charge was that he had not been true to the king, and that he had left him in the time of his sore need. There were more crimes, too, laid to him, and one of these was that in the time of peace he had gone to the town of Veringen, where there were great salt works, and had torn them down. All the stores were held, and those who made the salt had been bound and led to Munich.

The duke would not come, for he said it was his right that one should try him in his own land. So there was a

court held in one of his own towns, but he would not come to that. Then the ban of the empire was laid on him—that is, he had to give up all his lands, and goods, and rank, and leave his home and all he had. He had some friends and he held out for a long time, but he was such a fierce, hard man that he could not keep friends long. The emperor laid siege to the town of Brunswick. There Heinrich's wife lay ill, and she sent to Friedrich to ask that some wine might be sent in for her use. Friedrich said he would give her the city of Brunswick ere he would cause her a pang while she was ill. And he was as good as his word, for he drew off his troops. But he still had the best of the Lion, who found it was in vain to strive with him. At last he went to the court, fell on his knees to the emperor, to show his grief and to beg that he would not be hard with him.

The emperor took him by the hand in a kind way, but told him he had brought all these woes on him by his own course. The court thought he should give up all his lands, but the emperor let him still keep Brunswick and one more state if he would first spend three years out of his land at the court of England, from which he had wed his wife.

Now that peace was made, Friedrich held a great feast at Mainz, where he made his sons knights, and men came there from all lands to ride at the games. A camp with tents of silk and gold was set up by the side of the stream, full of fine dames who came to look on, and of minnesingers, who were to sing of the brave deeds of the knights. The

emperor, still grand in his looks, tall and straight, though his red beard had grown white as snow, rode in the ranks with his five fine sons. The songs of that great day were long sung in the land, and from that time song had more of a place in the lives and hearts of the folk.

Heinrich was the one of his sons who was to be his heir, so he had the wish that he should make a grand match. The kings of Sicily had at all times been great friends of the popes, and each had been their shield when the emperors drove them out of Rome. The last of these of the right line had no child, but he had an aunt by the name of Constance. She had made her home with the nuns, but it does not seem that she was a nun. Friedrich was wont to say that Italy was like an eel, which must be held by the head or tail if you would keep it. He had the head, and he said he had the hope that his son would get hold of the tail if he went to work in a wise way. So he thought it would make his cause more strong if he should wed Constance. The plan was made, and Constance sent to meet her lord at Milan, with a long string of mules which bore her wealth with her. The pope, Urban III, was in a great rage when he heard of this. The priests who had seen the two wed were all put out of the Church, and had no more the right to preach, and he would have gone on to lay the ban on the emperor and all the rest if death had not laid its hand on him.

Next there was a great shock to all in the news that the Sultan Saladin had won JerusaIem. The new pope and the

emperor thought no more of their own feuds, in the wish to save the place which held the tomb of our Lord. Friedrich, old as he was, set out to go on this Crusade. While on the march through a wild pass false news were brought to him that his son Heinrich, was dead. The tears ran down his white beard as he said to his troops; "My son is dead, but Christ lives—march on!"

But a few days from that, as he went to bathe in a cold, swift stream, a chill struck him and he sank. This stream was fed by the snows from the heights, and so it was ice-cold. They found him at last quite dead, and his grave was made at Antioch. But the Germans could not think that their great emperor was dead. He had gone forth from their sight to the great East and he had not come back, but he could not be dead. There were songs made on him, and his name was held dear in the hearts of all. To this day the name "Barbarossa" can thrill the heart of a German, and they tell in their book of folk-songs how he sits in a cave in one of the Harz mounts with all his knights round him, and that he has sat there till his beard has grown through the stone in front of him. He waits till the time of Germany's sore need shall come, when he will wake, rise, and come forth to make her one and free for all time.

End of the Line

Heinrich the Lion made all the haste he could to go back to Germany, when he heard of the death of the emperor. He thought he might get back Saxony, but he found King Heinrich, the son of Friedrich, in the field. He was tall and well-made and had a stern way of his own and a will more strong than the emperors had been. He made haste to go to Rome that he might have the crown of emperor, and he laid claim to Sicily, by right of his wife. He did not make his folk love him, for he was a stern and hard man. The fight with Heinrich the Lion went on for a year, and all Germany felt the scourge of war. At this time the King of England, Richard of the Lion Heart, on his way home from a crusade fell in to the hands of one of his foes who gave him up to the emperor. He was thrown in jail and a large sum set on him as the price for which he could go free. No one could find out just where he was kept, till a youth who had been wont to sing to him went to all the strong holds on the Rhine and sang his songs. At last he heard a well-known voice sing back a verse of his song, and he knew his king was there. In time shame made the emperor set Richard free, and the same year he made peace with Heinrich the Lion, who went back to his small State of Brunswick and did all he could for his folk. He made his home with them, drew up new laws, built schools, and taught them to wish to learn. He brought in to his land books and works of art, and in fact did all he

could to make his name dear to his folk. Once they had known but fear and hate of him, but now they felt naught but love, and at his death in 1195 all felt that they had lost a friend. Heinrich V now went to Italy, and with the help he brought there it was not hard for him to win Sicily. He was so harsh and hard to his foes that none were his friends, and he met fear and hate on all sides. In a hunt on one hot day he took a chill and death put an end to all his schemes. He was but a young man still and his son but three years old. All Sicily was full of joy at his death, and set to work to kill all the Germans found in their land.

The child Friedrich had been known as the King of the Romans as soon as he was born, but the Guelphs said the choice of such a babe was worth naugnt and there must be a fresh vote. There was one more son of Barbarossa's left, and when he heard this he made haste back to his land. The Ghibellines said he should be their choice, but the Guelphs took Otto the son of Heinrich the Lion and they set the crown on his head. Philip too had his crown, so there were two kings at once. The pope at that time was Innocent III, a great man whose whole aim was to make the strength of the See of Rome felt by all the world, and he took charge of Sicily and the young king, and gave his voice for Otto. So the strife of the two kings went on till Philip met his death at a feast, from a stab at the hand of a man who was mad or drunk. His wife's death came in a few days from the shock, and left two girls. Otto of Brunswick was then the choice of all, and said he would wed Beatrice,

one of these girls. He led her in to the place where the dukes and lords sat—though she was a mere child—and said to them: "See, this is your queen." Then he left her in charge of a great dame while he went in to Italy for the crown of emperor. It is said that Innocent wept for joy at the thought that he could now crown a Guelph emperor. But the men in the German troops did not act well; they would walk in to the Roman shops and take what they chose and give no pay for it, and at last a fight took place in the streets, and some on both sides met their death. Then, too, the new emperor would not give up some lands which had been left to the Church, and laid claim to Sicily. This was more than the pope could bear, and he laid the ban of the Church on him, and sent out a call that all those who were of the true faith should serve him no more. Otto made haste back to Germany, and thought he might make his cause more strong if he should wed Beatrice at once. But in two weeks the poor young bride was found dead, it was thought from some drug that the foes of Otto had found means to give her.

Otto had few friends in his own land and the King of France had no love for him. Once when a boy he had been at the French court and when one said to the king that there was a chance that some day that boy would be emperor, Philip gave a laugh of scorn and said that when that comes to pass I will give him Orleans, Chartiers and Paris. When Otto was emperor he sent to put the King of the French in mind of his words. The king got out of it in

this way: He said that Orleans, Chartiers and Paris were the names of three small pups now grown in to three old hounds, which he sent to the emperor.

The young Friedrich, who had grown up in Sicily was a youth of fine looks and had a grace in his ways that won all hearts. He was like Barbarossa in his form and had the same strength of will, but he knew much more of books. He spoke six tongues with ease, and could write verse well. He had a love for the arts of peace no less than those of war, yet he was a statesman and born to lead men. He found a route by which he got in to his own town, Constance, and the gates which had been shut to Otto were thrown wide to him. He then went to France and made a league with the king, Philip Augustus, who gave him a large sum of gold to help him. He took this sum with him to Mainz, and when some one asked him where he would have it kept he said: "No where; it is to give to our friends." So at Mainz all the Ghibellines chose him king and took the vow to serve him.

For near three years Otto and Friedrich kept a watch, but did not fight. Otto was still strong in his own land, but in some way he was led to mix up in a strife to help England in a war with France. There was a great fight, and France won the day. Otto was left on the field in the midst of the foe. A French knight sought to cut him down with an ax, but made a miss and struck his horse. He gave the poor beast such a wound that, mad with pain, it made a dash with Otto back to his troops and there fell dead. He

got a new horse, but could not bring his troops back to the charge, and had to ride off with them. The King of France said with scorn: "We shall see no more of him now but his back," though in truth King Philip was a much less brave man. Otto's hold on Germany was lost from that time and he fled to Koln. He had a wife who did naught but add to his woes. She was fond of dice and would lose vast sums at play, so that at last they had to leave the place.

The two went to Brunswick, where Otto's death came four years from that time. On his deathbed he sent his crown to Friedrich. He left no heirs.

Friedrich II

Friedrich, though but a youth when the throne came to him, had been wed and had a son. His wife was dead. As soon as Otto's death was known, Friedrich set forth to Italy that he might be made emperor at Rome. Then he took a new wife and said he would go forth on a grand crusade, to free the tomb of Christ, which was still held by the Turks.

Friedrich was in no haste to set forth on this Crusade, and the new pope did not like this, or his wish to keep Sicily. Friedrich said he would take care of Sicily, and he went in to that land and had hard work to deal with its fierce lords. There was, too, a band of Saracens who had made their homes on the hills and by the sea shore, who were a great plague to the folks, both by land and sea. Friedrich, who spoke the tongue of these Saracens, soon made friends of them, and was so kind that he won all their hearts. They were his best friends and sought to serve him in all ways. The Italians would not be friends with these strange men, who knew strange arts and were wise in queer ways, but Friedrich had a taste for such things, and men said he was more than half Saracen. Then, too, he did not lead the life of a good man, but gave up to all sorts of vice that wealth and pomp bring with them. At last the pope said he would lay the ban of the Church on him if he did not set out at once on the Crusade. So in all haste he

got what men he could and a fleet and set forth. He had with him Ludwig of Thuringia. Ludwig's wife was that Elizabeth of Hungary of whose sweet life and good deeds to the poor tales are told to this day. She met with scorn from his folk, for it was not the mode in that day to serve God as she did, and she had no love for balls and feasts, but went to see the poor. She would nurse the sick and lay them on her own bed, and she fed the poor babes who had no one to care for them, and went to the homes of the sick to give them drugs and dress their sores. She hid her good deeds from all as well as she could. Once it was said that Ludwig met her as she came out of their home with a great pack of bits of meat with which she was on her way to some home of need. "What have you there?" he said. She said with a smile, "Rose buds." It may be this was meant to show how sweet are deeds of love, for she was true in all her ways, and he found no fault with her good acts. She bade him look, and lo! he found naught but rose buds! This tale must mean that the good deeds of the just bloom and send forth sweets like the rose buds. Ludwig was young when he had to say goodby to this dear wife and their two babes. He had to start with his troops in the full heat of that time of the year, so that most grew sick. When they went on the ship they grew worse. Ludwig saw the white doves fly round the ship, a sign which had been held by his folks to mean death to one of his line. And his death came ere the fleet went back, which it had to do, as the emperor was ill. The pope, who knew what Friedrich's life

had been, would not be made to think that he was ill in truth. He thought the emperor had not gone in to the Crusade with his heart, and he would hear naught from the men sent to tell him of it. He laid the ban of the Church on him at once.

Then Friedrich in his turn wrote out his views of the pope—full of hate of him and his claims, and sent them to each king and prince in the world. But he still felt he must keep his word, and he set out once more on the Crusade. The pope did not like that a Crusade should be led by one who had the ban of the Church still on him, so he gave out that none should go with him. Friedrich did not fight this time, but made a truce with the Saracen Sultan. This was to last ten years, and for that time the road to Jerusalem should be made safe and the town should be put in the hands of Christians, all but one church, which the Turks might keep for their own. The pope's friends would not hear to this truce. They said it was a snare by which the foe would get Christians in their hands. When Friedrich took up his march for the Holy City the pope laid his ban on it while he should be there. So there was no priest to bless the emperor when he went in to the church that held the tomb of our Lord, but that did not daunt him. He set the crown of Jerusalem on his own head. Then he went back to Italy. He had in the mean time won much of old Greek lore from the Saracens, and he took with him a wise book that lives to this day.

The pope in the mean time did his best to stir up strife for the emperor and sent out some men to fight him. They bore keys made of cloth on their backs to show that they were sent forth by the See of Rome. But they were wild rough men who thought more of the gain they might make than aught else, and set to work to rob all in the lands through which they went. So of course all folk rose on them and were glad to give their help to the emperor to put them out. At this the pope gave up and peace was made with the emperor, and the pope took the ban from him and said that the truce with the sultan was the best that could have been made.

Friedrich did not seem in haste to get back to his own land. He had a love for Italy and his court there was a home for all men of fame in books or art or song. Friedrich was fond of verse and gave great gifts to those who had the most fame in this line. He had in his court Sir Thomas Aquinas, who taught the truths of Christ in such a way that all the world were glad to hear, and his works are read to this day. There too was the minnesinger, Walter, of Vogelneide, who left his gold to buy food to be strewn for the birds at his tomb, so that they might sing still for him the sweet songs of which he had been so fond in life.

This was a time when a new grace in dress and in the homes of men was shown. The fine arts grew, and the rude sports of the old time gave way to a more pure life.

In the mean time Friedrich had left things in Germany with small heed as to what went on there. His boy son, who had been known as King of the Romans when a babe, and sent to reign in Germany when a mere child, had grown up in the midst of strange crimes. There was no law that the folks held in fear, so one of the great men in the church set up a band who took the law in their own hands. They were court, judge and all. They met at dead of night and all took a vow not to tell a word of what went on of what they meant to do. They chose their own judge. When one had done a crime he would be sure to be found hung on a tree or with a knife thrust through his heart, with S. S. G. G. cut on the bark of the tree. That stood for "Stock, Stone, Grass, Green," but what these signs meant was not known. This court and judge whom no one knew, did a good work, though in a strange way, for the courts of law were so weak there was need of some thing to keep down crime.

As Heinrich grew up he felt that he ought to have more of the realm, and the emperor heard so much of his ill will and the want of all rule that he sent for him and all the head men of Germany to meet him. He said he should come home as soon as he had set things straight in Italy. But Heinrich had the wish to get things in his own hands, and laid siege to Wurms. So the emperor had to cross the Alps, and all Germans who were of right mind came to his help, so that it was not hard to crush out the plot and bring the son to terms. At last he came and made some show of grief

at his course. But he was not true, for we hear that this young man sought to take the life of the emperor by some means, and he was sent from the court and put in jail. And he was left in jail till his death.

Friedrich then staid in Germany and took a new wife from the line of the English kings. They were wed in great pomp, in the sight of four kings and ten dukes. He went to meet her with a great show of wealth and rich gifts, but he had soon to leave her and go back to Italy where the towns, with Milan at their head, once more had made a league. He had the crown of King of the Romans set on the head of his son Konrad, and made haste to cross the Alps. All the Ghibeelines in the north came to aid him and he beat the Milanese in a hard fight. They had to leave their dear flag, too, for there was a great rain and the car stuck fast in a bog. They could not save the gold cross on it, though they did stop to try, for the Germans came too fast on them. Friedrich had it drawn to Rome and kept it there as one of the spoils of war. But the war did not end there, for the emperor would give the Lombards no terms, and they chose to fight it out town by town. They knew the pope's heart was with them. On Palm Sunday the pope gave out that the emperor did not hold the truth of God, that he had said: "There were three men who had sought to cheat the world with lies, Moses, Mahomet, and Christ, and the last had met a death of shame on the cross." He said, too, that "the emperor was that beast told of in God's word which came out of the sea and tore all things with its

teeth and claws, and now sought with more bad men to drive the name of Christ out of the world." Friedrich wrote when he heard this: "The creed of the Church is mine. Moses was the friend of God." The pope would have been glad to have found some one to set up on his throne, but none would help him. The French king would not let a French prince go in for the prize.

In the mean time things did not go on well in Germany. The young Konrad drank too much and a fierce tribe like the Huns did as they chose in his realm.

The pope sent out a call to all the true sons of the Church to come to Rome and hear the case he had made out. The priests were told not to go, as Rome was a place of "bad drink, vile food, swarms of gnats, and air so thick they could grasp it; that the pope was a sly man and would get the best of them and their goods, and lives and souls might be lost." Some were kept back by this, and for the rest Friedrich had a fleet who met them and took off a load of priests and great men of the Church, and it is said that he let his chief foes die for want of food. All the rest had hard times and lost all they had with them ere they found their way home once more.

When Innocent IV was made pope he went on with the old strife and took part in the Lombard league, though he had been a great friend of the emperor. Friedrich said when he heard he was pope: "I fear I have lost a friend and found a foe in the chair of St. Peter, for no pope can be a

Ghibelline." His words were true. There was some small show of a wish to make peace, and then the breach grew worse and the pope fled from Rome to Lyons, which was much more out of Friedrich's reach than Rome. There he sent out a call to the heads of the Church to meet him, and said they could go by land. So a great host went and all the emperor's faults were brought up once more in their talk and the ban of the Church put on him. When he heard of it he had all his crowns brought out and put in front of him, and he said with a smile: "These are not lost, nor shall they be till much blood has been shed."

The French king strove to make peace but in vain. While Friedrich was ill at that time he heard that there was a plot to put him out of the way by means of some drug. The man who had been his friend for thrice ten years, whose wise words had been his guide in time of need was said to have made a plot to kill him. He was to give a bribe to the one who came to tend the emperor when he was ill, and the drug was to be put in the dose they gave to cure him. Friedrich bade the man drink half that dose in his sight. The man made a false step and so most of it was spilled on the floor. But Friedrich sent the rest of it to a man in jail, who had but a few days to live, and he had to drink it. His death came at once. Then Friedrich had the false friend thrown in jail and his eyes were put out. This gave him such fierce pain that his mind gave way and he made such a dash with his head at the wall of his cell that it was the cause of his death.

The son for whom Friedrich had the most love and who was the most like him was Enzio, whom he had made King of Sardinia. This son had the same grace of mien, the same fine looks, the gift of song, and the brave heart of the emperor. He had the ill luck to fall in the hands of his foes, and was thrown in jail. They would not free him for gold, and they did not seem to fear threats. The poor young man led a hard life in his lone cell, and the heart of the emperor was full of grief for him. Strange to say he was kept long years in jail, till his woes had worn him out. Once he had a chance to flee, but his long gold hair caught in the lock of the door and held him fast till he was seen. At last the brave heart which fear could not touch gave its last throb, and death set him free.

The emperor was not an old man, but his strength was worn out by all he had gone through. His heart was brave still, but the flesh was weak, and the end came in a town in Italy, the land that had his best love. He took the last rites, the bread and wine from the hand of the priest, and his death came on Christmas, 1250. He was a great man, and there are few on the lists of fame so bright, so brave, and so full of gifts. At the same time it is sad that he spent so much time and wore out his life in a strife to crush the free towns of Italy.

More Feuds with the Popes

Konrad had been made King of Germany as well as of Sicily, but the pope, Innocent IX, would not own him. He gave his voice for Wilhelm of Holland, and said he would give Sicily to young Edmund, son of Henry III of England, if they would send him gold to help him win it. They did so, but they were met by the troops of Konrad and were not as strong, so they lost the day. Then some one sought to kill Konrad in his bed, and it was not long before he did get his death by some drug, so it was said. Manfred, the son of the emperor, who had been left in charge of Sicily, was a fine young man—in face and form and in mind he had all the gifts that win men's hearts. His aim was to be wise, and just, and good. He knew book lore, and could write well. He was the friend of all wise men. He built good roads, and more than one fine bridge, and docks where ships might put in and be safe.

Konrad had left one small son, Conradin, who was but two years old. Elizabeth of Bavaria knew that there was no hope of a crown for him while he was still a child, so she took her child home. She sought to have the pope for his friend, but he would have naught to say to him. He lent all his aid to Wilhelm of Holland, and spent a great sum to help him, but Germany did not half own him. The best act we hear of Wilhelm was that he laid the first stone of that grand church of Koln. But the folk of Koln had no love for

him, and set the house in which he slept on fire, in hopes that it might cause his death. His own liege folk, the Frieslanders, rose to fight him. It was in the cold time, and he had to cross a swamp to get to them. The ice gave way 'neath the feet of his horse, and while he strove to get out of the mud the Frieslanders came up and slew him.

The new pope, Urban IV, found that Manfred had won all as his friends in Sicily. So to get aid to fight him he sent word to the king of France that if he would help him he would give Sicily to Charles of Anjou. Charles was a man of coarse looks, and his mind was as mean as his face, but he was a French man, and so was the pope. So he put the crown of Sicily on the head of Charles, and then with gold to bribe all who would take it, the new prince set out to meet Manfred. There was a long and fierce fight at Benevento, and Manfred was slain. The pope had his corpse sent out of the church where it was laid and flung in a trench, and his wife and babes thrown in jail. And they were kept there for life by this bad man.

The lords and men of rank in Germany had grown proud and full of self will, but their towns were strong. They had trade and much wealth, and had their own laws, and did all they could to make their towns like forts so that they could hold their own. They would own no lord but the emperor, and they took the name of free towns, with a pledge that they would stand as one for their rights. There was one of these leagues known as the Hansa, and it took in a host of towns. They had fleets and troops, and each

man of these towns had to learn a trade. First he must serve till he knew his trade. Then he must start out for a year to roam through strange lands and see how his work was done there, and pick up new ways if they were good ones. When he came back he could be sworn into the guild of his trade and sit with those who made the laws of the town. Each town had a fine Guild Hall, or, as they say, Rath-Haus. Each Guild put its young men to train in bands, and when they went out to war the flag of their Guild went with them. If they were slain the Guild took good care of their wives and babes. When Wilhelm was dead they thought they would choose a prince of great wealth who could give them gold to aid them in all times of need, yet one who had no lands in Germany. So they chose Richard of England as the best one, for he had great wealth from his mines in Cornwall. He was so glad to hear of his good luck that he sent three times ten cart-loads of gold to buy up votes for his side. But there was one of the old line put up, Alfonso, King of Castile, and each had the name of king. The pope was to say which should be the real one, but he put off this choice year by year, and in the mean time the towns grew more strong and had no wish to have an emperor at all. They thought they did not need one, but could make their own laws and rule as they chose. Alfonso had the name of emperor in his own land, but he did not go in to Germany. Richard did try to do some thing for his own cause, and spent vast sums in gifts to the Germans. He went to Germany three times and had the

crown put on his head at Aachen, where he kept court till he had to go and aid the king of England put down a feud with his own folks. There he fell in to the hands of the foe and was thrown in jail at Lewes.

In the mean time young Conradin had grown up to be a man, and there was a host of men in Italy who could not bear the rule of Charles of Anjou, who plead with him to come back and win his crown. He had a dear friend, Friedrich of Baden, who went with him to share all his toils and risks. He was young, full of grace, and won all hearts. The Lombards met him with joy. The pope said he must not go on, and laid the ban of the Church on him, but in Rome all came out to greet him. Then he went to Apulia, but Charles of Anjou put his troops to rout with much blood shed. Conradin and Friedrich rode off and meant to try the fight once more in Sicily, but some vile man in whom they had put their trust led them into the hands of Charles of Anjou. He had a court meet to try them, and the plea was that they were two thieves, and must be put to death as such. There was but one man who was so brave as to stand up in the court and cry out at such a crime, but they did not heed him. The two friends, who had no thought of such a fate, were at a game of chess when they were told that they must die the next day. They heard it with brave hearts and fond words for those they must leave. They went to their fate with a firm step, while their foe Charles sat where he could see and hear all. The folks were too much in fear of him to speak out, but each face

was full of gloom. Conradin stepped to the edge of the planks on which he stood and threw his glove to the crowd. "Take it," he said, "to some one who will fight for me, and bring to naught those who cause my death." Then he kneeled down and said the name of her who had borne him with a cry of grief. Last of all he was heard to pray, and then he laid his head on the block and took the blow. Friedrich, who burst in to tears for his friend, came next and met his death with a stout heart.

This vile act of Charles did not make him more dear to the hearts of the folks. They rose in a mass and in one night all the French men of rank and all the troops in Sicily were put to death. This was known as the Sicilian vespers.

Rodolf of Hapsburg

Now came a time that was long known as "the bad time," when there was no emperor, for the folks did not count the two kings of whom we have told you. It was a time of change and want of law, and each prince chose to rule like a king. The crusades had been the means of good to all, though in a way of which the Church had not thought. Those who went forth to fight found they had much to learn from their foes. The Saracens were brave and knew much of the fine arts. They could read the stars and knew of rare drugs which could act like a charm. Their modes of life were not so rough as the Germans, and they knew how to deck their homes with gems of art or rich and rare work in stuffs wrought with gold and bright dyes. So those who went to fight came back with new light in their minds, and went to work to change their own homes and ways of life. They grew more free in thought and speech as they knew more, and the priests could not keep all the rule in their hands as they had done. Sects sprang up that could not be put down by fire or sword.

But all this time, while Germany had two kings there was in fact no one to rule her. First right, which means the right of the most strong, was the rule out of the great towns. The lords had their homes high up on great rocks, and to rob was the chief work of their lives. If two men had a feud, a feud brief was sent out, in which all the man's

wrongs were set forth and that the foe and his friends and all in his house might know that he would do them all the harm he could. Then he felt free to rob or kill all he chose. It was said that none of the lords had the wish to learn to write save just what would do to sign these feud briefs.

At last when Richard of England was dead the pope sent the folks word that if they did not choose a king he would send them one. So they chose Rodolf of Hapsburg. He was a good and brave man and one that had the fear of God in his heart. It is said that once as he rode to Baden he met a priest on foot on his way to see a man who was like to die. The roads were full of mire and streams from the hills, and the priest had with him the bread and wine of the Church which he was to give to the man in the last rite. Rodolf set the priest on his own horse and led him on his way, and when they got to the sick man's house he would not take back his steed, he said: "I would not ride to war on a beast that had borne the flesh and blood of my Lord," and so he made it a gift to the priests when they should ride to see sick men as long as it should live. This tale is sung in the songs of the time. In one fight in which he had lost his horse he saw that his friends sought to put the man to death who had slain it. "Not so," he said, "I saw how brave he was; so brave a man must not be put to death."

He had his crown set on his head at Aachen and he sent word to the pope that he would lay no claim to the lands in Italy. So of course the pope was quite glad to give

his vote for him. When one found fault with him that he had let go all that had been held so long, he said: "Rome is like a wild beast's den. I see the prints of the feet of hosts who go there but of none who come back."

The King of Bohemia, Ottokar, would not own Rodolf's right to the realm, and thought he was so strong that he could hold his own. He had got Austria when its Duke Friedrich had been put to death with Conradin, and his rule was with a strong hand. But he found that Germany did not go with him, and he lost bit by bit of his land till at last he had to come and kneel to Rodolf and beg that some small piece should be left to him. He came with great pomp, but Rodolf met him in the plain suit he wore each day. He said: "The king of Bohemia has oft had a laugh at my old gray coat, but now my coat shall laugh at him." As Ottokar kneeled to the king it came to pass that the tent gave way. Ottokar was in a rage at what he thought was a slight, and as soon as he could raise troops went to war once more. There was a great fight in which Rodolf won the day. He did his best to save the life of his foe, but the corpse of Ottokar was found full of wounds. His son, Wengel, kept Bohemia, but all the rest went to Rodolf.

He won the love of all at home. He went through all parts of his land and heard all who came to him to tell their griefs. When his men would have kept some poor men from him, he said: "For God's sake let them come. I was not made a king to be shut up from my kind."

He wore plain clothes and ate plain food, and when he heard that some of his knights found fault with the sour wine and rye bread that he was wont to share with them he would not keep them with him, as he said they were too choice to serve him.

At Mainz one day, as he took his walk in his old gray suit, he went in to a shop where they sold bread to get warm at the fire. The dame, who was in a cross mood, said: "Men who fight have no place in poor folks' homes," for she thought by his suit that he was from the troops. "Let me rest, my good dame," he said; "I am an old man who has spent all his life to serve that chap Rodolf, who still lets me want." "It serves you right," said the dame, and she went on in a fierce way to rail at the king, and at last she put out the fire so that the smoke should make him go. When he sat down that day to dine he sent a boar's head and a flask of wine to the cross dame, as a gift. Of course the dame came to him in tears and great grief for what she had said, and he told her if she would tell her sharp words to all there he would make it all right.

He put an end to all wrongs, and made the land so full of peace that men could sow and reap, and those who made bread had soon no fault to find. He took some of the lords who had done naught but rob and kill, and had them hung. He did not let those go who did wrong, and he put all the laws in force. Though he was mild and good, he was firm and just. It was said of him: "He was the most brave

man of his day, and the most true man that ere won the place of judge."

He lost two of his sons by death, and it was his wish that the third, Albrecht, should be made King of the Romans in his life time. But the folk put it off and said they could not keep up the state of two kings at once. Rodolf did not live to see the crown put on his son's head. When he was ill and was told that it might end in death he said in a brave way: "Well, then, now for Speyer." That was the place where the dead emperors were laid at rest. He did not live to get there, but was on his way. His death was in July, 1291.

He had won the poor in his land by his frank ways and plain life. He could rule his own self, and that is more, the good book says, than to win a town. He was at no time cross, but full of jests and wise words. If the stores ran short he would pull up aught that was fit to eat that grew in the ground, peel it and eat it in the sight of his men to show that he would have no more than they, and he would not drink till he knew that there was some to spare for all. The pope had not put the crown on him, but he was known as emperor or kaiser, as the Germans call it, and he was one of the best they had known. He was the first of the house of Hapsburg, and was the one to found that line in Austria.

Four More Kings

The great men who chose the king were known by the name of Electors. The choice now fell on Adolf of Nassau, who is said to have been one of the worst kings that had yet worn the crown. He was fierce and hard and made all hate him. He bought Thuringia from the bad prince who held it. This man had been so harsh to his two sons that they fled from him, but he took them and had them thrown in jail, where they would have lost their lives for want of food if some of those who had been wont to serve in their homes had not fed them, and at last they got free.

They soon found friends and set out to get back the land the bad prince had sold, and half Germany went to help them. The troops of Adolf, whom he had bought to serve him, did as they chose, and the land was full of fear and hate of them. Once they caught two poor dames and went to work to melt some tar and dip them in it and stick the plumes of birds on them. Then they thought it a grand jest to take them in the camp and show them as two strange birds they had found. When one of the counts, a great man, went to tell the king of this vile deed, he was not heard, but sent out with rude words. The two heirs of Thuringia did not win the fight, but they held out for three years. And by that time the electors were sick of the choice, and they met and said that Adolf by his deeds had lost all claim to the land, and they chose Albrecht, the son

of the good Rodolf, in his stead. So the two young men got back their own land, Thuringia, once more. Adolf would not give up, so there was a great fight with Albrecht near Wurms. When the two met, Adolf said: "Here you shall give up to me your empire and your life." Albrecht said: "Both are in the hands of God!" and then he gave him such a blow that he fell from his horse. Then some Austrians came up and made an end of him. The suits Adolf and his knights wore were of such weight that when a man fell from a horse he could not rise, but must lie there and give some one a chance to stab him.

Albrecht went to Aachen, where all the kings had gone for their crowns, and there he was made king. He was not like the good Rodolf, for he was harsh to his folk. He was tall and grim, and was made to look more fierce by the loss of one eye. His great wish was to make his sons strong in their rights and great, and when the last of the kings of Bohemia was dead he got his son Rodolf put in his place.

The way in which Albrecht lost his eye goes to show what was known in those days of drugs. Once in his youth he was quite ill, and it was thought that some one had put a drug in his food to kill him. So the wise man who came to try and cure him took this way to do it: He hung him up by the heels and took one eye out, so that the drug might run out by that way!

He did one good thing in his reign. It had been the law for those who went in boats on the Rhine to pay great tolls

to the electors. One of these electors had grown so proud he was known by the name of "King Maker," and he said he had but to blow his horn to call up all the emperors he chose. But these men had to give up the tolls, and men were free to sail the Rhine at will. Albrecht was too strong for them, and the pope would not help them.

The next thing Albrecht did was to lead a force in to Thuringia, as he had a wish to get that land back. When he heard that the king was on his way with troops the young land-graf had to fly with his wife and new born babe. When they had gone a short way the child set up loud cries, and it is said that the land-graf made his troops stop and keep the foe at bay while the child was fed and put to rest. He was a man of great size, as is shown by a coat of mail now to be seen at Wartburg, and his skill was such that he drove out the Austrians and kept his land.

Albrecht sought, too, to rule Switzerland, and he sent there a harsh man by the name of Gesler. The folks of this land could not bear his hard rule, and three men met at night and swore they would make a stand and strive to get free. The tale that has been told so long is that Gesler, to see how far he could bend this brave folk to his will, had set up his hat on a pole in the chief square of the town and said that all who went by should bow low to it, as if he stood there. There was one man, Wilhelm Tell, who would not bow to it, so they took him and threw him in jail. Now Wilhelm Tell was one of the best shots in the place, and Gesler told him that he would give him a chance

for his life if he should prove to him that he was as good a shot as fame said. So he told him to put his young son 'neath a tree and try if he could shoot some thing that he would put on the top of his head. You see how hard that must have been, for Tell would be full of fear for his boy, and if his hand should move but a hair's breadth he might kill him. But Tell came forth with a stout heart and a grave face to do his task and try for his life. Do you know what he put on the boy's head? It was the same fruit that Eve ate, as told of in the Word of God, by which "sin came in to the world and all our woe."

His hand did not shake as he took his bow and sped the dart to the mark. The fruit was cleft in two. But Gesler saw still a dart left in his belt. "What is this for?" he said. "For you, if I had slain my son," said Tell. Then Gesler was in a rage and said he should be put where he could not see the sun or moon for the rest of his life. So they put him in a boat to cross Lake Lucerne, but a fierce storm came on and they had to free Tell from his chains so that he could steer the boat, as no one else knew how to do it. Tell did so, but when they got to the shore he sprang out and fled. He took his place back of a tree where he lay in wait till Gesler came by, when he shot him dead. Then he made off to his friends, and they rose in a mass and tore down all signs of the rule of the Austrian and swore they would be free. Albrecht thought it would be a light task to bring these Swiss boors to a right mind, and he made a call for his troops. Just at this time Johan the son of that Rodolf

who had been King of Bohemia, came, as he had oft done, to ask for his land. He was now grown and thought it was time he should have his own. Albrecht made a mock of him and threw him a wreath and said that was a fit toy for a boy of his age.

Johan made a vow that he would make the king pay dear for his joke. There were four knights who for some cause were not on good terms with the king, and to these Johan went. They made a plot, and when the king went to cross the Reuss they made out to get in the first boat with him. Then with the cry: "Wilt thou now give me back my own," Johan gave the king a stab in the neck and three of the knights did the same. He was left to die in the arms of a poor dame who came to try and help him. The men who had done this fled to Switzerland, as they thought they would find friends there. But the brave men of that place would have naught to do with them. The friends of the king got the four knights in their hands at last and put them to death. One was broke on a wheel, and the one who had not struck the king met the same fate as the rest. Johan got off, but it was said he was a prey to grief for his crime, and did not seem to find rest till he went to the pope at Rome and told his sin. Then he took a new name and led a life of good works far from the haunts of men. He is known as Johan the Parricide.

The electors at this time said they would have no more kings of the house of Hapsburg, and they chose Heinrich of Luxemburg, who is known as Heinrich the Sixth. He

had no thought of such a thing, but when the news was brought he set out to do what was right in all things and he was one of the best men who wore the crown of Karl the Great. The four sons of Albrecht came to him to ask that his lands should be put in their hands. He told them that they had best not touch Austria as it had been the death of five kings. They told him to take care that he should not be the sixth. In the end he gave it to the first born, Friedrich, and he made a pledge that he would let Switzerland go free, and help him in his plans with Italy. He had a wish to get back the old hold on that land and free it from French rule. So in 1310 he set out to cross the Alps. The Lombard towns held out for a while, but he took them at last. Then he went on to Rome and found that half of the folks were for him, but half were on the side of the French. He kept on his march and took the Capitol and the Colosseum but he was kept out of the Vatican. The pope had to send his crown to him by the hands of three great men of the Church. This was put on his head in the church of St. John, and while the emperor kneeled the foe shot their darts all round him. But he made it plain that he was such a wise and just man that all the best men of the state came to look on him as their head. His death came in the midst of his good works. It was dealt out to him at the hands of a priest who it is said put a drug in the wine that he gave him in the church. When the emperor knew what had been done he said to the wretch: "In the Cup of Life

thou hast dealt me out death; fly, ere my men can take thee." Germany had a great loss in this good emperor.

So the "king makers" had to meet once more. Five chose Ludwig, Duke of Bavaria and two Friedrich, Duke of Austria. Both had the blood of Rodolf of Hapsburg in their veins. Ludwig took his crown at Aachen and Friedrich at Koln. One held most of the north and one most of the south. They had no time to take care of Italy, for their own land was full of wrongs. The plague and want of food came to lend their aid to make it hard for all. The plague was known as the "black death," and it took on hosts of the folk. The two kings had a fierce fight at Muhldorf in 1322. Friedrich thought he had won the day when a fresh force came on him, and went to work on his worn out troops till they were mown down like grass. This was led by one Schwepperman, a Bavarian. Ludwig, who had thought all was lost, could scarce trust his eyes when he saw them bring in the chiefs of the foe and at last Friedrich the king.

That night when they came to Ludwig and said there was naught to eat but some eggs, and but few of them, he said: "Give them each one egg, but give two to the true Schwepperman. If I sleep in my camp this night I owe it to him." These words were cut on the tomb of Schwepperman when he was laid to rest, and all of his name had an egg in gold on their shield. Ludwig met his foe with kind words, but he sent him to a strong hold to be kept out of his way. Pope John laid the ban of the Church

on Germany, but most of the folk were on the side of Ludwig. When three years were gone he went to see Friedrich in jail, and said they were too near of kin to be foes, and that he thought they might both reign in peace and both have the name of "Kings of the Romans." This Friedrich was glad to do, and though the pope would have naught to do with this plan, the two held it all their lives in good faith. When Friedrich's death came, then Ludwig was sole emperor.

He did not win the love of his folk, for his whole thought was to get all he could for his sons, and he did not keep his word with England, who had sent him gold for troops to help them. So no one gave him aid when the pope put a more fierce ban on him, and the electors were glad of a chance to make a new king. The pope sent his vote to aid them, and the choice fell on Johan of Bohemia, but all the towns save those of Bohemia and Saxony stood true to Ludwig. In 1347 Ludwig had a stroke and fell dead from his horse at a bear hunt.

Rule and Misrule

Karl IV was held by most to be more of a French man than a German, and there was a good old man who was the choice of the electors at first, but he did not live to wear the crown. So Karl came to the throne, and like the rest of kings had all done with state and pomp, and the crown put on his head at Aachen. The pope sent word he might come to Rome for the crown there if he would bring no troops and stay no more than a month.

Karl had more love for his own land, Bohemia, than for all the rest of Germany. He sold the crown lands and all else that he could sell, and in this way made out to rob all the emperors who were to come. The Black Death was in such force in the land that whole towns were left with not one soul in them, and it was so bad that it took off the dogs and cats and pigs. Some thought it was the fault of the Jews, and in Strasburg they burned them to death, great hosts in one pile. Some thought the plague was sent for the sins of the land, and they thought they could best show their grief by fast and scourge. There was a band of them who went through the streets and the towns and sang hymns. They would strip off their clothes to the waist and had a scourge in their hands, and each would beat the man in front of him till the blood would stream from the wounds. In this way they thought they could make their peace with God, and He would take the plague from them.

But the most wise of all were some of the good wives and maids who made a band to go out and nurse and tend the sick.

In Karl IV's time was built the great school of Germany at Prague, and he did all he could to make that town fine. He, too, first found out that the springs at Carlsbad were good to heal the sick, and they took their name from him. But he had small care for the folk of Germany, and thieves once more could roam at will in all parts of the land, and the barons still held their place on the tops of high hills, whence they could see their prey and swoop down and take it.

He had more thought of Italy, and what he could get out of the towns there. But they soon found that he did not keep his word, and that a bribe was the most sure way to get his aid.

He was a man who spoke more than one tongue and was fond of books. He knew how to rule his own land, Bohemia, well, but for all the rest he did not care save to get as much out of it as he could. He had got his first born son, Wenzel, made King of the Romans two years ere his death.

In 1378 Wenzel, King of Bohemia, came to the throne. He was rude and coarse, more like a man out of the rough tribes of the north in the fierce wild deeds he did than a Christian king. He left Germany to get on as best she could, and things grew so bad there that good men had to

form a league and take hold of some of the thieves and have them put to death. The folk had no love for the king, and when he sent to the men of Rothermel for a sum of gold they would not give as much as a cent. The king wrote these lines to them which are still kept:

"To the men of Rothermel who do not keep faith with the empire: "The deil went forth to shear a hog and spake thus: 'Great cry; but not much wool.

"Rex."

But at his own court at Prague it was best seen what sort of man he was. He made a feast there at one time to which he bade all the great men. He had three large tents, black, white and red. He was in the black tent and each man had to go in there first. Then as each man came in he would ask him what lands he held from the crown. If the man said he would yield them all up they took him to the white tent to a grand feast; but if he said he thought he had a right to keep them, they took him to the red tent and cut off his head. The next time he gave a feast, ere his guests sat down he made haste to show them a man who stood near with an ax and said to him with a grim smile: "Wait a while, thou shalt have work when we dine." The guests were not slow to take this hint, and, of course, he got all he chose to ask of them.

His poor wife must have led a sad life, for it is said that he kept a pack of blood hounds at his side when he ate and when he was in bed, so that she was oft torn by them. She

was a good and kind dame and had a priest who led her to find that peace in love to God and good works that she did not find at home. This was a man, Nepomuk by name, who could at times make the emperor less harsh. But one day when he sat down to dine and a fowl was put in front of him that was not quite done, he flew in a great rage and said the poor cook should be put on the spit in front of the fire to roast. Nepomuk kneeled to the king to beg him not to have such a vile deed done, but in vain. All he got for his pains was the wrath of the king, who had him thrown in jail. He was held there for some days, then all at once he was sent for to dine with the king in great state. But he found that the king's aim was to find out all the queen had said to him, when she told him all her faults as a priest in the Church. This as a good priest he would not tell, and when the king found that threats were vain his rage knew no bounds. At first he sought to make the priest speak by the pain of the rack, then he was bound hand and foot and thrown in the Moldau at night from the bridge which still bears his name. But his corpse came up, and his friends took it and it was borne to the great church, and all the priests and the folk ran there to see him and touch him, as they held him to be a saint.

Wenzel's great friend was the man whose work it was to cut off heads; a grim sort of friend you may think. But he did not care much for his friends, for one day in jest he told this man that he would like to know just what one felt

when he had his cut off. "Bind me," he said, "and let me lay my head on the block and wait till I cry 'Strike'!"

The man did so, and when the king said "Strike," he did it in a light way with the flat of the sword. But the king did not like his own jest, for he sprang up, told the man to lay down his head in turn, caught up the sword, and cut it off!

The folk in their fright went to the next son of Karl, Siegmund by name, to ask him what they should do with this mad man. He told them they ought to put him in a cell and so keep him that he could do no more harm. So they shut him up in a fort at Prague. One day when they let him bathe in the Moldau he met a young girl with a boat, and got her to let him in and row him off to the shore, where he took up arms to fight the folk. But they got Siegmund to come with troops, and they took him once more and sent him to Vienna. There he was shut up in a strong hold. There he saw one day a kind old man who gave alms to all the poor in the court. He found a chance to talk with him and won him to his side, so that one day he brought a silk cord by means of which the king slid down to the stream. There his friend was in wait with a boat to row him off. He got back to Prague and made out to get his realm back, and he gave high rank to the friend who had lent him his aid.

In the mean time Duke Leopold of Austria had once more sought to make the free Swiss yield to him. He went with a great host of men to fight a small band who had

naught but shields of wood and clubs with spikes round their head, to which they gave the name of stars. The duke was in great haste to fight. One knight sought to make him wait till some more troops came, but one said: "No, we will serve up these chaps to the duke this night, boil or roast, as he likes best." So the troops were drawn up and stood like one steel wall, their spears were so thick. It did not seem that the brave Swiss could break that wall or reach them with their poor arms. They all kneeled down to pray, and then one of them, Arnold von Winkelried by name, stepped out and said: "Dear friends, I will make a way for you. Take care of my wife and babes." Then he made a dash on the spears, took all he could in his arms, and held them fast to his breast in the clasp of death. The Swiss sprang in to the gap he had made and fought on his corpse. Fright took hold of the Austrians. Most fled, but a few brave ones staid to fight it out. The Duke Leopold was one of' these, and met his death there. It was through one brave man that this strange fight was won, and his name still lives in song and tale. Two years from that time the Swiss won the day in one more fight, and from that time they were free.

Wenzel went on with his mad deeds till the folk felt that they could bear no more. Some one wrote on the door of his home: "Wenzel, the new Nero." When the king saw it he wrote this line next: "If I have not been I will be now."

So the electors met and chose Ruprecht of the Rhine to be King of Germany. Wenzel said he was glad of it, for

he should now have time to tend to his own land, Bohemia. He did seem to care for the great school in Prague, and had some wise men brought there to teach.

But some of the towns would not have Ruprecht, though he was a good man. The fact is they did not want to have laws to mind at all, they had had their own way so long. The new king was not so strong that he could force them. He did try to make way in Italy, but lost the fight at Breccia. This was the last fight of the Germans on that side of the Alps for five times ten years. In Germany he had more friends, and did his best to right some of the wrongs of the poor.

The Reformation

On Ruprecht's death in 1410 the electors met to choose a king. They chose Siegmund, who was one of them, and he cast a vote for his own self, for he said there was no one whose good points he knew so well as his own. So he got his crown at Aachen. He was a good man, but vain, and could not long keep at rest. He was full of plans to set things right, for there were just then three popes in Italy. At that time John Huss taught in the great school at Prague and sought to stir up the folk to the wrong that was in the Church of Rome. This made men wish to set a bound to the pope's claims. One of the worst of these was that the pope had said if a man went on a crusade or to Rome he would be freed from years of hell fire, when he was dead, in a place to which they gave the name of purgatory, and at last the priests sold for a sum of gold bills to free souls from this fire for a year or more. The more gold paid the more time could they buy from purgatory. The works of John Wickliffe of England were brought to Prague, and set all the sects who had not yet lost their strength to work once more. Men rose here and there to preach that the Church should go back to its pure ways, that it was no use to pray to saints, and that a trade in the mass, to say they could save souls for so much was vile and wrong.

At last Siegmund set to work to see what he could do to right these wrongs in the Church. So he brought from France and Italy a great crowd of the heads of the Church and wise men and priests, and one of the popes, for there were three of them at that time. They met at Constance, and a strange crew of all sorts of folks, knights and squires, those who had shows and games or things to sell, and those who came in their rags to beg, went there too, so that round the town was like a great fair. First they said that this should be known as the Council of the Church. Then they said that the voice of the Council of the Church should be of more weight than the pope's. Then they thought they would try the new faith, and they sent John Huss a safe pass to come and tell them of it. He did not feel a strong trust in the word of the emperor, so he strove to get off hid in a load of hay. But he was brought to Constance, and ere they said a word to him he was thrown in a foul cell, so that he grew quite ill. Siegmund would have set him free, but the chief men of the Church of Rome would not hear to it. When they brought him out to try him the whole thing was a farce. When he would try to speak they would drown his voice with their cries. Some of the things that Wickliffe held were read and they were said to be false and bad. Huss said he would give up what he taught if they could prove it was not in the Word of God. But they told him he must give up all he held as truth and teach it no more or be burned to death.

This he would not do, so on the 6th of July, 1415, they met once more. Huss was led in their midst clad in the dress of a priest. The charge was read and they did not let him speak a word. Once he did raise his voice and spoke of the safe pass that the emperor had made out for him. They gave him the cup which held the wine blessed by the Church, and then they took it from him and said that he should not have the cup which held the blood of Christ. Huss said: "I trust that I shall this day drink of this cup in Heaven." Then they took off his priest's dress and laid the curse of the Church on him, and said that his soul would be lost. But he said: "I give it in to God's hands."

That same day he was led out to be burned. He kneeled by the stake to pray. When they gave him one more chance for his life if he would take back what he had taught, he said in a loud voice that he would seal by his death the truth of all he had taught. When they had lit the pile he was heard to cry out three times from the midst of the flames to that Christ in whom he had put his trust.

Jerome, the friend of Huss, who had been thrown, too, in a cell spite of his safe pass, was so weak and ill that he said he would teach no more. But when he grew strong his faith grew strong, too, and he stood up in the face of the Council and in a bold and grand speech he made plain the truth of all he had taught. He too was burned at the stake.

The fate of these two men set Bohemia on fire. There were hosts of men of all rank who set their names to a bill

of blame to the Council and grief for the good men they had sent to their death. The Council said that they would sift out of the great school at Prague all who held the faith of John Huss. The Bohemians grew more fierce at this. Men of all ranks were as one. They said the faith of John Huss should be taught in their school and the Church should have naught to say to it. There was one man of rank, John Liska, who went through the land in a mad way. He had a flag with the Cup on it, and took up a march through Bohemia at the head of a crowd of all age, sex and rank, and they did all sorts of crimes. When they came to a church of Rome they would storm and rob it. When they came to the town hall, where some who held their faith were in jail, they threw stones till all the panes of glass were broke. Then they went in and threw out the chief men who fell on the spears of those in the street. This band of Liska's took the name of "God's folk," but they did not act up to their name. King Wenzel was so full of fear at the sounds he heard when they were on their march through Prague that he fell dead in a fit. The Hussites at last brought the rest to terms, which were: "That they should be free to preach the word of God. That the bread or wine of the Church should not be kept back from those of the faith, and that the Church should hold no lands in its gift. Siegmund had to yield all this ere the folks would own him for their king. He had a bad wife and he thought she was the cause of his death. On his death bed he gave the name of his son in law, Albrecht of Hapsburg, as the one to

whom he would leave his crown. Albrecht II had a hard fight at first for the throne of Bohemia, but they took him at last and he was made King of Hungary and King of the Romans, too. He was a good and wise man, but his reign was short. He found he had to keep back the Turks who were on the march for Hungary. So he set out with his troops and made his camp by the Danube. But the marsh round the camp made him so ill that he had to turn back. He grew so much worse that they thought it would be best for him to stop. But he said he would be well if he could get home and but see his dear wife and babes once more. So they bore him on, but he did not get home. His death came at a small place on the way. His reign was but two years. He left two girls and one son, a babe. The Hungarians who were in need of a strong hand to help them, said they would give their crown to King Ladislas of Poland. But when they came to crown him the crown could not be found. At last the queen came with the crown, which she had hid in her babe's crib. He was twelve weeks old, but they put the crown on his head and made him a knight. Still the great mass of the folk in Hungary held to the King of Poland.

The electors had in the mean time met, and they gave the crown to one of the house of Hapsburg, Friedrich, Duke of Styria. He was a dull man, who sought to grasp all he could. He thought that Austria was the lord of all the world. He was the last emperor who had a crown put on his head at Rome.

He took for wife Eleanor of Portugal, a dame whose charms had won great fame. Feasts were held with crowds of guests, founts of wine, and all that was rich and rare to eat. As he went in to Viterbo, some young men, to play a joke on him, let down hooks to pull up the cloth of gold 'neath which he rode. Next they sought to fish up his hat, which had a rare gem on it; but this was more than Friedrich could bear. He made a charge at the crowd, and the chief ones in this joke were thrown in jail for a while.

The death of the child-king of Bohemia came in 1457, and then they chose a Hussite, by the name of George Podiebrad. Hungary, too, chose a king, by the name of Matthias, who had won much for them in the war with the Turks. Friedrich did not win the hearts of his own folk, the Austrians, and once they laid siege to his home, and the King of Bohemia had to come to his help. So from that time Friedrich had to hold up this king's right to the crown.

Charles the Bold, a rich prince who held all the lands at the mouth of the Rhine, with Flanders and Holland, had one child, Mary of Burgundy. He thought it would be a good plan to wed her to Maximilian, the son of Friedrich. This young man had a fine form and face, and long, fair hair. There were eight weeks of feasts, for which Charles paid, while the two kings came to terms. Charles was to be made King of the Romans; but five of the electors would not have it, and they made out to coax Friedrich out of the scheme. So in the depth of the night he stole out, took a boat on the Moselle, and got to Koln ere his flight was found out. He had not paid his debts, and he left no goodby for his host. When at last Charles the Bold met his death in a siege at Lorraine, the young Mary found it so hard to rule that she sent Maximilian a ring which soon brought him to her side. They were wed at once, and for three years had much joy and peace, but then she met her death by a fall from her horse. She left two babes, Philip and Margarethe.

Friedrich had got into strife with Matthias, King of Bohemia, who came in such strength in to Austria that Friedrich had to fly from Vienna. He went from town to town and sought help, but could not find it.

His son could give him no aid. The states of Flanders and Holland would not let him have charge of them when his wife was dead, but sent the child Margarethe to the court of France, that she might be brought up for a wife for the Dauphin Charles. But when the electors met they

chose Maximilian as King of the Romans. Then Anne of Brittany, who had a hard time with the French, and her own folk too, sent to beg him to come and wed her and save her from her foes. He set out with a troop of Germans, but he had to pass through the town of Bruges. There the men were in a rage at the Germans he brought, so that when he came in to the town they rose on him and drove him in a shop, from whence they took him to a fort and kept him ten weeks. By that time the head men of Germany had got troops and brought the folks of Flanders to terms, and they set the king free. All the whole time he bore his ill luck so well that they could not hate him. When he gave thanks that he was free in a church at Bruges, he said to the folks: "Now we are at peace."

By this time Anne of Brittany, who did not seem to care much for him, did not wait, but wed Charles of France. This was the prince for whom the child Margarethe had been meant, so she was sent back to her home.

Maximilian was a tall fine man, full of grace. He was wise in book lore, could speak in all tongues, and knew all there was to be known of art at that day. He was so brave that we may say he was rash. Once he went into a den of wild beasts and found that the door had been shut on him. The beasts made a spring on him, but he fought so well that he kept them at bay till help came. He could climb like a wild goat or deer and had been in all sorts of straits in wind and snow storms in the Tyrol. Once he made a slip

at a place known as Martin's-ward and was caught by a small ledge of rock with a cleft in it, whence there was no way up or down. Crowds of folk came out to look at him, but they could not help him. They could not so much as get at him to give him food or drink. They thought he must starve and die in their sight. He threw down a stone with a note made fast to it in which he wrote that he would like to have mass said for him in the town, and that they must fire a shot that he might know just when they all kneeled to pray for him. At that time he all at once came in their midst and said a boy who kept sheep had come and led him through a way in the cleft and brought him out safe. As no such youth had been seen from that time the folk grew to think that God had sent some one to save him. A church built by Maximilian still stands on the top of that rock.

As he could do and dare so much, they gave him the name of the Last of the Knights. He was fond of fire arms, which had but just come in to use, and he sought to find out all sorts of new ways to make them. In this way he ran great risks. Once the toe of his boot, which had a long point, as was the mode in that day, was caught and torn off by the wheel by which he sought to turn balls out of stone, and once he was just in time to keep back his fool ere he lit with a match what would have sent all with one blast in to the jaws of death. He found out in this way new things to use in war and at the same time he did all he could for the arts of peace. He was kind to the great man, Albrecht

Durer, who could paint so well, and he gave his aid to those whose work it was to print books. He wrote two books, one of which by name "The White King," told the tale of his own life and of the young wife for whom he did not cease to mourn.

In the mean time the want of rule and law in Germany grew too great to be borne. One of the knights, or we may call him one of the thieves, by the name of Kunz, went so far as to scale the wall of a strong fort of one the Elector of Saxony and steal his two boys, Ernst and Albrecht. Ernst was hid by some of the band in a cave, but Kunz took Albrecht with him on a horse. He made a halt in a wood at the break of day to get some wild fruit for the boy to eat. A man came up just then and Albrecht plead for help. The man had a long pole, and he made out to hold Kunz till his call brought some work men who set the boy free and took Kunz to jail. His men then gave up Ernst, and Kunz had his head cut off in a week from that time. You see he had thought the boys would be bought back for a large sum of gold.

Each prince and all the towns did what they could to put down these vile deeds, and they made a strong league for it, by name the Swabian League. They set to work to put down all feud briefs, and where there was a knight who would not keep the law they would storm his home on the heights and make him do right or else put him to death.

Friedrich took small heed of all this. He gave all to his son. He spent his days with his books. He had grown old and weak. It had been his way for years to kick at a door with his right foot when he went in to a room, and then he would thrust back the foot to close the door. But one day the kick was so hard that he hurt his leg, and went lame from that time. This grew so much worse that he had to have the leg cut off. When this was done he took the leg in his hand and said: "There! a sound boor is worth more than a sick Kaiser." At first all went well, but then he grew worse, and his death was on the 19th of August, 1493. One great thing took place in his time. John Gutenberg, of Mayence, first made the plan by which we print. He first had type made that one could move from place to place, and set so as to form words. He had to try a long time ere he could get all right—the right stuff for the types and the best sort of ink.

He was poor, but he found a man of wealth to go in with him. Till then all books were dear, but once a press was made they could be sold cheap. The way they were made was not told, and the folks thought it was by some black art, that was not right. The first press was made in 1440. This art made a great change in the whole world, but the kings of that age were the last ones to guess what the press was to do for all time to come.

Kaiser Max, as he was known, though he had not the crown of emperor, came to the throne in 1493. He drove

back the Turks in a brave way, so that all came out to hail him at Innsbruck as a brave and true prince.

He took for his wife Bianca Maria of Milan, that he might have some foot hold in Italy. He did not seem to care for her, for she was a dull, fat dame and of small mind, who found her chief joy in the things she ate. There was all sorts of strife in Italy just then. The French were there and Maximilian took part with the league to get them out. The Italians would at times side with each, but their wish was to get rid of all. The pope, Alexander VI, was one of the worst of men, and had brought the Church into such a state, that all good men felt there was no cure but to call a grand council.

The strife went on, and when at last the pope was dead, Maximilian thought he would try to be made pope, and thus he could best right the wrongs in the Church. But this made men laugh at him, and Leo X was made pope. Some thought that Kaiser Max was not one whom men could trust, but the chief fault was that each German prince felt like a king, and would not keep rules or serve him as they should have done. They did his will if they chose to, that was all, and most of the time they did not choose. He lost Bohemia and Switzerland, but he did much by the way he laid out his land and set good men to rule each part and to keep the peace. Austria was kept in good rule, and there was a court set up there to hear plaints from all the rest of the land. But do what he would he could not stir up the Germans to join with him to keep off

the Turks, who grew more bold year by year. A large stone that fell in a storm was held to be a bolt from the sky, and Maximilian had it hung up in the church to show that they might look for the wrath of God if they did not do what was right. But all his words were in vain.

Still there was a gain of more than one kind in the time of Maximilian. The knights who had been the dread of all the land as thieves, were put down, and in the wars new modes had been brought in. They gave up the old coats of mail which were of such weight for man and horse, and a rude kind of gun was brought in use.

The chief strength of Germany lay in the towns, which kept all the arts in life and held a class of men who knew book lore and yet were not in the Church. Till then few but the priests had books or read them. In these towns were met those who could write the best, paint the best, mold the clay, or cut the stone in shapes and forms of men or beasts, or build grand piles that still stand. In these towns fairs and feasts were held and in times of peace the life there was gay and bright. One of the popes wrote: "One may say that no folk live in more clean and bright towns than the Germans. They look as new as if they were just built. There is great wealth here. At their feasts they drink from cups of gold, and there is not a dame who has not gems and gold to wear. The boys in this land can ride ere they can walk and sit firm while the horse goes at full speed. Men move at ease in their arms as if they did not feel the weight. Ah! you Germans might be the lords of the

world, as you were of old, if you were one and had but one king to rule you." The death of Maximilian came in 1519.

Martin Luther

At the time of the death of Maximlian there was a man who had been born to do a work more great than ere was done by kings or knights of old. This man was Martin Luther. The new mode of thought, which was known as the Reformation, had found place in the hearts and hopes of a large class of men. In all parts of the world there were those who held that the Word of God was the first rule of life, and that they need not go to priest or church for their faith. When men found out how to print, all could have the good book in their hands and read and find out the truth for their own selves.

Martin Luther was the son of a poor man who cut wood for his bread. When he was at school at Eisleben he had to go in the streets from door to door and sing chants so that he might get a few coins for food. He was so fond of his book and so glad to learn that all had the wish to help him. At last he was sent to a grand school at Erfurt, and he did well there and stood with the first. His folks would have him learn law, but his heart was set to serve God as a monk. He had read much in God's Word, and had such a sense of his own sins that he grew quite ill. One day as he took a walk with a young friend the youth was struck dead at his side in a storm. Then Luther made up his mind to give up the world and be a monk. He still did not seem to find peace of mind or rest from the thought of his sins. He

would fast and pray, and flog his own self, as was the way with the monks, but in vain, till at last he found rest in God's word. The peace he got there he did not lose, and he held out to the end.

In the year 1517 Pope Leo X, who lives in fame for his love of art as well as for his wealth, found that he had not as much gold as he could spend. So he thought of a way to make more. He drew up lines to which he put his name, by which he gave men leave to do a sin if they would pay for it. The worse the sin the more great the price. These were known as "Indulgences." Men went to sell them through the land, as we now see men with packs on their backs sell tapes and thread and pins. Such a man by the name of Tetzel came in to Germany. In some towns he did well and sold much, for there are vile men who love to do wrong and still more to feel that they are quite free to sin. There were some who bought the indulgence for sin that they had not done, but meant to do. But all good men felt that this was a crime. There was but one man who was so brave as to come out and say that the pope had no right to trade in sin and crime. This was Dr. Martin Luther, who now had a place to teach in the great school at Wittenberg. He wrote out the truth and said that he would prove it in the face of all foes, and he went on to nail this on the door of the church in Wittenberg. The sum of what he wrote was that none could free us from our sins but God, and one must mourn for sins with a true heart ere God would free us from them, that to give men leave to do sin was

false to the Church, and for that he could not think the pope had done it! It was Luther's aim then not to leave the Church of Rome, but to make it more pure. This which he had set forth was put in print and sent out to all parts of the land. He was told that he was false to his vows and that he should burn like John Huss. He then set forth his views in tracts which men of all ranks read, and the faith spread more and more. At last the pope sent him word that he must take back what he had said, as it was not what was set forth in his bulls; but Luther said: "The voice of the pope can but be as the voice of God when it is such as is set forth of in God's Word." One of the head men of the Church who was sent to see Luther said: "I will have no thing more to do with that German beast with the deep eyes and queer whims in his brain." And Luther said of him: "That man knows no more of God's Word than an ass knows how to play the harp."

Charles of Hapsburg had been made king. He was king, too, of Naples, Sicily and Spain. He was a grave man, full of thought, and slow of speech. It took him a long time to make up his mind, but once he had made it naught could change him. He had been a weak youth, slow of growth, and his nerves were not strong. He had a real wish to do what was right, and he had two great aims in his reign—one was to cleanse the Church of Rome from all that was wrong in her, and one was to have a Crusade and drive back the Turks.

Luther wrote to Charles on the state of the Church in strong words, and at the same time the pope sent a bull to say that if Luther did not cease he must be sent to Rome to be dealt with as one out of the pale of the Church. This bull was burned by Luther and his friends in the chief place of the town of Wittenberg.

Charles then sent out a call to all to come to Wurms and try this thing. He sent Luther a safe pass to come there, but his friends did not want him to go, for they knew how it had been with John Huss. But Luther said he would go "though the deils in Worms were as thick as the tiles on the roofs," and as he rode in the town he sang psalms.

There was such a crowd in Wurms as ne'er was seen in Germany. All the friends of Luther were there to see that he came to no harm. One old chief of the troops came to him and said: "Monk, thou art on a march and a charge such as we who go to war ne'er saw in our worst fight, but if thy cause be just, go on in God's name, and He will not leave thee."

They had all his books brought out in the court, and he was not slow to own that he wrote them. He was calm and firm. Charles thought he was rough and coarse, and said: "This is not the man to make me change my faith." But Luther made a plain and clear speech, and set forth the grounds of his creed. He said he could not take back what he had taught, save it should be shown that it was not to

be found in God's word. "Here I stand," he said. "I can not go back. God help me!"

Charles the V said they could treat Luther as one false to his Church as soon as the day for which he had the free pass was gone. So a few of Luther's friends made a plot to get him off safe, but they did not let the rest know. When he set out from Wurms he went in a cart with but one friend. When they came to a lone glen four knights in arms made a rush at him, took him, put him on a horse and bore him off. The news spread like wild fire that Luther had been put to death, and for a year he was lost to the world. But all his books were read the more, and his views spread through the whole land. All the time he was in a safe place in Wartburg and spent his days in work on the Word of God, which he wrote out of the Latin in to German, so that all could read it. The room in which he did this work is kept till this day and all that was in it. When he thought there was need for him to come forth he did so. He did not wear his monk's dress, but had a breast-plate and let his beard grow. His friend Melancthon did not know him when they met. He set out to preach with all his old zeal. Charles in the mean time gave half of his lands of Austria to Ferdinand. Ferdinand was a man who won the love of all, and was most true to King Charles, who left him to rule in Germany while he went to Spain. His old friend Adrian had been made pope, and Charles thought he could right all wrongs in the Church through him. But Adrian was too good for the court of Rome at that time, and he was soon

put out of the way. Then they chose a new pope, Clement VII, who was too fond of his gains to do aught that could make them less.

Francis I made war at this time on four lands, and Spain was one. Charles said he gave God thanks that he was not the one to bring on this war, for ere it was done one of them would be much more poor than he was now.

Charles had good troops in Spain and they fought well, so that he drove the French out at once and took Francis, their king. He was sent to Charles, at Madrid. Charles would have no feasts or signs of joy shown, for he said for two Christian lands to be at war was a cause for grief. His terms with the French king were that he should give up all claim to Sicily, and Milan, and Burgundy. Francis was in a rage at first, and said he would give up his crown first. But he fell ill, and then he said he would do all. At the same time he swore an oath to his own friends that he should not feel bound to keep his word as he was in bonds.

So he was set free, and his two sons were sent to Charles as a pledge that he would keep his word. But he would not keep his word nor give up Burgundy, and he made a league with the pope.

But he did not gain much by this, for there were some troops in the north of Italy who took it in their heads to march to Rome and rob the folk right and left. They meant to go on and make Bourbon (who had left his own land)

their king. But Bourbon was shot dead as he went in to Rome. Then the troops spread through the town, and the pope had to keep shut up in St. Angelo, he was in such fear of these men, for they did naught but drink and steal from the rich stores of the Church and do all sorts of crimes. The plague broke out in the French troops, and then Francis had to give up and make peace.

In the mean time the poor men whose work it was to till the soil and who had borne all sorts of wrongs from their lords rose to fight for their rights. They gave way to a mad rage and would spare naught that came in their way. They had a man by the name of Munzer at their head, and he taught them that all wealth should be put in shares, so that none would be poor and none rich. These folks did not spare men or their wives or babes. They would storm a house, kill all in it and then take all they could find. They did spare church or school if the walls were not so thick that they could not get in.

At last troops were found to meet them. Munzer did his best to keep his men brave. There was a rainbow in the sky and he told them to look on it as a pledge from God that they would win. But the knights in arms trod them down and shot them with ease. Munzer was found in a hay loft and put to death. One of the men said to those who took him: "Ah, sir, the rule of a boor is ten times worse than the rule of a knight." All were in a hot rage at these poor mad men, but the Elector Friedrich, who said that if

they were brutes it was the fault of those who had made slaves of them so long.

When Luther was at work on the word of God he took great pains to find short and strong words, so that all might read it and learn the way of life. He did not wish to write it in terms that the poor man did not know. So it was his way to go out in the streets where there were throngs of the poor, to go to the house of birth and death, or where feasts were held for those who wed, that he might hear the mode in which the poor spoke on such themes. He said: "I can not use the words of the rich and those heard in courts, I must give pure and clear German." And he said he and Melancthon would oft seek three or four days for one short and strong word. Charles the V and the pope had made a peace by this time by which Charles got the crown as King of Lombardy and Emperor of Rome, and was bound to root out the faith that Luther taught. In some parts of the land those who held this creed were burned at the stake and the ban of the Church was laid on Luther. But there were some parts of the land, with Saxony at their head, who did not think this fair, and they made what was known as a "protest." From this came the name of "Protestant," which we give to all but the Church of Rome to this day. There was once more a Grand Council held at Augsburg. All the Protestant towns had drawn up the grounds of their faith. It was done by Melancthon. At the same time Luther, who could not be there, wrote his grand hymn—"A Fort of Strength is our God." It was a warm

day, and the place where the faith of the Protestants was to be read was small, so that few could hear it. But the heat made them throw back the doors, and the one who read did so in a loud, clear voice. All the vast throng who could not get in heard just as well on the outside. It was clear and full of force, and has been held as the views of the Lutheran Church till this day. It is known as the "Augsburg Confession," and since then there have been found in each age and clime some who have been as "firm for truth and brave for truth as those at Augsburg were."

Charles heard the Protestant's creed, but said things must go on in the old way till he and the pope should make a change. Prince Johan of Saxony and the Prince of Hesse and more rose at this and left the room. They went off and made a league to stand up for their own faith.

Charles had a hard time with the Turks and the Protestants. The League would not help him if he did not let them hold their own creed and serve God in their own way. So he gave in at last and all went to his aid. The ships of the Moors had been the dread of all lands. They would sail near the coasts of Spain and Italy and seize all the men they could find and take them off to keep as slaves till their friends sent large sums to set them free. Charles with his troops took Tunis and set free a great host of Christian slaves who were kept to work the soil or dig at the forts or ply the oar.

In all this strife Charles had at times found that he was short of funds. There was a rich man at Augsburg by the name of Fugger who lent him large sums to fit out the troops. When Charles came to Augsburg Fugger sent to beg that he would stop at his house. A fire burned on the hearth that sent out sweet smells from the heaps of rich spice and woods of great cost which were in a blaze there. The emperor said he had not seen a fire of so much cost in his life. "It shall cost more still," said Fugger, as he threw in the blaze all the bonds for the sum due to him from Charles.

Luther's health broke down at this time from the weight of work and care. He had days of great pain and his heart was sad at times, for he could not hope for peace for the Church. Yet most of the time he was of good cheer, for he knew he had done a great work. He had to go to Eisleben, the place of his birth, to serve a friend. The day was cold and he felt it much. He made out to preach four times, and he wrote his wife words of cheer and love. But all took note that he spoke but of the life that is to come, as if he had no more part in this world. As night drew on all saw that he grew more weak from hour to hour. At times he would say a verse out of God's Word. One who stood by his bed said: "Dear friend, do you trust in Christ the Son of God, who came to save us from our sins?" Luther said: "Yes," in a strong clear voice. Then he was seen to fold his hands and draw one deep sigh. His death was at two by the clock on the morn of February 17, 1546.

When it was known that Luther was dead the grief was great. His friends bore the corpse to his home in Wittenberg and all the way the bells in each church were heard to toll, and the folks from all the places round came in crowds with loud cries and tears. The throng in the church at Wittenberg was so great that it was two hours ere they could get the bier in its place. "Here," said one, "we strove to sing the psalm, 'Out of the depths I cry to thee,' but the words were more wept than sung." So Luther was laid to rest. Years from that day, when some fierce men of the Church of Rome would have Charles dig up the corpse of Luther and burn it, he said: "I wage no war on the dead!"

Charles V could not find strong friends in the Germans, for they knew he was a Spaniard, and they thought he was not one of them in heart. They found fault with him that he should want them to take his son Philip, who was grave and cold, as heir to the throne and King of the Romans. Ferdinand, who had won their love, had a son, Maximilian, who was bright and kind and a true German.

All his cares and wars had made Charles V old, so he was glad to seize a chance to give up his crowns and spend his age in thought for his soul. At Augsburg a peace was made by which all were left free to take what faith they chose, and the next year Charles laid down his crown and went in to one of the homes for monks. There he wore a monk's loose robe with a rope round the waist, and told

his beads and made his vows like the rest. He wrote oft to his son, and gave him his thoughts as to the best way to rule. Much of the time he would pray or read good books, or walk in the grounds near the house. He had great skill in some ways, and could take a watch in parts and set all its works in the right place. When he found that no two of his clocks would keep quite the same time, he said that it was just the same with the minds of men. He led this calm life till his death came in 1558.

Max II

Ferdinand I was well known to Germany, and had hosts of friends there. He was true to his word, and that was a great thing for a prince in those days. He went so far that once when he had told a count that he should have a gift and the man went on to act in such a way that he ought not to have had it, Ferdinand still gave it to him, for he said he could not break his word.

The fierce old pope, Paul the IV, said that he would not own Ferdinand for emperor if he did not give up the Peace of Augsburg and burn the Protestants. This Ferdinand would not do, for he had been one of the chief ones who had made the peace. He thought that if the pope would give up some of the wrong things that crept in to the Church of Rome, all men would yet be brought back to it. He sent a band of priests who had been brought up in Spain and were known as Jesuits, out in the midst of the folks to teach them. It is said that they did bring back some of the Hussites to the Church.

At last both the pope and emperor sent out to call men of all creeds to meet and try once more if they could not join in the old faith and be one. The Protestants met in Saxony, and the pope's bull was sent to them. August of Saxony took the lead, and told the priest who had brought it that they could not take what the pope had sent, as he spoke to them as sons, and they would not own that they

were sons of the pope. They said more things that the priest did not like. "What mean ye by such words," he said, "to one who has come so far to serve the cause of Christ?" But they said they would hold fast to the Augsburg rules of faith, let all go as it might.

The Council met at Trent and Ferdinand did all he could to get leave for priests to take wives, to stop the sale of those things that gave men leave to do crimes, and to have part of what was said in church in the tongue of the land of those who heard it, and to have new rules for the choice of a pope. The French, too, were glad to join with him in all this; but Spain and Italy would have no change. So there was a fierce war of words. Some rules were made that no more leave to do sin was to be sold, yet the Church of Rome would not yield a whit of the rest, and there was no hope that the Protestants would be brought back. For a time, to please the emperor, the pope did let the priests have wives, and there was a part of what was said in church read in German, and is so to this day. Ferdinand was a good man, and sought for peace first in all things. His son, Maximilian II, was the choice of all as King of the Romans. But though they were good, the land was still in a sad state. Each pass in the rocks had some thief of a lord who took toll of all who went by and ground down his own folks in the worst way. These lords knew naught but to drink and game and steal. They did not read or care to know more. They held in scorn all men of trade, but these last were well read and knew far more than they.

Ferdinand was old when he was made emperor and his death came in 1564.

Maximilian was a kind man and had a warm heart. He let the Lutherans have their own way so much that some said he was one of them. He could speak six tongues with ease and had read much, and his mien was full of the grace of courts. He made a good use of his time, and was on hand to hear the plea of the most mean of his folk. But he had not the strength to put down the wrongs that were rife in all parts of the land. It had grown to be the way of the men to go and hire out to fight. It was naught to them what the cause might be if they were well paid and could rob the foe. This took them from their right work and there were none left to till the ground. Such as came back would not keep laws or work, and were not fit for times of peace. Maximilian would have been glad to have made a law to keep Germans at home and that they should not fight for strange lands.

No one of Maximilian's five sons were as bright as he was. It was the mode in those days for kings to wed those near of kin, so the race grew more and more dull.

Maximilian kept from war in all parts but in Hungary. There the Turks were brought in to fight him and a great force went up the Danube, for they meant to lay siege to Vienna. But they had to stop to take a small town on the way. Here the Count Trini with his few men held out in the most brave way. The place was in a bend of a stream

and had strong walls, so that the Turks had to throw in earth to make roads and raise mounds on which they could plant their guns. When they had torn down part of these walls the brave men still held out, and drove them back a score of times ere they could gain at all. But at last Count Trini saw that all hope was gone, and he took the keys of the place and with his sword in his hand went out at the head of his men. He had a hope that they might cut their way through their foes. He fell as he fought, and they drove his men back in the fort, and all save a few were slain. They were so brave that the Turks were struck by it. They had kept them at bay for a month, and in this way they had won peace for their whole land. For the camp of the Turks lay in a marsh that made them ill, and the sultan met his death there. So they did not go on, and peace was made with the new sultan. Maximilian was so true a man that when a great league was made to fight the Turks he would not join in it, for he said that a Christian should not break his oath.

Maximilian was the choice of the Poles as their king, and it was a wise choice, for he was so kind and good and such a friend to all that he was known by the name of "The Joy of the World."

Yet he was not strong in health, and his death came when he was not an old man. His sons were all more or less queer. There was Ernst, a good man, but so full of moods that he was ne'er seen to smile. There was one of their line who had not been sane, and it would seem that

the taint was in the blood. The firstborn, Rodolf II, was the least sane of all, but he had been made King of the Romans, and so came to the throne when Maximilian was dead. In his youth he was full of cheer and made his friends of men of all ranks. He had read much and spoke in more than one tongue. He was fond of rare plants and had his ground full of them, and he had too, a place where he brought strange beasts from all lands. He had a taste for rare gems, too, and all sorts of works of art. He brought to his court the two men who knew best how to read the stars in that day. These were Tycho Brahe and Kepler. But Rodolf did not stop at this. He thought that the doom of man could be read in the stars, and there were those who put faith in such things in his time. So when he was told that the stars said he would die by the hand of one of his own kin in the next race, he would not wed or let the rest of the sons of Maximilian do so, and he grew so full of fear that he would not go out or see those who came to speak with him.

In the mean time the strife of the Roman Catholics with the Protestants went on in the land. There was in one town a home for the monks, and they had leave to stay there in peace if they did not march through the streets in crowds to keep their saints' days. For some years they had held to this rule, but in 1605 they went forth as of old one day to bless the crops, and sang chants as they went. The heads of the town would not let them go on at first. There was a sort of mob, and the next time they went in the

streets, though it was to bear a dead man to the tomb, the mob set on them and drove them back. On this the ban of the empire was laid on the town, and the Duke of Bavaria sent to give the chief church back to the Catholics. The Protestants did not like this, and they went to work to form a league, and then there was a Catholic league, too.

Rodolf's want of care for his realm led to sad loss for him. Hungary and Austria made him give them up to the next of his house, Matthias. He had but Bohemia left, and he did his best to keep that. He sent out his word that the Hussites and Protestants should have just the same rights as the Catholics. But his folk soon found that they could not trust his word, so they, too, sent for Matthias. But they let Rodolf stay in his home at Prague, where he could peer at the stars and raise strange plants, and try to find the stone that turns all to gold. He had a fear all the time that he would be slain. When there was a strange light in the sky he thought it came to warn him. He would not go out save to go to church. He grew more full of gloom each day. Yet when he found that death was near he grew bright and of good cheer, and said he had not felt so full of joy since he was a youth. He had come back to his home from a long trip in Spain. For now he said he would soon be where grief and change could not come. His death was in 1612.

The Revolt in Bohemia

The new emperor, Matthias, was a good man who sought to do what was right. He had no child, and the next heir was Ferdinand II, who had been bred up by the Jesuits and was cold, shy and grave. His land was Styria. He was not held in much love by the Protestants, and so when the Bohemians heard that Matthias had the wish to give the crown to him, it did not please them; but they did as they were bid. Ferdinand did not want to take the crown with the clause in the law that gave Protestants the same rights as Catholics. But the Jesuits told him that while it might have been wrong to grant it, it could not be wrong to take it as part of the law of the land. So as he went in state to get his crown, he said: "I am glad to have won this crown, with no fears as to the right to take it."

Still he did not think that he was bound to do more than he was bound to, and he did his best to bring back Bohemia to the Church. He would have none to teach school save those of the Church of Rome, and he built two homes for nuns and monks and three large Catholic schools.

But there was one man, Count Thurm, who was a strong Lutheran, and had naught but hate for the House of Hapsburg. There were two men sent to rule in Bohemia, and when they went so far as to pull a Lutheran

church down, Thurm made up his mind to root out the House of Hapsburg, and first to kill these two men.

So in May, 1618, a troop of Hussites and Lutherans made their way in to the hall where these men were. Some hot words were said on both sides. "Let us fling them out," said one of Thurm's men. There was a ditch on one side of the hall, deep down scores of feet. One of the men was heard to beg for a priest. "Give thy soul to God," they said, "we will have no wretch of a Jesuit here." So they flung him out. Then came the next in turn. But they all fell on a heap of waste scraps that broke the fall, and they crept off with no hurt.

This was the first thing to start a long and fierce war that did not end for thrice ten years. It put a stop to all things good, and led to wild crimes of all sorts. The Hussites went in to it from fear for their faith, and they felt, too, that this king had been put on them by a cheat. They had the hope that those who did not like the House of Hapsburg would join them. So they wrote to all and did their best to raise all Bohemia to fight Ferdinand.

Matthias had such good sense that he would have been glad to have made peace and to have won them back by kind means, and he had the wish to hold back Ferdinand. But he was ill in bed with the gout, and when he heard what had been done his wrath and grief were great.

Count Thurm was at the head of a great force at the time of the death of Matthias. The Bohemians would not have Ferdinand for their king, and took up a march to Vienna. Ferdinand sent his wife and babes from him and a few men staid with him. But the most of the Austrians would not help him, for they thought they would make him sign a bond that would join them to Bohemia. He fell on his knees to ask for aid to stand out firm for what he thought to be right and he thought he heard a voice which said: "Fear not, I will not leave thee."

The fire of the Bohemians was on his house and the balls fell on all sides. A score of Austrian men of rank came in and told him the town was lost, and if he did not sign he would be shut up in some fort and his babes bred up as Protestants. One lord was so rough that he shook him by the coat as he said; "Sign it—sign it."

But he did not lose his strength of will, and just then the blast of a trump was heard. It was a troop of Flemish horse that had come to his aid. They had made their way through a gate which Thurm did not guard and had come in time to save him.

The Bohemians went back, but met in Prague and chose Friedrich, who was the Elector Palatine and had wed Elizabeth Stuart, child of James I of England. He did not want to take the crown at first. He said: "If I do not take it, they will say I am not brave. If I do, they will say I wish to mount too high." James I told him he need not

count on England's aid. But his wife thought he ought to take it, and she would taunt him that he had wed the child of a king but had not the pluck to act as a king. So the poor man set off from his dear home in Heidelburg 'mid the tears of all his folk. He was met by those in Prague with great joy, and the crown set on his head. The dames sent Elizabeth sacks of all kinds of cakes and gifts of all sorts. But Friedrich held the creed of Calvin, which is more strict than that of Luther, and the folk did not like this stern faith. They had kept much of the old Catholic forms and had the Catholic prayers read in the Church in their own tongue. He did not get on with Count Thurm, but gave the head of the troops to one of his own friends.

In the spring the Flemish troops went into the Rhine lands, and laid them waste. Maximilian of Bavaria went in to Bohemia at the head of a host, and Count Tilly, the great chief of the Austrian troops, took up his camp on the White Hill near Prague.

Friedrich had gone to dine with some English guests, when he heard that his men were put to rout, and then he knew that all was lost. He got off with his wife and child, and found a home at last at Hague with the Dutch.

The Bohemians fell in to the hands of the Catholic league, with Maximilian and TilIy at their head. The whole land was laid waste and hosts of the poor folk slain. Not a Protestant church was left to them. The Catholics took all for their own, and priests were brought in to teach

the folk, so that ere that reign came to an end it would have been hard to have found a trace of the creed of Huss or Luther in Bohemia.

The ban of the empire was laid on Friedrich. He was told that he might save what was left of his home if he would give up the name of King of Bohemia. But this he would not do. Some of the Protestants stood out for him. His wife was young and full of charms, and there were some knights who fought for her cause. So the war went on to rage on the banks of the Rhine. Tilly was a Hungarian of low birth, brave, but fierce and rude. He wore a green coat and a slouch hat with red plume when he went in to a fight, and he was like a brute to his men. This war was one of the worst known. The troops were made up of men who had been brought up to fight from their youth up, and would hire out for pay, and for what they could steal from the foe. They had no cause at heart, and did not feel for man, wife or child. Those who led them did not care what they did, so they fought well. Their hope was to wear out the land through which they went.

Ferdinand at this time made a call for more troops, and a new man came to his help known as Wallenstein. He was a Bohemian of rank and a Catholic, but he had more faith in the stars than in aught else, and could be led by a star. He had great wealth, and he came to the emperor and said he would raise troops and make them gain their food, not by theft, but by a tax on the lands they went through. So Wallenstein was put in charge and he won great fame, and

they gave him new rank and all sorts of fine names. He grew proud, for his state, and fame, and wealth were more than that of a prince. He had laid siege to a free town, and the Catholic league sought to make the emperor send him from the court. They said if he did not they would not vote for his son as King of the Romans. Wallenstein went to his grand house on his own lands, where he had scores of men to wait on him. His board was set each meal for scores of folks, and when he made a trip he had long trains of goods with him. He did not like noise, so when he was in Prague he would have chains put on the streets near him, so that no cart or horse could go by. He had a room where he spent much of his time in a watch of the stars. He was blunt, short in his way and proud, but he could bind men's hearts to him.

Ferdinand, when he found that his side had won once more said that all the Protestant lands must go back to the Church.

Gustaf Adolf, King of Sweden, took up the cause of the Protestants. He was one of the best men of his age, and one who did all he could to serve God. He kept his troops in strict rule and would not let them steal. He fed them well and gave them good clothes, and he had men to read and pray with them and teach them. All men saw how well his troops were kept, but the Catholics said he was the snow king and would melt as he got south. Tilly went out to meet him.

The free town of Magdeburg was Protestant. Tilly laid siege to it and took it ere Gustaf could come and save it. This was the worst sack of a town that man had e'er known. The troops drank, set fire, and stole more like fiends than like men. The fire drove them out at last, and of a great town full of folk there were but a few men left. This was a great shock to all Germany. Those who were in doubt now made haste to range their name on the side of Gustaf, and he had a great fight with Tilly at Leipsic and put him to rout. This was the first time that Tilly had lost. Gustaf made his way south, and near Bavaria met Tilly once more, and once more won. Tilly was slain. Gustaf would have let Friedrich go back to Heidelberg if he would have let the Lutherans have the same rights as the Calvinists, but this he would not do. Three months from this time Friedrich drew his last breath.

All the free towns were on the side of Gustaf and he was met with joy. He kept on his march in to Bavaria. At Munich when the men would have kneeled to him he bade them rise, and said: "Kneel to God, not man." He would not let his men take a thing from the foe, and left all as he found it. But he took the guns which were found hid in the ground. This great and good man fell in the fight at Lutzen. A stone, known as the "Stone of the Swede," marks the spot where he fell. He was one of the best men of his time. The young Duke of Saxe Weimer, a brave and good young man, took his place with the troops, but he

could not rule them, and soon they were as great a scourge as the rest.

Wallenstein had grown so proud that he did as he chose and would not heed emperor or electors. He made all his chief men sign a bond that they would stand fast by him at all times. Some who put their names to it sent word to the emperor and then left him. He then strove to make terms with the Protestants and said he would give up the town of Egra to them.

This would have been done, but six of his guard made up their minds to stop this deed by his death. Just as he had gone to bed they broke in to his rooms. As he met them at the door he was slain at once, 25th of February, 1634.

The strife went on, and in the midst of it came the death of Ferdinand. He was a good man in his way and kind to the poor, but too much the slave of Jesuit priests. He would serve the poor and sick with his own hands, and his Catholic folk had great love for him.

His son, Ferdinand III, was like him. He came to the throne in the midst of the long war. Bernhard, who led the troops, was worn out by care and grief, and had grown ill. On his sick bed he heard that the foe had set on his camp, and he rose, got on his horse and drove them back. But his heart was sick at the fierce deeds of the men, who would heed no rules. His death was in 1639.

The war did end at last in Prague, where it had made the first start. Germany was worn out. It had but half the men that were in it at the first of the war. Towns were laid waste, trade was gone, and all was in a sad state. Peace had to be made. They gave France Elsass, and Pomerania to Sweden.

In their creeds, each prince might force what faith he chose on his own folk, and those who held with Calvin should have the same rights as those who held with Luther. Though the terms of this peace did not please all they were glad to take it, for they were worn out with war. The emperor met his death in a strange way. He was in his room weak and ill, when the nurse made a rush in with his babe in its crib and said the child's room was on fire. In her fright she gave the crib a knock against the wall which broke it, and the child fell out. The shock to the king was so great that he did not live but an hour. The child's death from the fall came in a few months.

More Wars

Leopold, the son of Ferdinand III, was the next choice. He had been brought up for a priest, for he was not the first-born son. He was a good man and just, but not wise or strong, or born to do great things, though he could do some small things quite well.

He had a hard time with Louis the XIV of France, who was on the watch all the time to get what he could from Germany. He took the free city of Strasburg when its folk were off to a great fair, and kept it by bribes to the chief men. Germany was in a rage and would have made a league to get it back, but the emperor had made foes on all sides. He had been harsh to Hungary and sent some of the good men whose work it was to preach to the Protestants as slaves to Naples. Prince Eugene had come to his aid. He had found the French court too stiff for him, and had run off to fight the Turks. Some notes he left had been read, and the king knew that he made game of him, so would not let him come back. Eugene staid to serve the emperor. But the Turks were too strong for them, and laid siege to Vienna, so that the folk had to eat dogs and rats and cats.

There was no hope for Austria then but in Poland, for they had a great man for their king, John Sobieski. He made haste to raise troops to come to the aid of Austria. The Turks were worn out with the siege, and would cry out: "Oh ye men of no faith, if ye will not come, let us at

least see your crests on the hills, for then the siege will be done and we shall be free."

To keep them in a good mood their chief let them fight. The Austrians beat them off, but the walls bore such marks of the fray that the folk thought their doom was come. On what they thought their last night one of their chiefs sent up fireworks from the high roof of a church. Lo, they saw more fireworks blaze up in to the sky from a hill near. Then they knew help was at hand, and they sent one to swim the Danube by night and bear to the Duke of Lorraine these words: "No time to be lost." Lorraine and Sobieski took their troops and rushed down the hills on the foe. When the Turks saw that all hope was in vain, they slew all the men in their hands, and all their own wives and maids that they could not take with them. But they left the babes, and there were scores of these poor things brought up by the Christians. As Sobieski rode in to Vienna the folk came in a throng to kiss his horse and his sword. Leopold was too proud to owe so much to a strange king. He took a light in his hand and went to the church to pray. He would not see Sobieski until he had made up his mind how to do it. When they met Leopold said a few cold words and the Polish troops did not like it. He would not let the Polish sick be brought in the town nor their dead laid in the church yard. But Sobieski kept on and drove the Turks far back and took from them the town of Grau, which they had held for long years.

The emperor held Hungary to blame for all this woe, so he sent a fierce man there to act as judge. This man sent out men to bring in all who were thought not to wish well to the House of Austria. These were put to death for the least cause. Then he took from the Hungarians their right to have a king of their own, and sent his own son, a boy of ten years old, to have the crown set on his head.

In 1605 there came the death of Karl, who had the lands on the Rhine, and as he left no heir, Louis XIV sought once more to gain a bit of Germany. He laid claim to some of the Rhine forts, which would have let France in to the heart of the land. When this claim was not heard he sent troops in to the land. They were told to lay waste all they could not keep. It was in the cold time, and the poor folks in each town were told they must get out of their homes in three days. Wurms and Manheim were burnt, the tombs of the German emperors broke in to, and the grand old fort at Heidelberg was blown up. On Sobieski's death, August, Elector of Saxony, who had a wish to be King of Poland, thought he could gain it if he would join the Church of Rome. He was a man of such great strength that he could twist a horse shoe in what shape he chose, but he was a bad man. His feasts and bouts led to great waste of the funds of the realm, and his vice of all kinds was known.

There was a new war that all saw must come at this time. It is known as the war of the Succession. Carlos II of Spain was near death and had no heir. Louis XIV would

have laid claim to this throne for his son, for his wife had been a Spanish princess, but the rest of Europe said France was much too strong as it was. So there was young Ferdinand of Bavaria, who was the son, too, of a Spanish princess. Carlos made a will and left the throne to Ferdinand, but the boy was not let live to take it. He was put out of the way. Then Carlos left it to Philip, Duke of Anjou, who was the son of the son of Louis XIV, and he at once set off to take it. The emperor set out to fight for it, and sent Prince Eugene, who was the best man he had, to lead his troops. He was a small lean man and wore a blue suit and a great hat, and he was brave and just and full of skill.

The Archduke Karl, the German heir, went out to try his luck in Spain, but was so proud and dull that he had to keep out of the way and the French made out to gain ground.

In the mean time Maximilian of Bavaria brought in French troops to go in to the Austrian Tyrol, for which they had long had a wish. But the folk of Tyrol were true to their emperor and drove them out with great loss. Eugene came back from Italy and the great Duke of Marlborough came from Holland to his help. These two grew to be great friends and they put the French to rout at Blenheim 13th day of August, 1701.

Leopold's death came just as he saw the tide turn and his great foe Louis lost ground. His death was on 5th of

May, 1705. He had the name of "Thick Lips," as one of his lips was thick. He was in some ways like the Emperor Rodolf, as he was fond of books, but he was so shy that some of his men scarce knew him by sight.

One of his own knights who had not been oft at the court met a small dark man in one of the halls and said: "Where's the Kaiser?" "That am I," said Leopold in a hoarse voice.

Prince Eugene

Joseph the First was a man of good sense and strong mind. He had a fine face, was fair, with blue eyes, and knew much of art and the lore of the day. He was much more free of speech than Leopold. He did not care for praise and would not let men read birthday odes to him. He gave the Protestants back some of their rights and would not let the priests rail at them. His chief friend was Prince Eugene.

He found war on all sides. The war for the Spanish Succession still went on. Eugene at last brought France to beg for peace, but Joseph would not hear to it if they would not help to drive out of Spain the French heir to the throne. This they thought too much to ask, so the war went on. Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough laid siege to Lille. It was a strong place and had a brave man to keep it, Marshal Boufflers. Twice he beat back the foe and once Eugene was struck on the head and they thought he was slain. At last Boufflers gave up the town and went in to the fort with the hope that aid would be sent him. But the French would not try a fight just then. There was a note sent to him to say he had leave to yield. This note had to go through the Austrian troops, and Eugene sent it to Boufflers and said he had made a brave fight and might yield on his own terms. Boufflers did what he thought fair, and then sent to ask Eugene to dine with him. Eugene said he would if they would give him one of their siege meals.

He went, and the first course was of horse flesh, which the cook had made out to dress in four or five ways.

The French lost in the next fight too, and Eugene had a wound in the knee but he would not leave the field. He said if he should live till night there would be time to dress his wounds then.

But at this time there came a sore blow for Germany. Joseph I caught the smallpox. As it was the mode at that time to roll one up in yards on yards of red cloth and keep all air out of the room, it is not strange that he did not live. His death was in April, 1711. He left no male heir, so the crown went to the next in line, Karl. The war still went on and the small courts of Germany were in a sad state. August of Saxony was the worst prince of all. It was the style to ape all the vice and waste of the Court of France, to look on the German tongue as fit for boors, and French the tongue for courts.

The English at this time drew off their troops, so that Karl could not keep Spain. He did try to stir up the Germans to get back from the French what they had made out to seize, but no one would move, so he had to make peace. This peace is known as the Peace of Utrecht. The court of Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia at this time was known as the best. He was a rough plain man, with no more grace or taste than the most poor of his men. He did not care for aught but his troops, and had one set of men more than six feet high who were his pets. He would sit

and smoke pipes and drink beer while all the calls of state went on. His hate for the French was so great that he thought all fine dress or grace of mien was a sin, as the styles came from France. He was like a brute to his wife and son. The youth had a great love for all that was French, and the king was so harsh to him that he fled with his friend Liene Katt. The king sent and took them both, and Katt was shot. The young Friedrich had to stand and see his friend's death. Then he was thrown in jail and kept there for a long time. But one day the king brought him out and put him at the back of the queen's chair while she was at a game of cards.

Eugene, in the mean time, went on with his fight with the Turks and won as he went, till at last he laid siege to Belgrade. The Turks came to help it in hosts, and Eugene lay ill in his tent. But in the night of the 1st of August he rose and fought a grand fight, which gave him Belgrade. Then he could place guards the whole length of the Danube to keep watch on the Turks.

Eugene's life was a long one, and when the wars were done he made his home in Vienna and spent his time in good deeds. All his men were glad to serve him and grew old with him. All were full of grief when death took him in 1719. He was the one man who did not cheat the troops. When he was gone the want of rule was more and more felt. The troops had bad clothes, bad food and poor arms.

Faith and truth were not known. The emperor was the prey of all men. There was waste in the court and want in the town. The wine in use at the court to dip the bread in to feed the pet birds of the empress was two hogs-heads a day, and twelve barrels for her baths, to say naught of what was drunk. All this time the states of Austria were in want and woe. Karl's death came in 1740. He was the last male heir of the House of Hapsburg.

Maria Theresa

Friedrich II of Prussia wrote to Maria Theresa, who was the first born child of Karl, that he would help her to claim the throne, but his real aim was to get what he could for his own. He made a dash in to Silesia and sent word to Maria Theresa that he would vote for her if she would give up that place to him. But Maria Theresa was brave and would not bear this. She sent her troops out to fight him, at Mollwitz, but Friedrich won the day.

When the electors met they chose Karl of Bavaria emperor, but the brave young queen, Maria Theresa would not yield. They drove her from town to town, but she had made up her mind not to give up one jot of the realm she thought her own. Her chief hope was in Hungary, and she went there for the crown. She wore robes of deep black for her sire, Joseph I, but they were set with gems. The crown of St. Stephen was set on her head, her fair hair fell in rich curls on her neck, her sword was girt to her waist and her young son Joseph was in her arms. She made her speech in Latin, which was the state tongue of Hungary, and the hearts of all those brave men felt a thrill as they heard it. The swords of all were drawn, and with one cry the shout went up: "We will die for our king, Maria Theresa!" Then she put on the breast-plate, got on a steed and went up to the Mount of Kings to wave her sword to the four parts of the world, as was the mode for

kings to do there. This meant a sort of call on all the world to own her claim or come and try to take it from her. Friedrich still let her know that he would join her if she would give up the whole of Silesia to him, and when he had won one more fight, she had to give in with great grief. She made peace with the King of Bavaria, too.

Prague was still held by the French. Charles of Lorraine had laid siege to it, and he thought all the troops would fall in to his hands, but it was in the time of frost and cold, and he could not keep a strict watch. So the chief of the French troops made his way out by night with most of his men and food to last tor twelve days. He left none but the sick and those who had the care of them in the fort. The cold was so great that a host of his men froze by the way, and the Bohemians found the roads full of the dead men. Still the flags and arms were left. When the guard was told he must yield, he said he must march out with the flags and arms or he would set fire to the town and die in it. They let him go out as he would. Maria Theresa gave a feast to show her joy. It was as much like a Greek race in the old style as she could get it. Then on 12th of May, 1743, she was made Queen of Bohemia. She made a good queen, and set things to rights with great skill and sense.

The war with France still went on, and the Austrians and English, with George the II at their head, put the French to rout at Dettingen. The folks went wild with joy when they heard of it. The queen was out on the Danube

when the news came, and the bank was full for nine miles of those who came out in their joy to shout for her.

When Karl VII was dead, Franz of Lorraine, to whom Maria Theresa was wed, was made emperor. She was known from that time as the Empress Queen. She had great love for him, but she let him have naught with her own realm by birth right.

There was a great man at the head of the French troops at this time, Marshal Saxe, and he won so much that Maria Theresa made peace, and all had rest for eight years.

In the mean time Friedrich of Prussia did his best to work up his realm to be one of the first in Europe. He was a man of clear mind and far sight. He had great works done for the land and in trade. He had been brought up in a rude, harsh way, that had made him hard. Those were the days when the French books were full of sneers at all faith, and he had a great love for all things French, so he did not hold the true faith, and he sent for Voltaire, one of those who wrote the worst books, to come and live at his court. Friedrich thought at first that naught was too good for this guest, but each was too vain to be friends long. Voltaire thought he could mix up with state rule and Friedrich thought he could write verse. Each made game of each on the sly, and there were folks to tell tales, you may be sure. Voltaire would say when Friedrich sent him verses to read that he might note the faults; "Here is more clothes to wash," and Friedrich is said to have made the speech that

he kept Voltaire like fruit—but to squeeze out the juice, and then he would throw him out. So the two friends came to hot words, and Voltaire left the court. They sent to stop him, on the plea that he had some of the king's verse in his box. But they set him free, and the two made up in time, though they did not meet more in this world.

Friedrich soon made plain that he had a right to the name of the Great. He made Prussia one of the five great States of the world. Maria Theresa felt a fear of his great skill, and so did France. So the queen laid by her old hate of France and made a league that they should join and try to tame the pride of Prussia. The Empress of Russia and the King of Saxony and Poland were to lend their aid. Friedrich made friends with England, and sent word to Maria Theresa to know if there was to be peace or war. When he heard he made a dash on Saxony, and that was the first of what is known as the "Seven Years' War." He won the day and made a bold push on to Dresden. There he sent to ask for the king's notes and briefs, for he knew he should find proofs of the league in them. But the queen made a brave stand and stood in front of the box and then sat on it. She had to give up at last. They let her join the king in Poland, where it is said she came to her death through grief at the woes of her land.

From thence he took up a march in to Bohemia, and fought a great fight with Charles of Lorraine, which went on for near twelve hours. He won this fight, as he had done the rest, and then laid siege to Prague, but here he met

with a large force of Austrians, and they beat him back. Still he went on in the midst of his foes. He had made up his mind that he would die ere he would give up, and he had with him at all times a small flask of a drug that would end his life if the worst came. Yet all the time his skill was the same, and he kept up his short dry jokes. At last he won in a fight with the French at Rossbach, and then he beat the Austrians at Leuthen. The next year, 1758, he won the fight with the Russians at Zorndorf.

The battle of Minden was fought to keep Hanover from the French. Friedrich went on to Dresden, but the Austrians were at his heels, and they took Berlin and ran through Prussia. A fierce fight was fought by Friedrich at Torgau in Saxony, where he was struck with a spent ball. They took him to the church and he lay all night on the floor there in great pain. His pain of mind was great, too, for he thought all was lost; but the light of day made plain the fact that the Austrians had fled and the field was strewn with heaps of slain.

Torgau was the last fight of the "Seven Years' War." All were worn out, and Maria Theresa saw that all the league in one could not crush Prussia. If it fell for a time it rose more fierce to fight and more sure to win. So a peace was made. There had been naught of good brought out of this long sad war, and 640,000 men had been slain. Two years from the time peace was made Maria Theresa lost the good man who had won her heart and made her his wife. Her name for him had been her heart's joy. She felt great

grief at his death and let no one else sew on his shroud. All her life she was wont to go and pray and spend hours in the vault where he was laid. Friedrich the Great spent his last years in peace. He saw, ere his death, the United States made free of England, and he sent a sword to Washington. To the last he would have the folk come to see him and tell him of their wrongs. His court was plain, and so was his dress when he took his walks through the streets of Berlin. He would talk to those he met, and now and then use his cane on those whom he thought should be at work. One day he saw a group of school boys and said to them in his rough way: "Boys, what do you here? Be off to your school." One of the most bold said: "O you are king, are you, and do not know there is no school this day?" The king made haste to drop his cane and give them some coin with a laugh.

Joseph II

The first-born son of Maria Theresa and Franz I was made emperor, by the name of Joseph II. Germany at this time was made up of States, some large, but some quite small.

Friedrich of Prussia did the best he could for his land so spent with war. He gave those who had lost the most gifts of gold and corn; he set them to work to drain marsh lands, and to do all sorts of work for the good of the land. For this end he had to put a tax on salt and things most in use. The folk did not like this, but Friedrich said they might say what they would if they did as he said. He was just, and let Protestant and Catholic have their rights, but he had no faith. Joseph II thought some of his ways were so good that he would have brought them into Austria, but the empress queen would not hear of them. When her son sought to pull down the walls that shut Vienna in she said; "I am old. I have seen Vienna in great straits. Twice have I seen the Turk lay siege to it. Let Joseph do as he likes when I am dead. While I live let all stand." Joseph had such a wish to know Friedrich that he went to see him, and the two were great friends. Joseph spoke to him as one far up the heights of king and state craft, and Friedrich in his turn had his rooms full of prints of the young king, as he said he was "a young man of whom I can not see too much." Joseph's head was full of free thought, too, and he had no

faith in God. So he went in to all the bold schemes of Friedrich and that bad Catharine of Russia. One of these was that they three should seize on poor Poland and share it. The empress queen did not like this bad scheme, and wrote: "I have not been so sad, nay, not in the days when I had scarce a place to lay my head."

But she was old, and spite of all she could do or say, her son and his chief friend, Kaunitz, had their way. The Poles were too weak and too full of their own small strifes to stand out, so the plan went through, but not all at once.

In 1777 came the death of Maximilian, King of Bavaria, and Joseph II set up a claim to that land, which was not just, and the true heir gave up to him in a fright. But Friedrich of Prussia took up his cause and peace was made.

Joseph then set out to see the Empress of Russia. He chose to ride on and leave his suite far in the rear. He chose to pass for the man sent on to put things in right shape for those who were to come with the king, to see to their place in the inn. He would dine like a poor man, and talk with the folks. Thus he found out how to do more than one kind act. Once he stood for a new born child in a poor hut, and the poor folk were in great awe when he came to the small feast they had spread in his robes of state as emperor. One night he found one of the men who had a place of rank in his troops. He had ten young ones of his own, but in the warmth of his heart he had brought in a poor waif

and kept it as best he could. The emperor sent him the next day a deed by which each child would have a good sum each year.

When Joseph went back to his home he found the empress, Maria Theresa, at the point of death. It had been her joy to love and work for her folks, and the fear of God had been the rule of her life. Her death left Joseph free to work out all his own plans. He sought to sweep out all the old creeds and ways, which he thought worn out and of no use. Love for the empress who was gone kept the folk from war with him, but they did not like so much change. He would not let the priests obey the pope. He broke up all the homes of the nuns and monks save where there were schools; he took the saints out of each church, and would not let the folk go and see the pope when he came to Vienna. He had a wall put at the back of the house where the pope was, so that no one could get in on the sly.

Friedrich of Prussia by this time had grown so ill that he could not ride, walk, or lie down. He would still do all the work he could, and have the books of the day read to him, or play with his dogs, the things for which he had the most love. He went so far as to ask that his grave might be made in the midst of these pets. His death was in 1786.

Joseph had not strength or skill to work out all he sought to do. He found men in rage and grief at his work. He said his heart must be of stone not to break when he found that while he meant to do good, he had done harm

and made foes of those who had been such firm friends of the empress. He went to the help of Russia with the Turks, but lost his men in the marsh lands of the Danube and came home ill to Vienna. Bad news came to him on all sides, which made him worse. He said: "They should write on my tomb, 'Here lies one who meant the best for his realm, but could not bring it to pass.'"

And if it is true that hearts can break, that was the cause of his death in 1790.

Leopold II, the next son of Maria Theresa, came to his throne in the midst of sad times. Hungary was in a state of war, for they said Joseph II had not kept their laws, and now they would choose their own king. The Netherlands, too, had set up a free State. Leopold did not dare to go too far, for he saw in France the fruit of the faults of kings. Marie Antoinette was a child of Maria Theresa and so near to him by blood, yet he could do naught to save her from the blind rage of a mob. The lords and men of rank fled from France to Germany, as this land was not hard to reach, and there came, too, a worse stamp of men who led low lives and taught all sorts of French ways and vice to the folk.

But Leopold did his best to give his land peace. The war with the Turks was brought to an end, and he sought to bring back the old ways. He was kind, and won the love of all save the Hungarians who were still foes. They sent to him to ask things that he could not grant, but he said he

would rule them in the same way as Maria Theresa had done. With this they had to rest, and he went to Presburg to have the crown of St. Stephen put on his head, and took his five sons with him. The Hungarians met him with much warmth, and all went off well. They chose his fourth son, Leopold, to act as their palatine and to place the crown on the head of the king.

He then thought he could aid the King and Queen of France, and sent them word that he meant to help them with deeds, not words, and would get Prussia and Spain to go with him. This was the worst thing he could have done, for it made the folk of France hate their poor king and queen all the more.

Leopold found it was not a light thing to go to war with the French. The English would not take up arms, and his friends said he would lose the Netherlands, for the French had their eye on them and would take the first chance to get them. They told him to be friends with France was the best way to help Marie Antoinette. So Leopold gave up the thought of war, and had the new flag of the Revolution set up at Vienna.

But there was no use for him to try and be at peace with France just then, for the French folk thought all kings were mere wolves, and then, too, they were glad of a chance to seize the Netherlands. So it had to be war; but Leopold fell ill, and death took him out of all the woes of

the times. His death was in 1792, and his queen did not live but three months from that time.

Franz II came to the throne just as the war broke out. The Prussians, with their king, had set up a march in to France. They took two or three towns, but did not go on to Paris and take it by storm, as they might have done. They sent out a call to the French to give up their mad Revolution, and made a threat that they would not leave one stone of Paris in its place if they should so much as dare to touch a hair of the heads of the king and queen.

This put the whole French folk in a rage. They made a rush in flocks to join their troops, and ill fed as they were they drove back the Prussians. At the same time the Paris mob in their rage and fright put to death all those who were for the king in the jails, lest they should join their friends on the outside. The Austrians, too, had to fly, and the Netherlands, which had a hate for Austrian rule, rose and said they would be free and go with France. The French went on to try their king, and he was said to be false to his land, for he had brought the foe in on them; so they cut off his head. All Europe was in a rage, but the French met this news in a fierce way, and said they could fight all the states at once. And it did seem as if they could, for they won all the fights. Then Prussia had to leave, for the folk of Poland, who had seen what the French had won, rose with the hope that they, too, might get free. Prussia had to call in Russia to put down this, and the three thieves,

Prussia, Russia and Austria, had so much strife in this that they had to make a peace with France In 1795.

Then the French troops, with Napoleon at their head, went on to cross the Alps to try and take the lands in ItaIy that were held by Austria. They won all in their way. The Germans were brave, but they fought in the old ways and by the old rules of war, while the French were quick and full of new moves, so they drove them back on all sides. The emperor sent his babes to Hungary, and Vienna put all to rights for a siege.

But Napoleon at this point found that he was short of men and could get no more. So he made a peace, but Austria had to give up the Netherlands and all the lands she had held in the north of Italy.

There was a short calm while Napoleon went off to Egypt. At this time came the death of Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia. He left his land in a poor state, for he had spent all that the kings had laid up who had the throne ere his reign.

The French had not kept good faith with the Austrians, and these last thought their best chief and troops would be lost in the war with Egypt, so that there might be now a chance to win back the lands which had been lost to them. So they made a league with England and Russia to make a new war on France. Napoleon came back from Egypt in haste, fought the great fight of Marengo, and put the Austrians to rout.

The French made a march on Bavaria, and there was a fight in the woods of Hohenlinden. Count Johan, who sought to take the French while they slept, fought in a brave way. We know how "the drums beat at dead of night," and how the fires of death lit the dark scene. There was a snow storm, and the troops fought in the midst of such thick snow that they could not see aught but the flash of their fire. The white snow grew red with blood. France won the day, and Austria had to give up all the lands on the French side of the Rhine. In these sad days there were great men in Germany who wrote books that are for all time. The great Goethe had his own small court at Weimar of men who strove to show their love for him. He was king in this court and wrote his books, with, it would seem, no care for the woes or wars of his land. Schiller, too, wrote his verse and was one of the friends of the great man. They wrote plays and had men to act them, and found their joys in a calm way, while all the land shook with the war.

What France Won

Napoleon had made France great, and was now known as Emperor of the French. Franz strove to keep friends with him, but found that he could not do so. Napoleon had made small republics of all the north of Italy, and they were parts of France. Then he went on to seize Hanover, which England held as her own through George III. Franz strove to get troops to go to war, but Napoleon gave Prussia a bribe in the shape of a share of Hanover. The French beat Franz in Bavaria, and his troops were cut off from Vienna and shut up in Ulm. There they soon had to yield, and Franz lost 30,000 men.

By this time the Czar of Russia came to the help of Austria. Franz went out to meet him and left Vienna with no force, so that it fell in the hands of the French, and Napoleon could lodge for the time in the grand old home of Maria Theresa, at Schonbrun. The Austrians and Russians came down on him in force, and there was a great fight at Austerlitz, Dec. 2, 1805. The French won, and Franz lost heart. He made peace with the French at Presburg, and gave up Venice to the new states in Italy, and his own Tyrol, where the men had shot so well for him, to Bavaria. Germany then made a sort of league of the Rhine, with Wurtemburg and Bavaria at the head. This broke up the old Germanic league, with the Kaiser at the head, so Franz II gave up his crown on 6th of August,

1806. He was still King of Hungary and Bohemia, and Archduke of Austria. He kept the name of emperor, though he had no claim to it.

Prussia did not like this new league. Napoleon sought to bring down the pride of this state and force a war on it. So he said he would give back Hanover to England. Then the king made a call for troops. The whole land was full of joy, and the young men came in hosts to join in the cause. The Russian emperor said he would aid them, and he and the queen went to the tomb of Friedrich the Great to clasp hands on this. Then he went home and said he would send back aid. Prussia would have been wise to wait for this, but they were so full of fire for the fray that they went in to the war at once. Russia had not come with help, but they fought with France in Saxony, and lost the day. On the 14th of October, 1806, there was a fierce fight at Jena, where the Prussians fought in brave style, but they were slain in heaps. Poor Queen Louise was not far off, and could hear the sound of the guns, but she had to drive off ere she knew if the king were safe or not. He was safe, but 20,000 men lay dead on the field. The king and queen fled and Napoleon went on to Berlin. He took all the works of art and things of Friedrich the Great and sent them off to Paris. August III of Saxony made haste to join the new Germanic League, so Napoleon did naught to him, but to all the rest of his foes he was harsh. He would not let the poor old Duke of Brunswick, who had a wound, die in peace, but said he must go to England to die. The duke got

as far as Altona where death took him. His son in grief for him got up a band of men who wore black, with a skull and cross bones for their badge. They were known as the Black Brunswickers, and were sworn to fight the French at all times when they could get the chance. The French sought to push on through Prussia, but the Emperor of Russia came down with his troops and two hard fights were fought at Eylau and Friedland. Russia did not lose much, but she gave no more aid to Prussia. Napoleon made a peace at Tilsit, and sent word for the King of Prussia to hear what he would leave to him. The queen came too with the hope that she could get good terms, but Napoleon gave her naught but rude scorn. Once he did give her a rose, and she said: "I will take it with Magdeburg." He said in a rough way: "It is I who give—you who take." He took from Prussia all the lands on the Rhine and made a realm for Jerome Bonaparte. He left naught to the King of Prussia but Prussia, and he was bound not to keep more than 42,000 men in his troops. The queen was so full of grief and shame at the woe of the land that she did not live more than two years from that time. All the land went to work to train for a fight when they could throw off this yoke of France which was so hard to bear. The Emperor Franz took up arms once more in 1809, but this was worse than the last war for the Austrians. For he lost and had to fall back and had a great fight at Wagram, so near to Vienna that folks could watch the troops from the walls. Once more peace was made and

Austria had to give up a large part of her lands in the South, and Maria Louise, child of the Emperor Franz, was made the wife of Napoleon—he had one wife, Josephine, whom he had put from him.

Though Franz had let the Tyrol go to Bavaria its brave men still fought for him. There was one man, Hofer by name, who had kept an inn. This man led the troops in a most brave way and won a name that still lives in his land. They still sing how he fought and how when they took him and led him out to die, his last words were for his land. At this time Germany was down and the French rule was harsh and hard. Napoleon put to death all who would dare to show their hate to this hard rule, and he made their young men serve him in his wars. But all the time they went on to train for that war that should make them free. All through the German states there was a band sworn to this. When Napoleon came back from Moscow in 1812 with his troops in a sad state, the Prussians took heart and led the war. The Emperor of Russia came next with his brave troops, and the King of Prussia met him with tears of joy. "Take heart, my friend," said the emperor, "these are the last tears that Napoleon shall draw from you."

General Blucher led the Prussian troops at that time. His great cry was "Forwards," so he was known as Marshal Forwards. Napoleon said he was like a bull that would rush on with his eyes shut. All Germany rose save Saxony, which kept her faith with France. Austria sent word that she would join the rest of Germany. Then there was a

great fight at Leipsic and the French lost. In time the troops were so strong that they could push in to France and Napoleon could make no head when the men of five lands came to close in on him.

They did close in on Paris in 1814, and the Emperors of Russia and Austria and the King of Prussia all met there and made a camp for their troops in the boulevards. They saw Louis XVIII put on the throne of the French, then they went on to England, where Blucher was met with warmth by all. The folks went so far in their wild joy at the fate of Napoleon that they took hairs out of the tail of the horse that Blucher rode to keep in mind the day. Napoleon was sent to Elba, and the kings and emperors met at Vienna to try and fix the old bounds of the states once more. But in the midst of this a shock came. Napoleon was free, the French troops had met him with joy. King Louis XVIII had fled. Once more the troops had to start on the march. Prussia was on hand to join the English and there were some more fights. The grand one was Waterloo, which put an end to the war. Napoleon was sent to a lone isle in the sea by the name of St. Helena and there death came and put an end to all his dreams of fame. His wife went home to Vienna with his son. Then the kings and emperors met once more and made terms and rules for the time to come. There was peace for more than a score of years.

Prince Metternich, who had things as he chose, kept all down with a firm hand. Franz was a weak and dull man,

but kind and fond of his own folk. But in Italy there was great hate of the Austrians. The troops that were in the Italian towns were harsh and rude, and so there were men who made a band sworn to throw off the Austrian yoke. These men had the name of carbonari, but the time was not ripe for their plans. They were put down, and Franz kept the chief of them in a lone cell for years.

The death of Franz was in 1835, and his son, Ferdinand IV, was still more weak and dull. Metternich was still at the head of all. In Prussia the king was a good man who had the best heart for his folk, but not the strength of mind to rule well. In the long peace the land had grown in arts and all sorts of trade. In the north of Germany were the most of the great minds—those who thought and wrote the best. In the south were those who had the most taste in art. Ludwig of Bavaria was a great friend to art. He made Munich a great place for those who could paint well, and he built grand rooms in which to hang their works. He had the works of those of old and new times. He kept all the old landmarks and when a time worn house would lose a tower or aught he would have men build it once more in the old way. But he had more love for self than for art, and spent great sums. In his old age he fell in love with one Lola Montez, and was so led by her that his folk would not bear it. He had to give up the throne to his son, Maximilian.

Prince Metternich had the hope that things would hold all right till his death and he did not seem to care what

came then. But there was a new revolution in France. King Louis Philippe had to fly, and free thought spread to Germany. The young men at the schools had all sorts of schemes for a free land with no king.

The folk rose in Berlin, and the king had to say that he would grant a change that would give them what they thought were their rights. All the States of Germany thought they would be more strong if they should be one, and have one head. They met at Frankfort to make a plan. They chose Johan of Austria to be at the head of this new realm that was to take them all in, but the plan did not work. Vienna was all at strife. Hungary rose and said she did not have her rights. The chief man in Hungary, Kossuth, said that the Magyars (that was the old name of the men of Hungary) should be made free from the German yoke. He held the chief town and the crown of St. Stephen, and when the Austrian troops were told to march on him, some of them would not go. Large crowds of the youth left their schools and took part with those who would not go to Hungary, and then some men made a rush on the chief who had first made the move for troops to go in to Hungary and slew him. The emperor, whose health was weak and whose hand was not strong to rule in such times, took it much to heart that the men whom he had thought friends could act in this way, and not come to his aid at his call. These men, who had all sorts of free schemes, staid in Vienna and put things to rights for a siege. But the main part of the troops and the brave men

from Tyrol held to Ferdinand as their liege lord. For five days there was a fight and much blood shed, and then they gave up the town. Some of them fled, some were shot. Ferdinand felt that he had not the strength to rule in such times of storm, so he gave up his crown to Franz Joseph the 1st of December, 1848. The young emperor, Franz Joseph, had much on his hands, but in time all his German states came back to his rule.

War of France and Prussia

In Italy the whole land was in strife. There they still had hate for the Austrians, but Pope Pius the IX did not wish to get in a fight with them. The Romans were so wroth with him that they slew his chief friend, Count Rossi. The pope at this fled in fear to Gaeta in the robes of a priest, and the Romans set up a republic. But they could not stand out long in the face of the Austrian troops. Radetsky won the day at Novarra, and Carlo Alberto gave up the crown to his son Victor Emanuel, and did not live but five months from that time, such was his grief at the state of his land. Then Radetsky laid siege to Venice, which held out in a brave way for four months, but it had to yield at last. The French then let the pope come back to Rome, and the rule was much the same as it had been. But the Austrians did not trust the folks, and they in their turn gave them no love. In the mean time Hungary had made up its mind once more to be free from the yoke of Austria. They chose Kossuth for their chief. Franz Joseph could not crush them and he had to ask the Emperor of Russia to help him. With his aid they fought the troops of Hungary and won the day. The men who had led the Hungarians fled to Turkey. Kossuth came to America, where he told of the strife of his land to be free. He spoke from his heart of their woes, and the hearts of all who heard him felt for Hungary.

In 1866 Venice rose to turn out the Austrians and then came a war for their rights.

But Franz Joseph had one war on his hands at this time. Wilhelm I was now King of Prussia, and his chief man was Bismarck. This man, who had great strength of will, thought that war was a cure for all the ills in Germany. In the first war they took Schleswig Holstein from the Danes. Next he had a plan for Prussia to have all the states of Germany at the north, and Austria the south. This brought on a new war. Saxony and three more states at the north took the side of Austria and sent their troops to help. Count von Moltke took the head of the Prussian troops and went to siege Hanover and Saxony. George V of Hanover was blind, but he was with his troops on their way to join the Bavarians. He had to yield June, 1866. Then the Prussians took up their march in to Saxony. They were in good trim. Their men had the best arms to be found, and they had been taught all the arts of war from their youth. They had a kind of gun that bore down all in its way, so in the end the Austrians had to fall back with a great loss of men. The Prussians went on to win all, till at last a peace was made at Prague, by which the Austrians gave up all share of Germany. Prussia kept all. Though Bavaria, Saxony, Wurtemburg and Baden still held their place as states and had kings of their own, they had to give a pledge to Prussia that they would help her in time of war, and they had to own her as their head. The growth of Prussia, which had been so great in a few years, was such

as to make France feel some fear. At this time in Spain the folk had sent off their queen, and were in want of some one to rule them. They thought they would give the crown to Leopold, who was kin to the King of Prussia; but as soon as the French heard of this plan they were full of rage. To keep off a war, Leopold gave up at once all thoughts of the crown of Spain. But the French would not rest with this. They had a wish to try their strength with Prussia, and thought they might get back some of their old lands on the Rhine. So the French man who had charge of these things in Prussia met the king at Ems, and went up to him to say that he must give his word that at no time should Leopold take the crown of Spain. Wilhelm did not choose to say what he would do just at that time and in that place. The French made out that their great man had been met with scorn, and that there must be war at once. All Germany felt that the real cause of the war was that France sought to get back the lands of the Rhine, so all took up arms with one heart and will. All through the land was sung the song of "The Watch on the Rhine," and the young men came in crowds with the love of their land warm in their hearts. The fight was first on the French line. Count von Moltke took the lead, though the king was at the head of the troops, and they put the French troops to rout at Worth and at Saarbrucken. All round Metz there was a hard fight, and it was all gain to the Germans, till at last they shut in one great part of the French troops, with Bazaine at their head, and cut them off from the rest. Marshal McMahon

made haste to come to their help, but the Germans met him near Sedan and there was a long and fierce fight. King Wilhelm won the day, and Napoleon III had to give up his troops and his own self to the foe.

Then the crown prince went on and laid siege to Paris. The French said they would not give up one foot of ground; but the Germans were bent on the gain of their old lands of Alsace and Lorraine, and so the war went on. The Germans made a rule that no one who did not fight should be hurt, and those who were in the troops they would treat as the rules of war said should be done, but if the folk of the land shot at them they would treat them as thieves and men who ought to meet with death. If the folk in a town rose on the Germans, the town was burned and those who led the fight put to death. There was, of course, all the woes of war, but it was not so bad as the wars of old times.

The Germans took Strasburg first, and then Metz, and the troops the French sought to raise were swept to naught. All Germany was full of a wild joy. The Germans of the south sought to be one with those of the north, and Ludwig of Bavaria told them they ought to choose the King of Prussia to be at their head. Wilhelm was near Paris at the time, in the home of the old kings at Versailles, when they came to give him the Crown of Germany. There in the grand hall he was made emperor. By this time Paris had come to the end of her food and the folks were like to starve. There was naught left but to yield, and on the 1st

of March, 1871, some of the German troops went in to the town. But they did not go in with all the troops in state and pomp, as they might have done, they did not send this pang to the hearts of their old foes. Peace was made, and France had to pay 5,000,000,000 francs for the cost of the war and give up Alsace and Lorraine. These States had been part of France so long that the folks in them did not like the change, and at Strasburg, the French flag, the red, white and blue, for more than a year was still seen to wave on the grand old church, for no one felt it safe to climb up there and put the German in its stead. Germany has gone on since the war with all the arts of peace. There has been growth of all kinds. In 1877 they sought to bring Austria to hold with them a plan of trade, but they could not come to the same terms; still they are good friends.

The Kaiser Wilhelm has more than once been shot at by men who had the craze for a free land and a hate of kings. The last time the emperor's wounds were such that some one had to take the rule of the land for a time. The first thing of the kind was in May, 1878. The emperor had just come home from a drive when a man by the name of Max Hodel shot twice at him and thrice in to the crowd. There was great rage at this man, who was found to be one of those who seek to pull down thrones and to set up mob law. The next time the shots came from a house as the kaiser went through the grand street of Berlin which has the name of' "Unter den Linden." A man by the name of Nobiling was found, who shot at all who strove to take him

as if he were in a craze, and then he sought to take his own life. He was made to own his crime, but would not state why he had done the deed. The emperor had more than one bad flesh wound from the shots which had found a lodge in his face, head, both arms and in the neck. Of the fate of these two men we will say but a word, Hodel was put to death in the same year as his crime. Nobiling wrought his death by his own hand.

In this same year Germany made good friends with the folk in the Samoan Isles, in the South Sea, which gave her new ports of trade. In 1880 and 1881 the land throve still more. Prince Bismarck felt his health fail and twice sought to give up his place, but the Kaiser had need of him.

On the 10th of November, 1883, was kept the birthday of Martin Luther, who was born on that day, 1483. Men went from all parts of the land, and the state and pomp of the day went to show that the name of Luther still lives in the hearts of all.

On the 9th of March, 1888, the good Kaiser, Wilhelm, died. Had he lived but two weeks more he would have been ninety one years old. The whole world mourned his death as that of a great and wise and just king, who had loved peace though he did not fear war, who had found his land small and weak, and had made it large and strong. While he was sick great crowds went each day to his door to learn how he was, and when told that there was no hope that he could live, turned back with tears in their eyes.

Some stood there night and day till he died, in the hope that they might see him once more. On the day he was borne to his grave crowds still more vast, sad and grave lined the way to see him pass. Men from all lands far and near were there to show how high was the place he held in their thoughts. The chief towns in all parts of the earth were draped in black, and their flags were hung at half mast to mark the loss felt by his death.

His son, who was sick in Italy when Kaiser Wilhelm died, came back at once to Berlin, that the land should not be without some one to rule it who had the right to do so. He was too ill to go with those who laid the late king to rest, but watched them from his house as they passed by, with the sad thought no doubt in his mind that in a short time he too would be borne to the grave. Too ill to leave the house, his throat too weak to let him use his voice, he could not take the oaths as kings in times past had done, but in place of that had to sign them. He had been named Friedrich Wilhelm, but now that he was King of Prussia and Emperor of Germany he chose to drop the last name and to be called Friedrich III.

Kaiser Wilhelm

The reign of Frederick III of Germany was a short one. It lasted scarce three months and he was ill most of that time. He had the best doctors from his own land and a great one from England, but they could not save his life. The poor looked on him as their friend, and he loved peace, so there was great grief when he died. When his son, Wilhelm II, came to the throne, he said the ship of state should go on as of old. He meant to make the poor folk his chief care. He found Bismarck at the head of things. He had been a prime friend of Wilhelm I. When Bismarck had wished to give up his high post at one time, the Emperor had said, "Not while I live."

It was well known that the young Emperor, Wilhelm II, did not like Bismarck. So Bismarck did not say he felt too old or give any cause—but just gave up his place. He had been made Chancellor in 1862. Wilhelm I was giving great care to his troops at that time—and long railroads were built, so that large forces could be moved in a quick way, and Krupp guns had been bought for the whole army. All this cost a large sum, and so the folk were taxed till they groaned and found fault with it. Now, it is the way in Germany that when the Emperor signs a Bill that is to go out as law—the Chancellor must sign it, too. Then, if the law is not liked by the folk, the Chancellor has all the blame. Wilhelm I had spent so much on his troops and his

roads and his arms, that his folk were poor and found fault with the taxes. It was hard for the emperor to find a man who would brave the folk and go on with all the work he wanted to do. So he picked out Bismarck, who did not mind what folk said, and ruled things with a high hand.

He dared all, and in the end Prussia was made more great and Austria was joined to her. Then all the folk praised Bismarck—and they did not mind the cost.

But the ink was scarce dry on the peace Bill when Austria began to fear Prussia. Each felt that one must go to the wall, and looked around for new friends. Italy only was on Prussia's side—while all the rest took sides with Austria. But in two years the shell burst—Austria feared Italy more than she had Prussia, so she sent her best troops to Italy and her worst to Prussia. Austria lost the fight at Sadowa. Gen. Moltke and the Krupp guns won the day. Bismarck was made a Count, and the Prussians were so full of joy at the rout of Austria that they could not do too much for him. They saw the use of the great army and were glad to give more gold. North and South Germany were made one—and he got great fame.

In the war with France, too, Germany won, and this was said to be the work of Bismarck—but Gen. Moltke had much to do with it. Bismarck was then made a Prince. In Germany there is a large class who think that the folk of a land should have a voice in the rule of it. They are called Socialists. Bismarck tried to crush them out by force. He

tried to keep Frederick from the throne, for he knew that he was not of the same mind, but had the good of all the folk at heart. But, sick as he was, in the short time he lived he did much for the good of his folk.

The new Emperor, Wilhelm II, saw that new times had come. New times needed new men. He knew that Bismarck was not of the same mind, and so they parted. Wilhelm felt that the time for a change had come. At first he tried—or it looked as if he tried—to be a friend to the Socialists. He wished to be known as the friend to workmen. He gave out that he would help them to gain their high aims, and they could find no more strong friend in all good works than he would be. The Socialists took what they could get—but did not quite trust the fair words—and he soon grew tired. He sent these words to one of the great Socialists: "It is all nonsense. Who is not for me I will crush!" He now looks on these men as his foes. They are the thorn in his side. He has done all he could to get rid of them—but they spread and grow more strong, and are a great force in Germany. He would sweep them from the face of the earth—but he can not. He wants to lay down the law, and his word is law. He believes in the rights of Kings, and that is his whole faith. The Socialists hold that the folk have some rights, too. No one can say what the end may be.

In 1892 there were riots in Berlin. The crops had failed and there was a rise in the price of bread. Poor men could find no work. They saw their wives and babes grow pale

and wan for want of food. A great host of workmen—three or four thousand strong, wrought up to a great pitch by speeches on the hard times—marched to the gates of the palace with shouts and cries: "To the palace! The Kaiser must see us! We need bread!" The police charged on them and at last put them to flight—but at night they came out once more. The Emperor rode out in the thick of it, with but one mounted man at his side and two of the police in front. This pleased the folk, as it looked brave, and they cheered him. Some of the men were hurt—and those who led the mob were seized and put in jail.

In 1895 Germany joined with Russia, England, France, Austria, and Italy to try and keep the Sultan in bounds. These six nations were called the Powers. Turkey had roused the world with its vile acts. Christians in Armenia were killed in cold blood. First they took their arms from the men—and then they killed them. The streets ran with blood. In some places the women and babes were not spared. The Powers sailed out with their warships and stood round while the Sultan kept on with his work of death. He tried to make out that it was not his fault. Now and then he would say it should be stopped at once. Then a fresh batch of horrors would take place and shock the world. The Powers did no more—save now and then to send a mild note to the Sultan to say that he must stop such work—or something would be done. So it went on till whole towns were laid waste—and the land was full of woe. Russia, it was said, was to blame—for she had

pledged her word to Turkey that no one should harm her. Russia is a great land, with a vast army, and no one was so brave as to stand against her. In the end, the Sultan pledged his word that the Powers should have something to say in the laws for Christians for three years. But no one puts much faith in his word.

In 1896 there was a fine fair held in Berlin. Men from all the lands that Germany rules came and brought their goods and arms and all they had that was rich and rare to the great show. Berlin, as it had been two hundred years back, was shown with its quaint houses and narrow streets. Part of the town of Cairo was shown, as near as it could be made, with Arabs at work at their trades. There were arms and rare things lent by the Khedive of Egypt—and much more that we have not space to set down here.

THE END.