



JOHN SOBIESKI, KING OF POLAND.

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Polon 7.22

# AUTHENTIC MEMOIRS

OF

## THE LIFE OF

## JOHN SOBIESKI,

## King of Poland.

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE INHERENT ERRORS IN THE FORMER  
CONSTITUTION OF THAT KINGDOM, WHICH, THOUGH AR-  
RESTED FOR A TIME BY THE GENIUS OF A HERO AND A  
PATRIOT, GRADUALLY PAVED THE WAY TO ITS DOWNFALL.

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BY A. T. PALMER.

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"I wish it were possible to recall amongst the Sovereigns now assembled at Vienna the immortal Sobieski, to remind them of the services he once rendered at the head of a Polish army, in relieving that capital, and driving from the Austrian territories a Turkish invading force; for surely such a recollection would decide the question, and Poland would be rendered free and independent."—*Extract from the Speech of an illustrious DUKE in the House of Lords, Dec. 1, 1814.*

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AND MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

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1815.

## PREFACE.

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AT a period when general interest is excited by the doubt whether Poland is to be restored to her political existence, or to be for ever blotted from the map of nations, the Memoirs of Sobieski, who so long sustained her glory and independence, can scarcely be read with indifference by a country justly proud of her own liberty, and of the immortal honour recently acquired by her brave sons in the common cause of freedom,

“I wish,” said an illustrious Duke\*, “it were possible to recall, amongst the Sovereigns now assembled at Vienna, the im-

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\* In the House of Lords, December 1, 1814.

mortal Sobieski, to remind them of the services he once rendered Austria, at the head of a Polish army, in relieving that capital, and driving from the Austrian territories a Turkish invading force ; for surely such a recollection would decide the question, and Poland would be rendered free and independent."

The epoch of Sobieski's life, so peculiarly critical to Poland, opened a wide field for the exercise of his great talents and patriotic virtues. While yet a private individual, his sole genius saved his country from vassalage to the Turks ; and after the grateful voice of the Poles had elevated him to the throne, that genius spread so wide a lustre as to fix on him the eyes of Europe.

It was to Sobieski that Leopold II.



turned as a last resource, when 200,000 Turks appeared before Vienna, from which capital he had himself fled with his imperial family. This appeal to his magnanimity Sobieski generously answered, and, at the head of the combined armies of the Empire and Poland, drove with ignominy from the Austrian territories the mighty armament sent forth by the Porte for the subjugation of the Christian world. Thus, whilst Louis XIV., not satisfied with refusing his assistance to the emperor, was secretly encouraging the enemies of that monarch, the king of Poland acquired the double glory of humbling the most formidable enemy of the republic, and saving Christendom from the horrors with which she was threatened by the followers of Mahomet.

To Poland the memory of Sobieski ought

to be dear as that of a parent, since it was by studying with the indulgence of a father the temper of his subjects, that he was able to counteract many of the evils produced by the inherent errors of its constitution, and to maintain during his life its rank among nations. The glory of his country did not survive the reign of Sobieski; and her independence, corrupted and degraded as the republic became under that of Frederic Augustus, was easily conquered when committed to the feeble arm of Stanislaus Poniatowski.

*February 24, 1813.*

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# MEMOIRS

OF

## JOHN SOBIESKI.

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### CHAPTER I.

**J**OHAN SOBIESKI, the patriot, the warrior, and finally the king of Poland, was born in the year 1629 at his father's castle of Olesko, in the palatinate of Red Russia. The families from which he was descended were equally distinguished for the antiquity of their origin, and the succession of patriotic virtues which endeared their memory to Poland.

James Sobieski, the father of the subject of these memoirs, in addition to his appointment to the starosty of Javarow (1\*), received the honour of being four times elected Marshal of the

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\* See Additional Notes at the end of the volume.

Diet(2), before he was called to take his seat in the senate, as Castellan of Cracow(3); a dignity which he proved himself perfectly qualified to sustain with honour.

He married Theophila Zolkiewska, heiress to the celebrated general of that name; by whom he had two sons and one daughter. Mark, the elder son, was a youth of mild and amiable character; but his talents were not sufficiently distinguished to prevent his being wholly eclipsed by his younger brother, John, whose actions we are about to record.

Neither the high station which James Sobieski filled, nor the many diplomatic negotiations in which he was from time to time engaged with foreign courts, on the part of the republic, prevented him from taking an active share in the education of his sons. He appointed for their tutor, Stanislaus Orchowski, a man well qualified to discharge the trust reposed in him; and devoted many of his own leisure hours to the preparation of a treatise on education for his assistance.

This work has been denominated, by a modern Pole, the best practical treatise on physical and moral education which his country has

produced. He describes it as breathing the wisdom of a tender father, and the patriotism of an enlightened citizen, anxious to render his sons worthy of the country to whose service, from their birth, he had devoted them\*.

The branch of the young Sobieski's studies over which the Castellan personally presided was that of gradually developing the real interests of Poland; and habituating his sons to write and speak in defence of those interests. He seconded also the successful efforts of their tutor, to form in their young minds that habit of application which he had himself acquired; and without which, as he well knew, no reasonable hope could be entertained of solid advantage, from even the most promising talents.

The ardent and impetuous disposition of his younger son rendered him so susceptible of lively impressions, as to justify the opinion, that his character received an early bias from the tenor of an inscription, engraven on the

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\* James Sobieski wrote also in Latin, "Commentaries on a war with Sultan Osman I," who had attempted the conquest of Poland. He had been present, and honourably distinguished himself, at many of the battles he described; particularly that of Choczim.

tomb of his maternal grandfather, which enjoined some descendant of that hero to avenge the disrespect that had been shown by the Ottomans to his manes. James Sobieski, who felt that to a free country, surrounded like Poland by restless and intrusive enemies, no talents could be more valuable in her patriotic sons, than those martial ones which at once taught her enemies to respect her territories and preserved her independence inviolate, could not remark without pleasure the emotion which John betrayed on reading this inscription. From that period the boy began to display instances of a noble spirit, and a thirst for military glory; which his father was careful, without repressing, to temper with a love of justice, beneficence, and sacred respect for the laws.

When he judged them capable of profiting by the study of other manners, customs, and prejudices, James Sobieski resolved on sending the youths into foreign countries, where he exhorted them to employ their time in the acquisition of useful knowledge; observing humorously—"As for *dancing*, my sons, you will have sufficient opportunities of learning to dance from the Tartars."—The brothers

quitted Poland on their way to Paris; not then foreseeing that they had bidden adieu for the last time to their excellent father.

France was just entering into the civil war of the Fronde at the epoch of their arrival; and the political principles in which the Sobieskis had been educated, naturally tended to interest them in the popular cause. This interest was rendered still warmer on the part of John, by the intimacy and ultimate friendship which he formed with the distinguished leaders of the League,—the Great Condé and his heroic sister, Anne of Bourbon, duchess de Longueville. Of this friendship, founded on an admiration of their genius, he, through his life, gave repeated testimonies. On his first introduction to the prince, yielding to an impulse of his native frankness, he told him that in his admiration of the illustrious character of a conquering hero, he lost sight of the splendour attached to the rank of a prince of the blood royal of France.

Resolved to let no occasion escape him, by which he might be fitted for the great part he designed one day to act, John Sobieski prevailed on his father to purchase him a captain's commission in the corps of grand musketeers of

France; by which means he gained much useful experience in the tactics of that country during his abode in it. His laudable pursuits, however, were from time to time chequered by others of an opposite nature. Endowed with remarkable advantages of person; frank, animated, and engaging, he perhaps found it scarcely possible, amidst the dissipation of Paris, to avoid some affairs of gallantry in which he became unfortunately engaged. The consequence attending one of them involved him, after he ascended the throne of Poland, in some unpleasant embarrassments with Louis XIV. which terminated in a manner mortifying to his pride.

Our young Poles after quitting France visited England, Germany, Italy, and Constantinople; in which city they made a considerable stay, anxious to acquire an intimate knowledge of a power which was so frequently at variance with Poland, and on which John cherished the hope of one day avenging the insult shown to the remains of his illustrious grandfather, the inscription on whose tomb he had taught himself to regard as a posthumous injunction particularly addressed to himself.

The intelligence of their father's death, and



that an alarming insurrection of the Cossacks threatened desolation in the heart of Poland, determined the brothers, instead of penetrating into Asia, as they had first intended, on hastening back to their own country.

At that period (1648) Casimir V. had just succeeded to the throne of his deceased brother Uladislav VII. the greatest error of whose reign was that of deviating from the beneficent policy of Stephen Battori (4); which uniformly protected the rights granted to his new subjects the Cossacks of the Ukraine.—Uladislav, towards the close of his reign, had been so unjust and impolitic as to connive at the aggressions of the Polish nobles, in the palatinate bordering upon that country, who assuming the conduct of tyrants towards the Cossacks, violated with impunity their privileges, invaded their property, and completed the desperation of the aggrieved by destroying their churches. Provocations so insufferable had at length roused to rebellion this hitherto loyal people. They had been, on their first revolt, defeated by the Poles, and compelled to purchase a cessation of hostilities by delivering up their general, whose life the Poles promised to respect;

notwithstanding which they basely beheaded him.

The second rebellion to which the Cossacks had been goaded, was occasioned by the atrocious conduct of Jarinski, a Polish noble, who had been intrusted with a command in the Ukraine. This man, a disgrace to his country, found there a respectable Cossack, by name Kmilienski, living peaceably on his paternal property, which he had rendered valuable by the efforts of his own industry. The cupidity of Jarinski was excited by contemplating the possessions of the Cossack, on which he endeavoured to seize forcibly ; but failing in this attempt, he found means to revenge his disappointment by setting fire to some mills of Kmilienski, dishonouring his wife, and, by way of climax to his barbarity, afterwards murdering her on the bleeding body of her son. The undone Cossack demanded justice at the throne of Uladislas, and his complaints were echoed by multitudes of his oppressed brethren ; but Uladislas was deaf to the general appeal, and absolutely denied all redress(5).

Sovereigns should shun the danger of exciting, by injustice, the indignation of a brave

and loyal people. The timely interference of the king might have appeased the exasperated Cossacks; his refusal created in them the most ungovernable fury. Uladislas did not, however, live to see the dreadful effects of his misconduct; he expired at the very moment that the Cossacks, with Kmilienski at their head, were forcing their way, with irresistible impetuosity, into the heart of Poland, and putting to the sword every noble whom they encountered.

At Pilawicez it was hoped their progress would have been stopped by their encounter with the Polish army commanded by the crown-general Potoski, an officer of high reputation; but the Cossacks, in whose leader despair supplied the want of experience, as it did that of discipline in his troops, gained a complete victory over these veteran forces, and pushed forward to Leopol, the capital of Red Russia, which surrendered at discretion.

Kmilienski, in the inextinguishable fury which agitated him, retaliated, with interest, every wrong which he had suffered; refining upon the insults that had been offered to his own religious prejudices, by compelling all the Polish priests, who fell within his power, to

espouse nuns, and conform to the ritual of the Greek church.

The terrors which preceded the devastating effects of his advance, had now spread to Cra-cow, from whence it was thought necessary to remove to a place of greater safety the crown, recently placed on the head of Casimir(6). It was at this crisis that the young Sobieskis received a summons from their mother, commanding them to hasten to the assistance of their bleeding country, and endeavour, by their patriotic efforts, to repair the loss Poland had sustained in the death of their father.

In the meantime the new king showed himself disposed to listen to the dictates of humanity, rather than to the voice of his clamorous nobles, who called on him to put himself at the head of a powerful army and march against the rebels.

Casimir, whose unadulterated mind regarded with abhorrence the wanton and atrocious cruelty which the Cossacks had experienced from the Poles, replied firmly, that he should first endeavour to appease them by negotiation, and offers of satisfaction, before he directed his arms against a brave people, who had

been driven into rebellion by oppression and injustice.

These sentiments of moderation were so little relished by the turbulent nobles that, in defiance of the king, fifty thousand of them took up arms, and marched into Little Volhinia; where their conduct and bravery so ill seconded their presumption, that they were beaten and routed by ten thousand of the enemy.

The Cossacks were soon after joined by very powerful allies in their neighbours the Tartars. The khan, who conceived that he had been deeply injured by the late king Uladislas, in his suppression of a pension which had been long paid to him and his predecessors by the crown of Poland, seized on the present as a favourable moment to execute the vengeance he meditated. He accordingly dispatched a considerable force to act in conjunction with the rebels, in the hope of completing the ruin which threatened the republic.

The principal armies of Poland had been defeated, her king and nobles were at variance, and her enemies were laying waste her territories, when the young Sobieskis returned to Warsaw. Their intention was that of imme-

diately joining a body of the nobles, who, having found safety in flight after their late defeat, had assembled in considerable force in Lower Volhinia. But this design on the part of John was suddenly frustrated by his too great impetuosity, which involved him in a duel with a Lithuanian noble of the name of Paz, the members of whose family were remarkable for the overbearing arrogance of their manners. In this encounter Sobieski received so severe and dangerous a wound, that he was compelled to abandon all thoughts of accompanying his brother, and had the mortification of seeing him depart alone, while he was confined to his bed at once a prey to self-reproach, and an object of displeasure to his patriotic mother, who could not easily pardon his having risked, in single combat, a life which she considered the property of his country. But the anger of Theophila Sobieski towards her younger son was soon absorbed in grief for the loss of her elder.

The result of the battle, in which Mark had engaged, against the united power of the Cossacks and Tartars, was still more disastrous to the Poles than either of those which had pre-

ceded it. They suffered the most signal defeat; and the unfortunate Mark Sobieski, together with a considerable number of Polish nobles, fell into the hands of the Tartars, by whom they were inhumanly put to death, and their remains denied the common rites of sepulture.

Casimir, now convinced that no other course was left to restore tranquillity to Poland, put himself at the head of the whole disposable force of the republic, and by the exercise of his royal authority endeavoured to unite the jarring interests of the nobles, which had hitherto unhappily distracted his councils and divided his efforts.

## CHAPTER II.

**JOHN SOBIESKI**, become by his brother's death the representative of the united houses of his ancestors, and appointed by Casimir to the starosty of Javarow, was now about to enter on a career calculated to draw forth all the latent resources of his great mind.

No sooner was he recovered from the effects of his imprudent duel than, eager to repair his fault, he put himself at the head of a select troop, and joined the royal standard. Some serious skirmishes, which were but the prelude to a general engagement, afforded him early opportunities of proving that to the undaunted valour of a soldier he joined that happy quickness of discernment which characterizes the accomplished general. An event occurred before the decisive battle, which, though at first it seemed to threaten inevitable ruin to Poland, in its fortunate result at once evinced the respect which Sobieski had early acquired among the soldiery, and the empire his genius gave him over the minds of others.



At the very moment an attack of the camp of Zborow was hourly expected from the enemy a mutiny broke out in the Polish army, and every method of persuasion, remonstrance, menace, and even force, had been vainly tried to reduce it to order by their general Czarenski, who at length abandoned the attempt as hopeless. At this desperate crisis Sobieski (then in his twenty-first year) with a temerity which excited considerable surprise, petitioned the general to intrust to him the quelling this alarming revolt. Czarenski consented, yet expecting little advantage from the efforts of a youth so very recently entered on the career of arms.

On being charged with the negotiation, Sobieski at once threw himself within the power of the armed and enraged multitude, with an intrepidity and firmness of soul which excited their involuntary astonishment and respect. Seizing on this auspicious moment, he addressed them with all that passionate and persuasive eloquence for which he became through life so greatly celebrated; and inflamed with that holy love of his country which burned in his own breast, he soon rekindled in theirs that

spark of patriotism which had been stifled only, not extinguished.

Sobieski had the glory of leading back to the king his repentant troops, and of seeing them, soon after, prepared to repel the enemy with renovated sentiments of loyalty and unanimity. His majesty gave an immediate mark of his gratitude to our young officer, by making him standard-bearer to the crown (7).

Concord was but just restored in the army of the republic, when the united forces of the enemy made a desperate attempt to force the Polish camp; but the reclaimed troops, animated by their young hero, formed so impenetrable a rampart, that after an obstinate and bloody conflict during three successive days, which cost the Cossacks and Tartars upwards of twenty thousand men, they retired without having gained any advantage over the royal party. The immediate effect of this disappointment was to dispose them to listen to such terms of negotiation as Casimir desired should lead to peace.

Conformably with the mild policy by which he still hoped to bring back the rebels to their allegiance, he proposed to forgive them all past

offences ; to restore to them the undisturbed exercise of their religion ; to maintain twenty thousand armed Cossacks, as militia, in the palatinate of Kiow for its future defence ; and to appoint no other than a noble of the Greek church as its governor. On the part of the Cossacks he demanded only this condition ; that their general, as a mark of his return to his duty, should ask pardon on his knees for the excesses he had committed. Kmilienski submitted to the humiliation required of him, and peace was, for a time, established. On behalf of the khan, the principal stipulations were, that his suppressed pension should be restored to him, and that he should be allowed to choose from the Polish officers a hostage, who was to accompany him to Tartary, as a security for the fulfilment of these engagements.

That the esteem and confidence which Sobieski had already acquired in the army of the republic had extended also to that of her enemies, became manifest on this occasion. The khan, who had marked his conduct with silent admiration while they had been opposed to each other as foes, now gave a public testimony of it by selecting him as his hostage ; while

Sobieski, whose heart was engrossed by the interests of his country, hailed with pleasure the opportunity this choice offered him of acquiring such a knowledge of the Tartars as he might, at some future day, render subservient to the advantage of the republic. The consequences, in a great measure, answered his hopes; since, although the friendship and confidence with which he inspired the khan, during his continuance near him, had not the power to detach him immediately from the Cossacks, it enabled him, soon after, to draw him over to the succour of Poland in one of her most critical situations.

Meanwhile it could not be expected, from the general clash of interests, that the peace which Casimír had purchased by such great sacrifices could be of long duration. On the one hand, the majority of the Polish nobles thought the king had degraded the republic, by granting terms which appeared to them utterly humiliating, and waited only for a favourable pretext to renew the war with some show of justice; while on the part of the Cossacks, in addition to the suspicions naturally excited in them by the avowed enmity of the nobles, the

bad habits into which they had degenerated during the late depredations had ill disposed them to return willingly to the peaceful labour from which they had been unhappily diverted by the late commotions. The Tartars also, who had tasted the enjoyment of the plunder they had wrested from the Poles, were much inclined to renew a contest by which they hoped still further to enrich themselves. Where the wishes of all the other parties, therefore, tended so decidedly to war, the pacific disposition of the king could do little towards maintaining peace. Sobieski had not been long returned to Poland\* when the Cossacks and Tartars once more appeared in arms.

The Polish troops first encountered them on the borders of the palatinate of Beltz. Sobieski, who was in the hottest part of the battle, received a wound in his head; but the Tartars, with the loss of six thousand men, were completely defeated, while Kmilienski with a part of his Cossacks found safety in flight.

A new ally had in the interim started up to his aid in the Czar Alexis, who thinking the present distracted state of Poland a favourable

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\* A. D. 1652.

opportunity for the recovery of Smolensko, (which had been taken from Russia by the Poles,) suddenly seized on that city, and by this act of hostility tempted the Cossacks and Tartars to join their remaining forces to his. Thus strengthened, Wilna and several other places of importance rapidly fell before them.

During the scenes of carnage and devastation which for the three following years ensued, the services which Sobieski had rendered the republic were acknowledged by his appointment to a distinguished command in the cavalry. Never had Poland greater need of sons who, like himself, united the patriot and the warrior than at this period\*. As if their bleeding country had not yet sufficiently suffered from the horrors of intestine war, a party of the discontented nobles invited Charles Gustavus (lately become king of Sweden by the abdication of Christina) to invade her with a powerful army.

The Swedish monarch first seized upon Great Poland and Masovia; Cracow but feebly resisted him; and the unfortunate Casimir, finding himself abandoned by so considerable a body of his nobles, with the troops under their in-

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\* A. D. 1655.

fluence, fled into Silesia for safety; while the conqueror, after strongly garrisoning Warsaw, pushed his successes into Prussia.

Except the crown general, Sobieski was now the chief hope of Poland and her fugitive king. Firm in his duty, he continued, however ineffectually, to grapple with the enemy; and though with forces so disproportionate he was generally overpowered, the resources of his genius still supported him in arms, and taught him to draw, even from the bosom of defeat, the certain means of future conquest.

Between Elbing and Marienburg he had an opportunity of showing what might have been expected of him had he been more adequately supported. He defeated, with four hundred horse, a choice body of six hundred Swedish cavalry commanded by a near relation of Charles Gustavus. But in the mean time the unfortunate Casimir had the mortification of seeing Lithuania voluntarily put herself under the protection of Sweden, to avoid the miseries which threatened to attend her subjugation by force of arms.

At this dreadful juncture the address of Sobieski greatly tended to ward off the blow which threatened the republic with immediate ruin.

Availing himself of the knowledge he had gained of the Tartars, and the esteem he had created in their prince, while he lived among them as a hostage, he found means at this critical period to detach them from the interests of Russia, and fix them in those of Poland. The khan was prevailed on to furnish an army for her defence, and Sobieski was appointed to command it.

Under a general of less capacity, no reasonable expectation could have been entertained of assistance from a host of men hitherto accustomed only to rapine and plunder, impatient of control, and ever ready to fly on the first show of resistance. But through the example and discipline of Sobieski they soon acquired firmness, order, and obedience; while, by imparting to them a portion of his own ardour for military glory, he taught them to make the enemy dearly purchase the victories they obtained.

The Poles, goaded to despair by the enormous contributions extorted from them by their conqueror, and at length animated by the patriotic example of Sobieski, resolved, unanimously, to throw off the grievous yoke which had been imposed upon them, or perish in the



attempt. Every man became a soldier, and Casimir returned to support by his presence the revived courage which displayed itself among his subjects.

The crown general and Sobieski, respectively at the head of the Poles and Tartars, speedily changed the aspect of affairs. The Swedish troops which had been left to overawe Lithuania were attacked, defeated, and put to the sword. Warsaw was delivered from the enemy's garrison, and every day some new success extended over a wider space the blessings of renovated freedom.

In the mean while intelligence arrived that the king of Sweden at the head of his army, strengthened by a reinforcement from the elector of Brandenburg, was advancing out of Prussia. Sobieski, with his characteristic celerity, took such measures as enabled him to check his dangerous progress, by blocking him up between the Vistula and the Samus, where he cut off his provisions and harassed him by continual skirmishes. Affairs were in this situation when information was brought him that six thousand Swedish troops, with general Douglas at their head, were marching to the

relief of their king. Sobieski instantly resolved on cutting off this assistance ; and, leaving his infantry to continue the blockade, rapidly marched his cavalry to Pileza, swam across the river, and, surprising Douglas, defeated and put to flight his troops.

But while these successes seemed to promise a favourable issue to the disasters of Poland, fortune was in reality preparing new trials of her valour and constancy.

Ragotski (8), prince of Transylvania, in the hope of deposing Casimir and succeeding to his crown, invaded Poland at the head of thirty thousand men, to hinder whose junction with the main army of Charles Gustavus it was necessary to dispatch a division of the Polish troops. This circumstance was rendered the more unfortunate, as the king of Sweden, having taken advantage of Sobieski's march to meet Douglas, broke through the Polish infantry, and pushed forward on Warsaw; to which city he immediately laid siege.

A general engagement ensued, which was continued with unrelaxing fury during three days. The Tartars under Sobieski performed prodigies of valour ; but victory declared in favour of

Charles Gustavus, who again became master of Warsaw. His triumph was, however, very dearly purchased and of short duration; while Sobieski found consolation for his defeat in the happy consequences which, soon after, followed his patriotic exertions. Those exertions had assisted to suspend the frightful revolution with which his suffering country was threatened; *time* had been gained; and in that valuable interval political views had raised up in Denmark a formidable force against the chief enemy of Poland; and thus a brighter hue was soon cast over the prospects of the republic.

The Danes, alarmed at the conquests of Charles Gustavus, declared war against him, and by invading his territories compelled him to abandon his late acquisitions to defend them. From the period of his drawing off his troops from Poland \* he was assailed by too many enemies to find leisure, during his short life, for renewing hostilities against that country. He died three years after quitting it; and that event was soon followed by the conclusion of a treaty of peace between Sweden and the Poles.

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\* A. D. 1657.

In the interim, Lubomirski, the lieutenant-general of the Polish army, and Sobieski, by retaliating on the territories of Ragotski the hostilities with which he had afflicted their country, had compelled that prince to accept peace from the republic on the most humiliating terms. He was obliged to pay a large sum to the king of Poland, to do him homage, and to break off his connection with the Swedes; concessions which deprived him of all future power to annoy that prince. The combined army of the Poles and Tartars now turned its exertions against the only enemies which remained of the late formidable confederacy, the Muscovites and Cossacks. In order to prevent a junction of their forces, Sobieski was dispatched to interrupt the advance of the latter, whom he attacked with such intrepidity, that though with very inferior numbers he obtained over them a complete victory.

The ill-fated Kmilienski, whose first alienation from his allegiance had been caused by intolerable oppression, but whose hostilities subsequent to the concessions of Casimir had proved him a confirmed and dangerous rebel, fell into the power of Sobieski, and was delivered up by

him into the hands of the offended king. The report of these events so dispirited the Muscovites, that the Polish army found them an easy conquest. Wilna and the several other places which had fallen into their hands were speedily recovered by the Poles, and a general peace was once more established on terms very favourable to the republic.

The services which Sobieski had rendered his country were not long after further rewarded by his nomination to the dignity of grand marshal of the crown, vacant by the banishment of Lubomirski. That noble, while grand marshal and lieutenant-general of Poland, had rendered himself obnoxious to the court by his warm opposition to the attempt of Casimir to nominate his successor, in violation of one of the fundamental laws of the republic. Some discontents about the same time having broken out among the Polish troops on account of pay, Lubomirski was accused by the court party of being the secret fomentor of them. A diet was in consequence convened for the purpose of examining how far the lieutenant-general was implicated in the mutiny. But Lubomirski,

either through the belief that he should not be treated fairly, or conscious of some guilt, instead of obeying the summons to appear, withdrew to Breslaw ; which being construed into an avowal of his crime, he was, as a traitor, condemned to forfeit his estate, his honours, and his life.

The year following that in which Sobieski was nominated to succeed Lubomirski as grand marshal of the crown, he was, by the death of Czarenski, elevated to the still higher dignity of lieutenant-général. He had not long been possessed of this important office, when he was called upon to execute a painful duty in the discharge of its functions. The banished Lubomirski, resolved to seek from force of arms the redress which he thought had been denied him by Casimir, returned to Poland with a body of eight hundred men ; but this little party, increasing as it advanced by the partisans of its leader, was soon in a condition to obtain the advantage in several engagements with the royal forces.

At length, increased by malcontents to the number of eighteen thousand, the troops drew

near the grand army of the republic in the palatinate of Cujavia\*. Sobieski for the first time acted, on this occasion, as a general in the *Polish* army; yet his situation was attended by circumstances of a very distressing nature. It was under Lubomirski that he had first exercised the profession of arms, and in conjunction with him he had often fought the battles of his country: now his best energies were to be exerted against this very veteran whom he had been early taught to reverence; while the troops which he commanded were natives of the same soil as those they were to oppose, and had, like himself, often embued those very weapons in the blood of their common enemies which were now to be turned against each other.

But however deeply Sobieski grieved at the necessity, his duty no less imperiously called on him to reduce them to obedience. The army of the republic, consisting of twenty-six thousand men, was only separated from that of Lubomirski by a morass. Unfortunately Casimir had put himself at their head, and com-

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\* July 1666.

manded them to pass the swamp in order to give immediate battle to the rebels. Sobieski earnestly remonstrated with the king on the fatal result which threatened to attend this step: but Casimir, with his characteristic pertinacity, peremptorily insisted, and the consequences which Sobieski had clearly pointed out to him followed. The king's troops in crossing the swamp became embarrassed, and found the utmost difficulty in disengaging themselves; while Lubomirski fell impetuously on them as they struggled out of the morass, not affording Sobieski time to form them; so that the royal army was overpowered without the possibility of coming to action.

Casimir, who from the other side of the morass was a witness to the effect of his own egregious folly, had leisure to repent the sacrifice of four thousand men; the rest by the talents of Sobieski were extricated from their peril, and under his skilful dispositions effected a retreat, the conduct of which reflected the highest honour on him as a general. Casimir, full of grief and mortification, rejoined his troops, and encamped on the river Pileza, where he soon manifested an inclination to come to an amica-



ble adjustment with Lubomirski; which desired end was effected on the following conditions :

The king agreed to enter into a solemn engagement never again to interfere in the choice of his successor to the crown ; to pay the sum which had been refused them ; to revoke his sentence of banishment against Lubomirski ; and to call no one to account for what had passed. On his side Lubomirski evinced no desire of being re-instated in the dignities of which he had been deprived, but retired to Breslaw, in which city he died within six months after (9).

Sobieski had been one of the greatest sufferers by the late disturbances, his estates having been ravaged, and his stables plundered of his most valuable stud of horses.

## CHAPTER III.

**T**RANQUILLITY was now awhile restored to Poland, and Sobieski in his thirty-sixth year, for the first time since his entering on the profession of arms, found himself at liberty to enjoy the charms of peace. It was during this short but eventful interval from toil, that in an evil hour he became seriously captivated by a lady, who, notwithstanding the remarkable beauty of her person, the sprightly graces of her conversation, and the high favour in which she stood at court, proved herself utterly unworthy the affection with which she inspired Sobieski, since she never scrupled to sacrifice his glory to her own private views.

Mary Casimira de la Grange, a native of France, was descended from two ancient families of the province of Berry : her father, the marquis d'Arquien, was captain of the guards to Philip duke of Orleans \* ; and her mother, Frances de la Châtre, had been governess to

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\* Only brother to Louis XIV.

Louisa, queen of Poland. Their daughter at the age of eleven attended her majesty from France in quality of maid of honour, and had been uniformly treated by that princess with peculiar marks of confidence and favour. She had first given her hand to prince Zamoiski, by whom she had four children, all of whom died in infancy; and by the subsequent death of their father she became a widow a few weeks only before her introduction to Sobieski.

Still young, and distinguished above all the other females of the court, the elegance of her figure, the majestic expression of her countenance, the brilliancy of her complexion, and the sparkling vivacity of her eyes, added new attractions to the wit that enlivened her conversation. The immediate impression which this accomplished princess made on Sobieski was so great, that he would not submit to the delay of their union till the period of her mourning had elapsed.

The queen was made acquainted with the lieutenant-general's passion for her favourite; and finding little difficulty in discovering that it received encouragement from the lady, she declared it to be her pleasure that the marriage should take place without further delay. As

little more, however, than two months had passed of the princess Zamoiski's widowhood, it was thought necessary, in order to save appearances, to have the ceremony performed with the utmost privacy; and pope Innocent XII. (then apostolic nuncio in Poland) conferred the nuptial benediction on this hasty union.

This lady, destined now to share the fortunes of Sobieski, proved that she was not more remarkable for her personal recommendations than for the selfishness of her character. She had so long taken part in the cabals and political intrigues by which her mistress agitated the republic, and disgraced the court of Casimir, that a taste for them seemed interwoven with her very nature. Her fault, however, in the end met its punishment, since she defeated some of her dearest wishes by the excess of artifice which she practised for their accomplishment. Yet it was long before the native candour of Sobieski permitted him to discover in a woman, whom he passionately loved, faults from which he was himself so entirely exempt.

The year following his marriage\* Sobieski

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\* A. D. 1667.

succeeded the deceased Potoski in the first office of the republic, that of crown general of Poland (10), which constituted him commander-in-chief of the army; while by that of grand marshal, which he still retained, he was the chief of the police also. This was the first instance of an individual having been allowed to unite these high offices; a proof of the extraordinary confidence which was reposed in him by the republic.

The condition in which Sobieski, on his appointment, found the army was so miserable, that his new office seemed to be little more than a nominal one; and long intestine wars had so drained both the population and the treasury of Poland, that when he proposed recruiting the army, now reduced to between ten and twelve thousand men, he was answered by the grand treasurer, that the republic had not the means left to support the old troops, still less to furnish money for levying new ones.

Affairs were in this situation, when intelligence reached Warsaw that the Cossacks, complaining of fresh grievances, under their new general Doroscenski, and joined by an army of eighty thousand Tartars, had passed the frontiers

of Poland, and were laying waste Podolia, Volhinia, and the palatinate of Russia. The news found Casimir so wholly abandoned to grief for the recent death of his queen, that he made no attempt to stop the torrent of disaster which now threatened to overwhelm Poland. On the crown general, therefore, rested the sole hope of the republic. On this occasion Sobieski gave a striking proof that his was not a character to be depressed by danger; on the contrary, that his energies ever rose proportionably to its magnitude. Rousing himself from the comparative inaction in which his last year had been spent, he became at once the soul of Poland. He emptied his private purse, and even borrowed large sums of money on his personal credit, to supply the public treasury. He formed magazines of provisions, and from his own territories recruited the army of the republic; by which means he soon increased its disposable force to twenty thousand men. With his accustomed celerity he then sent detachments to the different passes of Poland, in order to stop the inroads of the detached bodies of Tartars, at the same time intrusting Piwot, an officer whom (though usually the leader of a

marauding party) he well knew to possess the abilities of a general, with a troop of two thousand horse, ordering him to scour the country and harass the invaders. Then, having disposed his main army to march towards the enemy, he wrote to his consort (at that time on a visit to her family in France) a letter, in which, with that confident anticipation of victory which often commands it, he detailed his projected plan of operation, assuring her that it must lead to the inevitable ruin of the immense forces of the invaders. This letter was shown by her to the great Condé, with a view to draw from him his opinion of its contents; and he ingenuously told her that he could not encourage her hopes, as he saw no possibility of the success with which the crown-general flattered himself.

In reality, it required all the resources of Soubieski's genius, and as intimate a knowledge of the enemies with whom he had to cope as he possessed, to surmount the various difficulties with which he had to contend. His own officers, not comprehending the scope of his plans, loudly condemned the disposition of his forces. This disapprobation soon produced a dangerous effect on the soldiers, who began to

manifest strong symptoms of dissatisfaction : but Sobieski, not less capable of speaking than acting with effect, took no other measure than that of summoning the troops around him.

“ Soldiers (said he), it is my fixed determination to make no change in my plans ; on the event I rest my acquittal or condemnation ; but if any among you fear a glorious death, let them retire. For myself, I will remain with those brave fellows who love their country too well to abandon its general. Yonder crowd of robbers excites no fear in me. I know that the God of Christians often gives the victory, in a just cause, to the smaller number ; nor do I doubt but that he will protect us against these infidel invaders.”

The auditors of Sobieski looked at each other in confusion, and not a single man deserted him. Had the enemy's troops been determined on pushing forward into Poland, Sobieski well knew that they would have met with nothing capable of impeding their progress ; but he had justly calculated on their first attacking his little army, on the ground that it would appear to them more expedient to subdue, than to leave his forces in their rear. Sanguine as to the



result of the conflict, yet neglecting no means within his abilities to insure what he expected, he availed himself of his experience in the peculiar talents of each officer, so to dispose him as to call forth his exertion in the way most beneficial to the general safety; while his own unremitting vigilance and comprehensive mind embraced every department and watched over the whole.

Meanwhile the enemy, like swarms of bees, began to pour their numbers on all sides of the Polish encampment, and were every where received with the most undaunted bravery by the little army of Sobieski, his artillery playing the whole time upon the assailants. At length a weak point of the camp was for a moment forced, when the Poles, with desperate fury, rushed thither, repulsed, expelled, and pursued the invaders far beyond the entrenchments.

The plain was soon covered with the dead bodies of the enemy : but Sobieski, ever tempering his valour with prudence, recalled his victorious troops within his entrenchments, there to await some favourable moment for renewing the contest ; for he thought it would be daring too much to hazard a turn of fortune,

in case so superior an enemy should rally, where he had every thing at stake.

The seven following days produced repeated attacks from the enemy ; against which the Poles not only continued to defend themselves with the same invincible courage, but made several sallies, which proved not less destructive than their first to the Cossacks and Tartars.

At length the decisive day of conflict arrived : the enemy, astonished and enraged by so obstinate a resistance from a handful of men, resolved upon a general assault ; while Sobieski, who had anticipated the approaching crisis, by sending orders to his various detachments to draw near him with the utmost precaution and privacy, had made every preparation in his power to turn it to his own advantage. Instead of waiting the enemy's assault within his entrenchments, he now led forth his troops to meet it. The barbarians, astonished at such boldness, testified their savage joy, as the Polish squadrons advanced, by uttering loud cries which were quickly succeeded by the battle.— Torrents of blood had flowed, yet victory seemed uncertain ; when the several detachments of Sobieski burst upon the enemy, and, with irre-

sistible impetuosity attacking them in flank, threw them into terror and disorder. The brave Piwot in particular, who (in his zeal to justify the confidence which had been reposed in him by the crown general) had been occupied in laying waste the quarters of the Cossacks, carrying off their convoys, and repulsing their foraging parties, now rushed on the invaders with his two thousand horse, overturning and scattering them before him. The very peasants, catching the general enthusiasm, turned their instruments of husbandry into weapons of offence, and joined the troops of Sobieski in sharing a victory which soon became complete.

As Sobieski proceeded to examine into the extent of the depredations committed by the enemy, he found whole villages sacked; churches burnt; the palaces of the nobles levelled with the earth; heaps of murdered Poles piled on their ruins; and the whole frontier presenting one wide scene of desolation.—Such spectacles only swelled the public tide of gratitude towards the hero who had delivered Poland from these hordes of barbarians; and Sobieski had the additional gratification of learning that his victory, in so unequal and apparently so desperate

a conflict, had excited the surprise and admiration of his first pattern in arms, the great Condé, and was applauded by the first generals of France. Soon after this decisive battle the enemy sued for peace, which was granted on terms of mutual satisfaction.

The grateful homage which Sobieski received from all ranks of citizens, on his return to Warsaw, burst forth in enthusiastic acclamations on his re-entering the capital so lately the scene of despair.

A meeting of the diet was soon after his arrival convoked; when, in conformity with the laws of Poland, the crown general rendered publicly an account of the instructions he had received from the senate; his own plan of operation; and the success which had crowned the close of the campaign; recapitulating with warmth the distinguished actions of those who had shared his labours, but passing lightly over his own.

Loud plaudits from all orders of the assembly bore testimony to the approbation which his discourse had excited in them. When the acclamations had subsided, the vice-chancellor arose, and, addressing Sobieski as the deliverer

of his country, returned solemn thanks to him in the name of the republic, and to all those who had assisted him in its preservation.

The sublime pleasure which a mind like his must have experienced at the universal sentiment of gratitude manifested by that country to which he so early devoted himself, had scarcely had time to subside, when he received intelligence of the birth of his first son; and the safety of his wife, who was still with her relatives in France. Louis XIV. on this event testified his esteem for the crown general of Poland by answering at the font for his infant son, who was named James Louis, after his illustrious grandfather and the French monarch.

Casimir, still wholly absorbed by sorrow for the loss of his queen, gave no other token of interest in the late critical situation of his kingdom, than by appearing at the great church of Warsaw to join in the general thanksgiving which was offered up to heaven for the happy termination of so threatening a war. His next public act was that of abdicating a throne, which his inclinations and habits incapacitated him to sustain, surrounded as it was by continual storms(11).

The attention of Poland now\* became wholly turned to the choice of some successor to the feeble Casimir; and the giddy people, whose delight is novelty, showed more eagerness to fill his vacant place, than caution to fill it wisely (12).

Many foreign candidates disputed the honour of their choice, whose various merits the several orders of the republic were warmly discussing on the appointed day, when they were joined on the field of election by two palatines, who presented a young Pole, by name Michael Wiesnowicki, and immediately proceeded to propose and nominate him, as a descendant of Koribut, uncle to the great Jagellon (13).

The vice-chancellor, not penetrating into the artifice of these palatines†, (whose sole motive in this nomination was to ascertain how far a native of Poland would be agreeable to the diet, without compromising a party of the nobles which was desirous of advancing one of their order to the sovereignty,) precipitately swayed the feelings of the multitude by crying out "Long live king Michael!" And the whole assembly

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\* A. D. 1669.

† Of Kalisch and Posenania.

forgetting, in their kindling enthusiasm, the motives which had a moment before actuated them to plead with intemperate warmth for the other candidates, echoed from mouth to mouth. "Long live king Michael!"

It was now too late to direct the tide of favour from this new idol to a more judicious choice; and the reluctant primate was forcibly compelled to proclaim the election, to the chagrin and disappointment of the party who had trusted to the insignificance of the man as a bar to such an event.

Amongst the immense crowd which was present at this unexpected proclamation, there was not one person so greatly astonished by it as the new king himself; who possessed no other claim to the dignity which had been so suddenly conferred upon him, but that of his descent from Koribut. His father had been palatine of Russia, and had once possessed a fine estate in the Ukraine, but had seen it wrested from him by the Cossacks. The mean abilities of Michael, joined to the poverty and obscurity in which he had been obliged to live, seemed to preclude all chance of his ever rising to any dignity in the state; and so little interest had he taken in

the election, that, instead of repairing to the field, he had retired to the church of Recollects at Warsaw ; from whence he had been drawn by the palatines without a shadow of suspicion of what were their intentions in doing so. He shed tears after the election, as they dragged him to the throne, protesting that he was incapable of filling it: but his new subjects, scarcely yielding in superstition to the ancient Romans, in the first moments of their senseless joy, discovered too many happy omens to doubt the wisdom of their choice. During the election a dove had flown across the inclosure where the senate was debating ; and a swarm of bees had hovered over Michael without hurting him. These presages were strengthened by so many others of a fortunate nature, which were said to have occurred to the very priests while performing their sacred functions, that the giddy multitude were impatient to commence a reign which they believed destined to bring back prosperity to Poland. They caused Michael to be crowned, therefore, with so much precipitation, that some of the most important articles of the *Pacta Conventa* (14) were omitted in his coronation oath ; a negligence of which



they had afterwards sufficient leisure to repent.

Indeed no monarch was ever more incapable of governing than the new king; and from sovereigns who know not themselves how to govern, a wise choice of ministers can rarely be expected. Casimir Paz, the head of one of the most considerable families in Lithuania, and the grand chancellor of that duchy, was a man of great abilities, who soon won the entire confidence of his sovereign, which he abused by aggrandizing his own family at the expense of the public good and Michael's honour. His brother, Michael Paz, the grand general of Lithuania, was an officer well versed in military affairs, but of an envious, fiery, and capricious temper, which made him the rival of Sobieski. Such were the two favourites by whom Michael became completely governed. The new king was scarcely seated on his throne, when more than one cause arose to open the eyes of his subjects on the egregious folly of their choice. The Cossacks had heard with jealousy the exaltation of a man whose first use of power, they believed, would be to recover the large possessions in the Ukraine which they had

taken from his father. As the only means of dispelling their fears, they boldly demanded that he should voluntarily renounce claims which they were resolved at all hazards to dispute, if necessary. In the then exhausted state of the republic, it is not surprising that the Poles should have been anxious for the king's compliance with these demands, rather than renew a war recently terminated.

His majesty, however, was far more disposed to gain time with the Cossacks, with a view ultimately to baffle their aim, than to consent to the sacrifice required of him. No one, he knew, was so well qualified to transact these negotiations with success as Sobieski; yet he felt extreme reluctance, even for his own interest, to employ talents which he already hated him for possessing. But necessity at length prevailed, and the crown general was charged with the embassy.

He found Doroscensko so inflexibly bent on Michael's compliance with his first demand, as to compel him, although reluctantly, to have recourse to measures of a less friendly nature. Anxious to spare as much as possible the effusion of Polish blood, and conscious of the great

inferiority of his forces to those he was about to oppose, he summoned policy to the aid of arms; and by setting up a new general among the Cossacks, in opposition to Doroscensko, he turned the tide of their animosity against each other.

While the rival generals were dividing the attention and energies of the soldiers, Sobieski seized the crisis of their dissensions to reduce the whole district between the Bog and the Niester to the obedience of Poland. Doroscensko, every where worsted, had no other means of saving the rest of the Ukraine, than by threatening to give it up to the Turks if Sobieski pushed him to extremities; a threat which at once suspended the victorious career of the crown general.

"We know not which most to admire, your valour or your prudence," wrote the vice-chancellor of Poland to Sobieski in the name of the king and the republic: "with a mere handful of men, your genius has enabled you to open to us a passage into the Ukraine, and will doubtless complete your glory by its reduction. Envy herself is compelled to own that Poland owes to you its safety."

A mind like that of Sobieski must have felt it a noble revenge, thus to extort from his enemies, an acknowledgement of the services by which he had requited their malice.

It was, however, far from the enlightened policy of the crown general to push to absolute despair those whom he still considered as the children of the republic. Like Fabius Maximus, he thought that "if care and kindness had been found the most effectual method to subdue the stubborn tempers of dogs and horses," he who commands *men* should endeavour to correct their errors by gentleness and goodness. His earnest advice therefore was, to induce the Cossacks to return to their allegiance by clemency, as the only method to prevent an alienation, which must render those once valuable subjects a perpetual scourge to Poland\*.

In these temperate wishes Sobieski was supported by the majority of the senate and the whole of the deputies assembled at the diet; but

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\* Amurath the Great, in allusion to the Cossacks, used to say, "that in spite of the potentates of Europe he could sleep on *both ears*, but that these *gad-flies* would scarcely suffer him to sleep on either."

Michael, who without consulting the republic had recently espoused the emperor Leopold's sister, was now entirely surrounded by the creatures of that monarch, who swayed his actions according to the pleasure of their imperial master; and who on the present occasion so warmly combated the policy of the crown general, that they induced the diet to dissolve before any step could be taken to restore tranquillity to the Ukraine.

Doroscensko, in the interim, learning the particulars of what had passed at Warsaw, and fearful of ultimately falling into the hands of an offended sovereign, was now driven exactly into that step from which Sobieski had so earnestly desired to withhold him; he threw himself and his fellow Cossacks on the protection of sultan Mahomet, and thus the Ukraine became united with Turkey.

The Porte was at that period engaged in immense preparations for the invasion and destruction of the German empire; while the storm with which she menaced Christendom was rendered more alarming from the sultan's possessing in his grand vizier, a general capable of executing the daring schemes which as

minister he had planned. Kiuperli had signalized his great military talents by his victories over the Austrians, his conquests in Hungary, his subjection of Transylvania, and his capture of the island of Candia: nor was he esteemed greater in the field than in the cabinet.

The acquisition of the Cossacks to the interest of his master at once suggested to Kiuperli that their views against the empire might be facilitated by first employing the Ottoman forces in the subjugation of Poland. He consequently proposed it in the divan; but being answered, that to make war on the Poles without a previous demand and refusal of justice from them on behalf of the Cossacks, would be to commit an equal injustice with that which was made the pretext of the impending war; and the mufti agreeing in this opinion, Kiuperli immediately addressed to the republic of Poland the following manifesto:

“Poles, when you assert that the Ukraine belongs to you, and that the Cossacks are your natural subjects, you forget that we know this nation was formerly free and independent, that it voluntarily submitted itself to you, and upon

conditions which you have violated. In consequence of the monstrous outrages which you have committed against the Cossacks, they have taken up arms to recover their former liberty, and the laws of nature authorize them to do so. They have besought the sublime Porte to receive them under the shelter of its powerful protection, and extend to them the assistance which it never withholds from the oppressed. Mahomet, the invincible, has consequently sent the sabre and the standard to Doroscensko, the chief of the Cossacks. Learn hence, that it is for you to hasten and compose the difference with the sultan my master, who is already on his march to Adrianople; since, if you allow him to reach your frontiers with his immense forces, the dispute will no longer be decided by treaty, but by the sword and the wrath of the God of vengeance."

Sobieski had not returned to Warsaw at the arrival of this threatening mandate; but the senate immediately assembled for the purpose of taking into consideration what might be the best measure for the public to adopt: but the time for deliberation was principally spent in expressions of indignation, that the manifesto

had not been written by Mahomet himself instead of his grand vizier; a circumstance which was construed into an insulting mark of contempt.

The partisans of Michael, taking advantage of this idle warmth about punctilio, laboured to prove that the sultan's not writing himself was sufficient evidence that he was not serious in his threats against Poland. They argued, that it was highly improbable he should break his treaty with the republic to league with a robber (for such they called Doroscensko); but that, even admitting his hostile intentions, they might reasonably build on the assistance of Russia, to which they should probably add that of Germany also.

These speculative arguments were answered by the more experienced part of the senate, by remarking that it was a far wiser plan to deprive the Porte of all pretext for disturbing Poland, by satisfying the Cossacks, than to involve her again in a destructive war, under the hope of assistance which they might not in the end receive. The primate also pronounced this to be his opinion; yet he declared that nothing decisive ought to be determined on during the



absence of the crown general; whose patriotism, talents, and the essential services he had already rendered his country in her contests with the Cossacks, alike established the propriety of his first delivering his sentiments on a subject of such vital importance to the state.

Nothing could be more grating to the king than the public utterance of sentiments such as these; since, already jealous of the consideration in which Sobieski was held by the republic, he was anxious to avoid every measure which tended to augment his power. The lateness of the hour, however, obliged him, although reluctantly, to suspend proceedings till the following morning.

On that day intelligence was brought that Sobieski was approaching Warsaw, and the majority of the senators immediately went out to meet and conduct him to the senate. On his entrance there, he was complimented by being publicly told that "the gown and the sword equally became him, and that he had entwined the laurel amidst his fasces."

But however gratifying to the crown general such an address might have proved at a period of less danger, he felt nothing now but impa-

tience that a moment should be lost in diverting their attention from the public interests. The blind infatuation which lulled the king and his council into a fancied security at a period when ruin was ready to burst over them, astonished and transported him. He exhorted his majesty, in a strain of energetic eloquence, to treat with the Cossacks before it was absolutely too late; he pointed out to him the concessions which could with honour be made by Poland, and which would even yet appease them; and warmly combated the absurd belief that Mahomet's was but a vain threat, when opposed to the notorious fact of his actual advance towards the Polish frontiers.

But Sobieski addressed in Michael one equally deaf to the voice of reason and of truth: the latter persisted in refusing to return any answer to the manifesto of the Porte, and in treating its menaces as beneath his notice. • The disgust engendered by this stupid obstinacy, in neither treating for peace nor preparing for war, speedily gave birth to a league for the dethroning the king. This league, which was headed by the primate, consisted of several of the first officers of the crown, and the chief of the nobles.

In consequence of the queen of Poland being sister to the emperor of Germany, it was thought proper to acquaint that monarch with their designs; and in doing so they laid before him the many grievances which the imbecility of Michael had brought on their country. The reply of his imperial majesty was couched in terms of much decent sorrow at the awkward necessity of wresting the sceptre from the hands of Michael; yet declared that he should not oppose the measure, provided they pledged themselves to divorce from him his sister, and to elect prince Charles of Lorraine as his successor.

The next step of the league was to consult the queen of Poland; who, on learning the emperor's concurrence with the plan, as the price of her consent to the dethroning and divorcing her consort, insisted only that his successor to the crown should stipulate to espouse herself. The consent of the nobles to this notable piece of forecast rendering every thing thus far easy, they proceeded to the last step which they deemed necessary, that of gaining over the crown general to their scheme, who had hitherto been kept entirely ignorant of it.

The conduct of Sobieski had so uniformly indicated the firm supporter of the crown, that, indignant as they knew his feelings were towards Michael, and certain as appeared the ruin of Poland if that imbecile prince continued at its head, they were doubtful if even these considerations would induce him to join the league. Yet the part he should resolve on taking, it was evident, must decide the fate of their projects.

Sobieski, after listening to the explanation of them, hesitated not, in a case of such dire necessity, to espouse the cause of his country against the monarch which it had with so much precipitate folly set up. Yet his penetration instantly revealed to him, that the deposition of Michael was the only part of the leaguers' scheme from which any benefit could arise to Poland. It was the creatures of Leopold who had influenced him in his late pertinacious obstinacy; for, consulting the obvious interest of their master, they had endeavoured to direct the storm with which the Porte had long threatened Vienna, towards Poland. In accepting a king, therefore, from the empire, what could they expect but the same pernicious influence over the councils of the republic which had

reduced it to its present difficulties? Such were the arguments by which Sobieski prefaced his advice; to guard against the future interference of Leopold by cultivating the friendship of France, and selecting from that nation a king, whose connections as well as talents might ensure from every friend to Poland the approbation of their choice. That choice he directed to the duke de Longueville, nephew of the prince de Condé, and only son of the duke de Longueville by his duchess, Anne of Bourbon. The young duke had already given proofs, under the eye of his uncle, that he inherited that prince's valour and love of military glory\*.

The confederated nobles, clearly perceiving the advantage of replacing Michael by a member of the house of Bourbon, readily acquiesced in the wishes of Sobieski: a discreet emissary was in consequence dispatched to France, in-

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\* Madame de Sevigné, who was well acquainted with the duke de Longueville, thus describes his character: "Jamais un homme n'a eu tant des solides vertus; il ne lui manquoit que des vices, c'est-à-dire, un peu d'orgueil, de vanité, de hauteur; mais du reste, jamais on n'a été si près de la perfection: *Pago lui, pago il mondo*; il étoit au-dessus des louanges; pourvu qu'il fût content de lui, c'étoit assez."

vested with powers to settle the preliminary arrangements with the court of Versailles ; while the league on its part demanded of Michael a new diet, as a step necessary to complete their plans.

That prince, now himself panic-struck at the near approach of the Turkish forces, dared not refuse a concession necessary to the properly arming the republic for its defence ; so that every thing seemed to favour the views of the confederacy.

This diet (which assembled in 1672) was rendered remarkable in the annals of Poland by the extraordinary scene it exhibited. The primate, who as head of the league was deputed to lay open its designs, electrified the king, by recapitulating the many instances of injustice, imbecility, and flagrant violation of the *Pacta Conventa*, by which he had disgraced his reign, forfeited the confidence of his people, and absolved them from their oath of allegiance. These bold assertions were followed up by the associated nobles, who unequivocally declared that the king must choose between the alternatives of voluntarily abdicating the throne, or preparing to be forcibly expelled from it. Then

leaving him to recover at his leisure from the consternation into which he was thrown, they set out to meet with due honours the duke de Longueville, whom they now hourly expected.

But on reaching the sea-coast a disappointment awaited the league, as little expected as it was embarrassing. Instead of finding their party strengthened by the presence of their new sovereign, they received a dispatch informing them that the duke de Longueville (who had accompanied the French army in its so much vaunted passage of the Rhine near the fortress of Tholas) had fallen a victim to an act of imprudence which had greatly endangered the life of the prince de Condé also.

This perplexing disappointment to the league dissipated at once the fears and confusion of Michael, who, sensible that among his enemies was to be ranked the whole of the higher order of nobility (15), turned his hopes to the support of the lower, of which he had himself formed one at the period of his election. This class, consisting of a hundred thousand men, he precipitately assembled six leagues from Lublin; and putting himself at its head, he had the gratification to find every individual ready to swear

that he would, at the risk of life and fortune, join to maintain him on the throne. Following up these new measures, and regardless that the republic acknowledged but two grand generals, Michael proceeded to create a third, in whom he vested the powers of a dictator, licensing him to raise a new army for the protection of the royal confederacy, and to restore the ancient militia. He then issued mandates to the senators, and all persons in office, to join his standard immediately, on pain of confiscation of property and loss of dignity.

His majesty had, however, soon the mortification to discover that the death of the person whom the confederated nobles had chosen for their new king had by no means disposed them to show obedience towards himself; he consequently proceeded to pronounce the sentence he had threatened, condemning the primate and Sobieski, as chiefs of the league, to lose their lives.

The army of the crown general, which he had in the interim assembled in the citadel of Lovicz in the palatinate of Rava, now formed itself into a confederacy, opposing to the lower order of nobles oath to oath. They swore in the



name of God and of Sobieski to maintain the rights and privileges of their country, as handed down to them by those antient warriors who had purchased them with their blood; to recognise no generals but those who were invested with their staffs before the breaking out of the present disturbances; to make known to Sobieski whatever might come to their knowledge, that might prove detrimental to the common cause; to preserve their secrets inviolate; and to consider every man an enemy to his country who enlisted under any other banner than their own.

This oath had been but recently taken by the army, when information was brought that Michael had set a price on the head of its general. An universal shout of indignation and horror against the king and his confederates instantly burst from the camp: the soldiers, laying their sabres in the form of crosses, solemnly swore to defend and avenge their commander. "I accept your protestations," replied Sobieski, affected by their enthusiasm; "but remember, the first duty I require of you is to save your country."

In reality, Sobieski's thoughts were too much

engrossed in planning how he might best meet the coming storm, to bestow a thought upon his personal safety. He knew that, while the republic was arming against itself, Kiuperli, having received no answer to his manifesto, had procured the menaced war to be pronounced a just one in the divan, and had seen it sanctified by the fests of the multi. Already the horses' tails, ensigns of blood and havoc, were waving over the walls of the seraglio, and Mahomet, like a devastating torrent, approached to overwhelm the unhappy country of Sobieski.

Kaminieck, the capital of Podolia, and the key of Poland, became the first object of the crown general's cares, as he was well convinced the Turks would open the campaign by laying siege to it. It was a citadel fortified still more by nature than by art. Built upon a steep rock whose base was washed by the river Smotrick, which nearly encompassed it, it had in all ages been regarded as the bulwark of Poland, and long had been contemplated with envy by the Turks, and jealousy by the Tartars. Sobieski's first care was that of dispatching thither eight regiments of infantry to reinforce the garrison.

It was now that one of the most fatal effects

inseparable from civil dissensions first became manifest to the crown general. The governor, who was warmly attached to Michael, refused to admit the troops of Sobieski; fearful of giving his interest a preponderance in a place of so much importance.

Meanwhile Mahomet, at the head of a hundred and fifty thousand men, had passed the Danube near Silistria, crossed Walachia and Transylvania, thrown bridges over the Niester at the foot of the walls of Choczim, and soon appeared before Kaminieck. He was there met by the khan Selim Gierai, accompanied by Meradin and Galga, his sons, with one hundred thousand Tartars under his command. The sultan, dividing this irregular force into three bodies, sent them to make predatory excursions as far as the Vistula, while the Cossacks carried desolation on the opposite side.

Michael, with his hundred thousand nobles, was closely shut up within his encampment, and Sobieski was still at the head of his little army at Lovicz, when an act of temerity in Meradin rendered manifest the incorrigible degeneracy of the king, and the inefficiency of his forces. The young Tartar prince, as he skirted the

palatinate of Lublin, daringly directed his march between the two Polish camps; at which Michael was seized with so great a panic, from a suspicion that he was acting in concert with Sobieski, that he fled precipitately to Lublin; and the whole multitude of his attendant nobles, catching the infection of terror, disappeared with extraordinary celerity.

Meanwhile Sobieski, sensible that he must expose his little army, consisting of thirty thousand Poles, to certain and useless destruction, by the attempt to relieve Kamienieck, which was surrounded by one hundred and fifty thousand Turks, saw the necessity of abandoning that fortress to its dreadful fate. By doing this, he was enabled to prove of inestimable use to Poland, in stopping the influx of Tartars and Cossacks, who were already desolating that afflicted country.

He first encountered Meradin, and engaged him with such signal success that he fled, nearly alone, to the camp of his brother; who, to avoid a similar disaster, pushed forward to join his father. The rapidity of Sobieski's movements, however, frustrated his plans; he intercepted the young Tartar, engaged and defeated

him, Then leaving his infantry to guard the spoils, he closely pursued the fugitives, and overtook them just as they had reached the khan. The latter, not having yet engaged his troops, he found in a condition to give him battle. But Selim, like a true Tartar, was too solicitous to preserve the precious metals, rich furs, horses and cattle, of which he had plundered Poland, to risk the loss of his booty in the romantic attempt to redeem the honour of his sons. His only aim, therefore, was to avoid an encounter which must endanger them; while Sobieski, incessantly hovering near him, watched for a favourable position to attack his retreating enemy.

At the foot of the Carpathian mountains, in a narrow defile in which the Tartars had not room to draw up their troops, the crown general commenced his assault. It was followed by a long contested and bloody action, which terminated in the flight of Selim Gierai and his sons; who, beside fifteen thousand slain, a great number of prisoners, and the whole of their immense booty, left behind them above thirty thousand Poles whom they had been leading into slavery.

It was an affecting sight, after the retreat of the Tartars, to see these grateful creatures, who a few hours before believed they were for ever cut off from again beholding their wives, their children, or their homes, throw themselves in a transport of joy at the feet of Sobieski, blessing him as their preserver. The crown general, touched to the soul at this scene, prostrated himself beside them, and by his example directed their thanksgiving to a higher source.

But while he was thus gloriously employed in freeing his country from the Tartars, Kiuperli had not been less active before Kaminieck. During a period which historians have varied from twelve to thirty days, the constant discharge of cannon which the vizier kept up from five batteries soon reduced the city to ruins.

In this state of wretchedness the besieged received an offer from Kiuperli, to be allowed the liberty of returning unmolested, with their arms and baggage, provided they would peaceably deliver up the fortress to him in twenty-four hours.

This humane proposal, at a moment when (as was well known to them) he had made every disposition for a general storm, determined their

conduct ; and Kaminieck was surrendered to the Turks on the 29th of August, 1672.

The sultan, by this time master of the whole of Podolia as well as of its capital, sent Gierai's sons into all the places of the Ukraine that were possessed by the Cossacks, and encamped himself at Boudchaz with his main army ; while Sobieski, on leading back his victorious troops from the foot of the Carpathian mountains, was greeted with the intelligence that disaster had been heaped upon disaster during his absence. He had no time, however, to expend on vain regret, as every effort of his mind was requisite to form some plan of attacking the Turks, wherein his own genius might supply the want of numbers.

While the crown general was himself making every possible exertion to recruit his small army, he sent a detachment to reconnoitre the sultan's camp at Boudchaz ; but all his patriotic plans were suddenly frustrated, not by the sultan's troops, but by the degeneracy of Michael. This pusillanimous prince, still inclosed within the walls of Lublin, learned with equal consternation the rapid progress of the sultan and the victories of the crown general. Yet however

great were his terrors of the Ottoman arms, of Sobieski they were still greater, since he would rather have seen Poland perish, than owe to him its preservation. No sooner was he convinced that the crown general had raised new levies, and was preparing to try his talents against Kiuperli, by disposing his forces to advance upon Boudchaz, than he sent a secret emissary to the camp of Mahomet to sue with abject humility for peace; leaving that potentate master of every condition, provided he would acknowledge him as king of Poland.

Mahomet, as the price of this condescension, insisted on retaining Kaminiack with the whole of Podolia; demanded that the republic should henceforth renounce all pretensions to the Ukraine; admit the Cossacks to be vassals of the Ottoman empire; and, as the last stage of degradation, that she should thenceforth acknowledge herself tributary to the Porte, by an annual payment of twenty thousand lion-dollars.

These ignominious terms were eagerly accepted, in preference to the risk of elevating Sobieski still higher in the esteem of his countrymen, by perhaps giving him the opportunity



of placing them in a condition to treat with the enemy upon equal terms. Kiuperli, in advising the sultan to these stipulations, well knew that the king of Poland could not of himself perform them, as he possessed the privilege of making neither peace nor war without the sanction of the diet. Yet he was satisfied with having for the present added a province to his master's dominions, which he took care to use every precaution to retain. He was, besides, about to leave in Poland a spirit of internal discord which promised to consume her, without any further sacrifice of the blood of Mussulmen. His chief care, therefore, was to leave the requisite forces to preserve his conquests in subjection, and to overawe the Cossacks. Having removed the inhabitants of Podolia to the other side of the Danube, placed two thousand spahis in their desolated province, and encamped eighty thousand Turks at Choczim for the purpose of enforcing the submission of Poland, he followed Mahomet and the remainder of his troops to Constantinople.

## CHAPTER IV.

**I**N the mean time Michael, who had preserved the crown at such a price, felt great complacency at seeing himself again surrounded by the lower order of nobility, who on the disappearance of danger had once more rallied round him. In the whole republic there was not one Pole who manifested so deep a sense of grief and indignation at the humiliation of his country, as Sobieski. With his hopes frustrated, and his actions fettered by the peace, he remained silent and abstracted in his camp at Lovicz, awaiting there the assembling of the diet of pacification.

Michael, whose late complicated fears were now singly directed against the crown general, by way of removing this last obstacle to his perfect satisfaction, bethought himself of sending an embassy to his camp, offering to pardon and forget what had passed, provided the proscribed nobles would once more acknowledge him as their king, by renewing their oath of

allegiance. To this proposal Sobieski drily answered, that when his majesty had sworn to the republic better to observe in future those articles of the *Pacta Conventa* which he had so repeatedly violated, neither himself nor his friends would be found backward in complying with the terms required of them.

It was happy for Poland that the confederated nobles had chosen Sobieski for their leader; since his high spirit was so tempered by patriotism, as to render him an invincible barrier between the opposing parties. While on the one hand his well earned reputation forced Michael and his supporters to respect a league of which he was the head, his influence over his friends effectually curbed their impatience to spill that blood in civil conflict, which he carefully treasured for a nobler cause—the redemption of his country from vassalage.

During the period which elapsed in awful uncertainty of what would be the conduct of the league, the queen and the Austrian ambassador were very busy with their offers to mediate between the king and Sobieski. Clement the Tenth also joined his endeavours to bring matters to an amicable adjustment; as a first step to-

wards which, Michael was prevailed on by them unconditionally to reverse the sentence of proscription which had been passed against the confederated nobles; and to send a deputation to the camp of Loviez to assure them of his affection, and to invite them to the diet of pacification, which was to be held in Warsaw in the beginning of 1673.

As it was on the effect which might be produced on his fellow citizens by the power of reasoning, not by turning against them the undoubted strength of his arms, that Sobieski had ever placed his hopes of rousing them to his own keen sense of the humiliating state to which their country was reduced, he immediately signified his intention of attending the approaching diet.

At this declaration of the crown general, his officers and soldiers, pressing round him with great emotion, represented the danger to which he must expose his person by thus putting himself within the power of his enemies: but Sobieski, who required no other shield than the uprightness of his intentions, remained inflexible, and on the appointed day took his place in the diet.

The sensations of Michael may be easily conceived when the crown general arose to address his assembled countrymen. Weak and contemptible as was that monarch, it is not possible but he must have been overwhelmed by the painful feelings of shame and apprehension;—shame, at the disgraceful cowardice and treachery with which he had abandoned Poland to her enemies, without one effort to protect her,—apprehension, lest the indignant and revered guardian of her independence was about to draw down on him the prompt and signal vengeance of an injured nation. But Michael was at the feet of Sobieski; and it was not in his generous nature to trample on a fallen enemy. The cautious temperance with which, in his opening speech, he shunned inflaming the passions of his auditors, by degrees reassured Michael. He perceived that the drift of the crown general's advice extended no further than to enforce, in future, his observance of the laws of the republic; not to revive the desire of de-throning him. But when Sobieski came to speak of the treaty of Boudchaz, to expose the infamy and ruin with which it covered Poland,—hurried on by the tide of his patriotic

emotions, he depicted, with resistless eloquence, the degradation to which it had reduced his country. He could not, without shedding tears of indignation, recapitulate its humiliating clauses; and appealing from the monarch, whose concurrence it had received, to the republic, which had not yet ratified her own disgrace, he called on the assembly, in a strain too noble to be resisted, to disavow and spurn the debasing treaty. The unanimous voice of the assembly echoed the sentiments of Sobieski; the treaty of Boudchaz was declared infamous, illegal, and of non-effect.

Yet when the first burst of enthusiasm which the crown general had roused was a little subsided, he was asked what would be the effect of this declaration at Constantinople. "It will kindle the brand of vengeance," replied Sobieski: "but that it may not consume our country, we will go forth to quench its fire."

Alarm seized the diet at this declaration; even those who most deprecated the humiliating treaty of Boudchaz shrunk from the prospect of renewing the war with a power that had so lately humbled them to the dust. They represented that the Polish army was small; that

new levies would not be capable of standing against the veteran troops of Kiuperli; that the revenues of the republic were exhausted, and the people, already weighed down with taxes, were unable to bear new ones; that Mahomet, in full possession of the Ukraine and Podolia, with his eighty thousand Turks upon the frontiers, had irrevocably sealed the fate of their ruined country. "Let us rather wait," said others, "till we have recruited our strength, formed alliances to assist us, and procured subsidies; which we have reason to hope we may effect, since ours is the common cause of Christendom."

These arguments seemed to admit of no dispute; but Sobieski replied, and the strength of his genius subdued the fears of the most timid. "I am well aware," said he, "that our present force is small, and that our finances are exhausted; but these evils are not irremediable. The boors who cultivate our soil acquire a species of freedom by taking arms, and, when headed by an experienced commander, soon become soldiers. I demand of you no more than sixty thousand men to free Poland from the Ottoman yoke. But where are we to find

a fund to pay them: you will ask. Were I to answer, *By the sale of your consecrated plate*, you should not hesitate so to apply it, since the *paganism* of religion can never be more sacredly employed than in rescuing a Christian country from the power of infidels. I am not, however, reduced to make that proposal. The republic possesses, in the castle of Cracow, treasure sufficient for our preservation. My countrymen! shall we wait for Mahomet to wrest it from us, when we may yet render it instrumental in breaking those fetters by which he would perpetuate our slavery? Let us not waste the precious moments that we may yet call ours, in soliciting alliances and subsidies. Negotiations are tedious, the future uncertain, the present only within our power. Our ancestors would have perished rather than have submitted to a single year of slavery. Let us imitate their glorious example."

The words of Sobieski acted with the force of electricity on the senate and the equestrian order; each caught from him a spark of the noble fire of patriotism which lighted his countenance and animated his discourse; and by universal acclamation the treaty of Boudchaz



was again pronounced void—the peace broken—and the words “Death or freedom,” uttered from every mouth, proclaimed that the torch of war was already rekindled. The triumph of patriotism over selfishness appeared to be complete: but detraction, that mildew of superiority, was yet to take her turn in the assembly. The late governor of Kamienieck, who had refused to admit the troops which Sobieski had sent thither for its preservation, rose to implore the notice of the diet. He said that he had to divulge an atrocious crime which had been perpetrated against Poland. Having fixed general attention by this opening, he proceeded to assert that the late invasion by the Turks and Tartars had been invited and aided by a Polish traitor; that he had himself seen several waggon loads laden with immense treasure, which he had since discovered to be the barter for which Kamienieck had been sold to Mahomet; that at Zloczow, a seat of Sobieski, in the hands of one of his officers had been found notes for certain sums payable at Constantinople; and he concluded by declaring that, though with great reluctance, he now impeached the crown general as the traitor towards whom his denun-

ciation pointed. Astonishment filled every breast on hearing this improbable accusation. Who could indeed believe that the man who had delivered Poland from the Tartars, had invited them to invade her? that he who had weakened his own forces by detaching eight regiments to save Kamienieck, could have sold that fortress? Yet every eye was turned from Lonski to Sobieski, who, without change of countenance, immediately addressed the king and the representatives of the nation: "If I am guilty," said he, "of this crime, I am unworthy to sit in this august assembly. I therefore withdraw; and, till I am either convicted or acquitted by my country, I shall remain a voluntary prisoner in the palace of Oviasdo in this city."

The first impulse of the senate was to rise, and in a body to conjure the crown general to despise a calumny whose grossness destroyed itself. But he was inflexible, and quitted the assembly. Lonski was immediately put under arrest; and as a step now become necessary to satisfy the accused, four senators and eight provincial deputies were appointed by the diet to examine into the merits of the cause.

The accuser could not substantiate his charge upon the trial: on the contrary, it was clearly proved that the officer, in whose hands he affirmed that he had seen the notes on Constantinople, had never been at Zloczow since the taking of Kamienieck. Lonski prevaricated and varied so palpably in his evidence, that his falsehood became manifest; but, in the progress of his examination, he confessed that in this slander he had merely been an instrument in the hands of a powerful party of the crown general's enemies.

Sobieski, satisfied with his own acquittal, requested the senate to allow the affair to drop. He declared that he willingly sacrificed his private resentments to the public safety, which required that its counsellors should be otherwise engaged at such a crisis than in the punishment of private wrongs. It was thought indispensable, however, to pass sentence on Lonski. He was condemned to death, and delivered to Sobieski, whose office of grand marshal required that he should confirm the sentence by giving orders for his execution. To this circumstance did the criminal owe his life, since the native generosity of Sobieski disdained to use the power

with which he was invested, in revenging his personal injuries.

Every friend to Poland rejoiced in the honourable acquittal of Sobieski; and the diet seized eagerly on the opportunity of giving proof of its unlimited confidence in him, by committing to his care all the preparations of a war which was to terminate in the preservation or ruin of the republic. The treasure at Cracow, which had been accumulating during several centuries, was removed to Warsaw, and delivered to Sobieski; for, though the grand treasurer Morstyn claimed the right, in virtue of his office, to distribute it, this was thought no time for etiquette or delay.

The money raised from this resource was distributed by the crown general amongst his officers, for the purpose of raising recruits. As a further sum was found necessary, it was quickly supplied by a subsidy, which was not more cheerfully imposed by the republic than paid by the people: so popular was the attempt to throw off the Turkish yoke, and so great the confidence reposed in the man to whom all looked as the instrument of their redemption.

While Sobieski was himself occupied in the

preparations necessary to begin the campaign, he sent his emissaries into various places to procure an exact statement of the enemy's situation. From them he learned that, after the departure of Mahomet, all the bridges across the Danube had been demolished; that Tartary was in a state of tranquillity, but that Walachia was in considerable commotion. With respect to the camp at Choczim, the most formidable report was given him; it was described as resembling an immense fortress, which from its communication with Kamienieck, by its bridges across the Niester, appeared erected to hold Poland in perpetual subjection.

Sobieski had taken care, from the first, not to deceive himself as to the immense responsibility with which he stood charged, and the dangers that he must encounter in fulfilling his promises to Poland; but his was one of those rare minds, in which the very greatness of the hazard seems to inspire the power requisite to encounter it successfully. He no sooner found himself in a condition to put his troops in motion, than he sent instructions to the grand general of Lithuania to join him a few leagues from Leopold. But here he was doomed to ex-

perience that it was not merely the Turks and their allies whom he had to conquer. Michael Paz, his rival and bitter enemy, studiously contrived impediments to excuse his obeying the mandate of Sobieski, who in vain dispatched courier after courier to urge his march.

He had consequently the inexpressible grief and mortification to see the end of September arrive (a period at which it was more proper to close the campaign than to begin it) before the Polish army was joined by the Lithuanians. The crown general, on their arrival, dissembled the vexation and disappointment which he felt at this inexcusable delay, and sought only how best to repair the misfortune which was now not to be avoided; but he had yet another stroke to support, which was a still greater trial of his fortitude.

The king, whose incapacity was, if possible, more striking in military affairs than any others, soured by jealousy at Sobieski's popularity, and instigated by the advice of the enemies of that great man, resolved on putting himself at the head of his army at this critical moment. Never was there an occasion on which it was more necessary for the commander-in-chief to act in

person, to be prompt, decided, and absolute. Such a chief as Michael, therefore, could only perplex, retard, and ruin every plan. His first step on joining the forces was a sufficient specimen of what was to be expected from him. He issued orders that a council of war should be assembled; and the parties met, in the belief that their plan of operations was about to be settled: great therefore was their surprise, when his majesty informed them it was for the purpose of debating whether it were prudent to provoke so formidable a power as that of the Ottomans.

The grand chancellor of Poland replied, "We have already passed the Rubicon; it is now too late to look back."

But Paz, delighted at an opportunity of putting the patience of Sobieski to the proof, remarked sarcastically—"I have equipped my Lithuanians for a seven years expedition; and since we are bent on *crusading*, it is to be lamented that the true cross is no longer at Jerusalem."

"I had hoped," observed Sobieski, rising and addressing the council with grave dignity, "that our deliberations would have turned on subjects more to the purpose. To what end may we

debate in a council of war, a matter which has been already decided in an assembly of the nation? Is it forgotten that we formed part of that assembly, or that we owe obedience to the republic? Our duty has been already fixed; no choice is left us, but how best to execute it; we have no time to lose, let us endeavour to repair the mischief of having lost so much."

The council broke up without any thing having been decided, and the king next commanded that the army should be drawn out for his review. Sobieski might well have felt some exultation as he exhibited fifty thousand effective men, who, through his unremitting exertions, had been raised and disciplined for the redemption of Poland.

The manœuvres were scarcely over, when the king complained of sudden indisposition, and caused himself to be immediately conveyed to Leopold. His disorder was there found by his physicians to be of so threatening a nature, that his rejoining the army was impossible: Sobieski, therefore, put his forces in motion for a six weeks march.

All now appeared to go well with the army of Poland: it reached the banks of the Niester, where the crown general halted for some days,



to give the last body of the Lithuanian troops time to join him; but there he became sensible that he carried with him a party devoted to the court, which still seized every opportunity to thwart him, and sow the seeds of discontent among the soldiers. These enemies to the republic, now assuming the mask of zeal for the safety and comfort of the soldiers, disseminated the remarks that, as they proceeded, provisions must become daily more scarce, and the roads more difficult; the winter with its frosts having already overtaken them. When it was perceived that these observations had produced the desired effect among the troops, a council of war was demanded by the malcontents, and readily granted on the part of the crown general. On this occasion it was represented to him, that if he persisted in leading them forward at that season, they must cross rivers swollen with snow, and large forests scarcely penetrable by the troops. In short, nothing but madness, as they insisted, could induce him to expose to such superior numbers the last remaining strength of Poland, under all the disadvantages and fatigue attending a march performed amidst the rigour of winter.

Sobieski, filled with indignation at arguments which tended directly to blast the hopes of freedom with which he had inspired his country, painted in glowing colours the ignominy that must cover them, if by turning back, after a march that had already attracted so much attention, they acknowledged Poland to be subdued before her sons had drawn a single sword in her defence. He depicted to them the irretrievable degradation to which the republic would be sunk, by appearing, but for a moment, to submit to the chains which had been forged for her. "I am well informed," pursued the crown general, "that a Chia is now actually on his journey from Constantinople; to demand the infamous tribute which was agreed to in the treaty of Boudchaz; that he is the bearer of the *capitlan* to our king, that ignominious vestment which will rank him among the *slaves* of the *Porte*. Fear not famine—I have taken the necessary precautions for your supply of food. Fear not the enemy, though his numbers exceed ours. My officers may desert me; but I am confident that my brave soldiers, whom I have so often led to glory, will not abandon their long-tried general. It is to Choczim I am

conducting them; from whence I will either return crowned with a victory that shall set my country free, or perish in the glorious attempt."

The eloquence of Sobieski again prevailed; and the passage of the Niester was unanimously agreed on.

On this occasion, the versatility of the multitude was very strongly exemplified. Those who had uttered the loudest clamours against marching to Choczim, now became the most eager to lead the way thither, as if desirous of effacing the remembrance of their late misconduct. It required all the exertions of Sobieski to restrain the rash impetuosity which impelled many of the troops to swim across the river, who were too impatient to wait the construction of a bridge. Several perished in the midst of the swollen Niester; but at length the bridge was completed, and the army passed it, the crown general bringing up the rear. They advanced into the immense forest of Bucovina, in which a chain of the Carpathian mountains forms many difficult and dangerous defiles; but in the present temper of the troops no complaints were heard.

It is not easy to account for the profound ig-

norance in which the Porte seems to have been kept, respecting proceedings so public as those which had recently taken place in the meeting of the diet in Poland; but it is certain that the army, instead of meeting with any Turkish forces to dispute the passes, for which Sobieski was prepared, encountered only Mahomet's messenger, who was solemnly proceeding to Warsaw to demand the first payment of the tribute stipulated in the treaty of Boudchaz. Sobieski demanded of him his dispatches: but the Turk refused with so much of the haughtiness which he imagined might, with impunity, be shown to a conquered tributary, that the crown general, turning to his officers, exclaimed, "By St. Stanislaus I am tempted to punish the insolence of this Musulman by shaving his beard!" But respect for the law of nations checked this sally, and he permitted the Chiau to proceed on his mission, without suffering this greatest indignity that can be offered to a Mahometan. In the beginning of November Sobieski appeared before the camp at Choczim. Had any other excitement but that of patriotism been requisite to call forth, in the approaching conflict, all the talents of the crown

general, he would have found it in the spot on which he was about to grapple for the freedom of his country. It was the same on which his illustrious father had; fifty years before, immortalized himself by *defending*, against the sultan Osman and his immense forces, an encampment on the very place which his son was now about to attack.

He found the town of Choczim defended by a high citadel on the right side of the river, and the head of the bridge on the left, covered by a strong fort. The Turkish army, consisting of eighty thousand veteran troops, was commanded by the seraskier Hasseim, a pupil of the great Kiuperli.

Hasseim had exhausted the country for many leagues round, in plentifully supplying his camp, when the Poles, who were consequently deprived of the means of procuring many necessities, and a great proportion of whom had never been in actual service, appeared before the Turkish army.

On the night of their arrival a council of war was held by the Polish officers, at which Sobieski had again the mortification to experience that he had more to dread from his nominal

friends than from his open enemies. Paz employed all his ingenuity in setting forth the immense inequality of the terms on which they must give battle to the Ottomans; and maintained that to attempt it was to expose to certain destruction the last resource of the republic. In this temerity he declared he was so determined not to share, that he had come to the resolution of withdrawing his Lithuanians at the dawn of morning, to preserve them for the future service of their country (16).

Sobieski, harassed but not shaken in his resolution by this continued and ill-timed opposition, coolly replied, that his arrival before Choczim had not disclosed to him any difficulty or danger which he had not anticipated, and maturely prepared to meet; that the only misfortune which he had not foreseen was the threatened desertion of Paz, who must be well aware that, by attempting to retire before an enemy of such superior force, he should expose his troops to greater peril than in boldly attacking him. He added, that the only favour he should ask of the grand general of Lithuania was, not to withdraw till he had witnessed the first onset between himself and the enemies of his country.

Paz was not proof against this mixture of firmness and temperance in his rival. Brave himself, and fond of glory, even his jealousy could not stimulate him to persevere in withholding his assistance in the approaching conflict; which, if successful to the arms of Poland, must cover her champions with glory, but entail on those who at such a moment should desert her cause, indelible disgrace.

The crown general was at this very time acquainted with circumstances which promised considerably to aid the Polish forces, but which he could not divulge, without great imprudence, in the public council. The princes of Moldavia and Walachia, highly incensed by the haughtiness and disrespect which they had experienced from the seraskier Hasseim, who had actually struck the former with his pole-axe, had offered Sobieski to join his standard in the heat of the battle; and as an earnest of their friendly disposition towards him, they daily sent him secret advice of every thing of importance which was transacted in the Ottoman camp.

On the 10th Sobieski had prepared every thing for battle; but, instead of immediately beginning the attack, he kept his men inactive,

though under arms, the whole of that day and the ensuing night. It was a night of intense severity; snow fell in abundance, and the soldiers suffered dreadfully from the frost: but the example of Sobieski silenced every murmur. He repeatedly visited in person the different posts; and refusing the shelter of a tent, he rested himself on the carriage of a cannon during the remainder of this memorable night, exposed to all the inclemency of the weather.

At break of day the policy of his conduct became manifest. Much as his troops had suffered by remaining twenty-four hours under arms in such severe weather; the Turks, who were compelled to follow their example in their own defence, had suffered infinitely more. Accustomed to a mild climate, their strength was wholly exhausted by braving the hardships of the night, and subdued nature imperiously required that they should retire and take some repose towards morning.

As increasing day-light discovered to the watchful Sobieski the thinness of the Ottoman ranks, he turned eagerly to the officers who surrounded him, exclaiming, "This is the moment for which I have been waiting;—carry



my orders for an immediate attack." Then observing that the first brigade, dispirited by their late sufferings, did not show all the promptitude he wished in obeying him, he instantly made his own regiment of dragoons, whom he had himself formed, dismount, and putting himself at its head, he led the way to the Turkish entrenchments.

The sight of their revered commander fighting on the ramparts of the enemy, exposed to a heavy fire and supported only by his dragoons, kindled with the quickness of lightning the dormant fire of the Poles. Trembling for the safety of Sobieski, and eager to purchase it with their own lives, they rushed impetuously on the right and left, seized post after post, and in a short time turned the cannon of the enemy against himself.

The Turks, surprised, bewildered, and pressed on all sides, fell or fled so fast, that the camp, soon covered with the dying and the dead, presented no longer the appearance of a conflict, but that of a complete rout. On one side were seen flying squadrons of the enemy, who, to avoid the pursuing Poles, madly precipitated themselves from a rock, to meet certain death on the

crag beneath ; on the other, broken parties of infantry, driven back from the crowded citadel, where they had vainly sought refuge, to expire beneath the sabres of the victors. Multitudes of the cavalry, finding their course checked by the destruction of the bridges across the Niester, plunged into the river ; and the small number of these, who in defiance of the rapid current, and fire of the Poles, succeeded in reaching the opposite side, sought refuge under the walls of Kamienieck.

During the prelude to this scene of carnage and horror, Sobieski had been every where, animating, leading on his troops, and turning to his own advantage every error of the enemy. His victory had left the river covered with ten thousand turbans, while the earth was stained with the blood of twenty thousand slain, among whom were eight thousand janizaries.

Great as was this day to the crown general, when considered merely as exhibiting his military talents ; to appreciate justly all the merit of the hero of Choczim, it is necessary to keep in mind the glorious object for which he fought, and the many obstacles which envy, malevolence, and jealousy compelled him to surmount,

before he could render the army which he had created, the instrument of his country's emancipation. History furnishes us with no brighter example of genuine patriotism, of strength of mind, of talents equal to the accomplishment of an object whose magnitude and difficulty none but a great soul could have contemplated with the just confidence of achieving.

It is painful to relate that Sobieski, after the battle, felt himself called on to commit one of those acts of rigour, which, notwithstanding the circumstances of war may sometimes render them deeds of patriotic though stern duty, it is impossible for humanity to contemplate without shuddering.

When he compared the great superiority in numbers of the Turkish prisoners over his triumphant little band of Poles, and considered the small dependence which he could place on the continued co-operation of the Lithuanians while commanded by so impracticable and envious a general as Paz, added to his total want of confidence in the fidelity of the princes of Moldavia and Walachia; he thought it necessary for the preservation of the victory he had gained, a victory on which depended the fate of

Poland, to cause a considerable number of the Ottoman captives to be put to the sword. No one was more constituted than Sobieski, to feel that in the eye of posterity this action would be regarded as a deep stain on the laurels he had acquired at the battle of Choczim. When, therefore, his enthusiastic love of glory and the clemency of his character are remembered, no doubt can exist that he must have grieved at the necessity of a sacrifice, which he reluctantly consummated for the preservation of his country's freedom.

The voice of pity, however, to which he dared not before listen, governed his conduct towards the unhappy creatures who had sought safety in the citadel of Choczim. The Polish artillery had been brought to bear against that place, which could not possibly have held out many hours; yet he granted terms of capitulation full of generosity to the besieged. He allowed them to be safely conducted to Kamieniec, with as much of their effects as forty waggons could convey. The commandant of that fortress acknowledged his grateful sense of this lenity, by voluntarily sending back, without ransom, fifty Polish prisoners.

## CHAPTER V.

**W**HILE the army of Sobieski had been successfully employed in recovering the liberty of Poland, by annihilating the veteran army of the Porte; and teaching Mahomet that a spirit of freedom rendered the republic, with her moderate resources, capable of spurning his vassalage; the Turkish Chiau had been pompously proceeding on his mission to the king of Poland, to demand the ratification of the treaty of Boudchaz, by the first payment of the humiliating tribute.

He found Michael at the point of death at Leopold: it had been there discovered by his physicians, that the disorder which had seized the monarch at the review was of an incurable nature. He expired on the 10th of November 1673, in the thirty-fifth year of his age, and fourth of his reign, leaving no issue behind him.

No monarch ever ascended a throne with less ability to govern than Michael; and his inca-

capacity was productive of equal misery to his subjects and himself. It is remarkable, that he died on the evening preceding the battle which had freed Poland from the yoke he would have imposed on her by the treaty of Boudchaz. Had he lived to have learned the triumph of Sobieski, it is probable he would have grieved more at the glory of the man he hated, than he would have rejoiced at the emancipation of the country which had so rashly called him to reign over her.

While the Turkish envoy, from apprehension that his head would answer for his not having executed the commission with which he was charged by the Porte, was unfeignedly grieving at the death of Michael; and the attendants of the deceased king, to save appearances, were exhibiting the external marks of mourning; Sobieski had again experienced the mortification of finding himself cramped in his further plans by the animosity of Paz. When once that general had engaged his troops at Choczim, he had acted gloriously; yet now that those feelings which had influenced him in the heat of the battle had found leisure to cool, all his habitual perverseness revived; and so far

was he from concurring in the further views of the crown general, that he was disposing his troops for their return into Lithuania, when intelligence reached the camp that the king was dead. It is impossible but this unexpected event must have been received with satisfaction by the heroes, who at the expense of their blood had just redeemed the national honour which had been compromised by Michael, and which they knew could never again be intrusted to his hands with safety.

A party of the principal officers immediately assembled in the tent of Sobieski, who pressed him for his opinion on the qualifications requisite to direct them in their next choice of a monarch. "Were Poland wise," he answered, "her election would fall on one of established reputation for wisdom and valour; whose matured age may ensure his prudence." "But above all," interrupted Paz impatiently, "who is not *already married*." The matter as well as the manner of the Lithuanian general's remark seems pretty evidently to prove his fears, lest a grateful country should elevate his rival to the throne, and his determination to oppose that dreaded event.

The news of Michael's death was soon followed by the departure of the Lithuanians; and the Poles also began to manifest an eagerness to follow their example, alleging that no further steps ought to be taken against the enemy till after their election of a new king. Sobieski combated these arguments by reminding them, that as the election could not take place before the spring, the intervening period might be turned to inestimable advantage by them, in expelling the Turks from the Ukraine, and, if possible, retaking Kaminiack. These patriotic views were however baffled, not by the disobedience of his army, but by an order from the primate (17) in his quality of interrex or regent, which enjoined him to return immediately to Poland, leaving him no choice, but obedience to the will of a power held so sacred by the laws of his country.

After having caused a hillock to be raised at Choczim, as a rude monument of the glorious victory which had saved the republic from becoming tributary to the Porte; placed a garrison in the citadel to defend it, and detached eight thousand men to protect the territories of his allies, the Moldavian and Walachian



princes, against the vengeance of the offended Mahomet; Sobieski reluctantly set out with the remainder of his troops on his march back to Poland.

As the crown general proceeded, he was every where greeted with the tribute of joy and gratitude. Deputies from the most distant palatines came, to honour, in him, the deliverer of their country; and at Leopold he received the congratulations of all orders of the state.

Every semblance of mourning for the deceased king had disappeared, giving place to the display of the gayest colours; while nothing was heard but the language of triumph and of joy.

Such warm testimonies of gratitude and affection from a nation on the eve of choosing a prince to reign over her, must naturally have suggested to Sobieski the probability, as well as justice, that that choice would fall on himself. Who could offer such undeniable claims to the crown, as the patriot whose whole life had been spent in preserving its lustre? Who was so worthy to preside over the republic, as the man who had revived her late expiring liberty? But however unavoidable such reflections

in the crown general must appear, it is certain that, while-Warsaw was filled with cabals and intrigues by the partisans of the numerous candidates who aspired to the vacant throne, he passed the whole winter at Leopold, solely occupied in restraining the incursions of the Tartars and Cossacks.

The 15th of January 1672 was fixed for the meeting of the diet of convocation, an assembly which necessarily preceded that of election. Six competitors, through the medium of ambassadors, had put in their claims to the crown; but of these two only had received sufficient encouragement to enter the lists; prince Charles of Lorraine, and the duke of Newburgh. The former was supported by Paz, who exerting the utmost stretch of his policy to bar Sobieski from the throne, artfully insinuated among the Lithuanians, that the misfortunes of Poland, during the weak government of Michael, ought in future to deter every friend of the republic from again advancing a *Piast* to the royal dignity.

Thus was the very claim which had secured the crown to the late king, now converted by malevolence into a reason for excluding from it the great pillar of his country.

In this intrigue the Lithuanian general was supported by the queen and his brother, the grand chancellor of the duchy. Her majesty, on finding herself a widow, had again avowed the desire, which she had not concealed while a wife, of becoming the consort of the prince of Lorraine; and the emperor, in support of that prince's interest, held out promises of assisting him against the Turks, in case he should be elected king of Poland.

The other candidate, the duke of Newburgh, was supported by France, and a considerable number of the Polish nobles, who dreaded the influence which the election of Charles, and his marriage with Eleonora, would give to Austria in the cabinet of the republic.

## CHAPTER VI.

SUCH was the posture of affairs, when in the beginning of May Sobieski reached Warsaw. It was the first time of his appearance before the assembly of the states, since the victory of Choczim; and the impression was still fresh in every memory, of the noble ardour with which he had pleaded the cause of freedom when last he filled his station in the diet; of the renovated confidence in her own strength, which he had imparted to the republic; of the apprehensions which had again assailed his auditors when Sobieski no longer spoke to animate their sinking courage; of the anxiety with which they had seen him depart (intrusted with the last resources of his suffering country) on his difficult and dangerous enterprise; of his fortitude and unshaken perseverance in the great cause he had undertaken; and, finally, the glorious victory by which he had more than redeemed his pledge to Poland.

With such acknowledged claims to the grati-

tude of his country, it is not surprising that Sobieski was received with a pomp scarcely inferior to the *triumphs* which were granted to the victors of ancient Rome ; and that when he had taken his place in the diet, and listened to the arguments adduced in favour of each candidate, the deepest attention should have been excited when he rose to deliver his sentiments on a question of such vital importance to the republic.

Sobieski began his address by reminding his countrymen that Poland, on the eve of being attacked by the whole Ottoman power, never had so greatly needed for her king, a hero whose name alone was capable of inspiring a just confidence in her powers ; that he in vain sought this hero in the prince of Newburgh, an entire stranger to military glory ; or in Charles of Lorraine, who, though a soldier of promise, was at present comparatively a novice in the profession of arms :—but that he could direct their eyes to one possessing all the qualifications requisite to discharge the arduous duties to which they were about to call the monarch of their choice.

Every eye was fixed on Sobieski, and every

ear was eagerly bent to catch his meaning as he proceeded.

"That man is the prince de Condé, whose well earned fame, acknowledged throughout Europe, points him out as the prince suited to reign over us."

Was it possible that the auditors of Sobieski could avoid being struck with the reality, that all the grand requisites which he then detailed as recommending to their choice the prince de Condé, were, with many nearer claims to their allegiance, united in himself? Was it possible but that he must have been conscious of this fact? and that, in reminding his countrymen of the qualities necessary to support the crown, he was fixing their attention on the hero who had so gloriously restored its independence?

However this may be, the effect naturally produced by this address was strengthened by the respected palatine of Russia. The birth, fortune, acquirements, and valour, for which this senator had been ever distinguished, had long accustomed the Poles to listen to his precepts with confidence and respect. On the present occasion, embracing all that had been urged in favour of the several candidates, he

remarked, that if in their choice of a king they were to be confined to the princes of Lorraine and Newburgh, it was immaterial on which their election fell, since they had nearly equal pretensions to their favour, neither of them having hitherto put forth more than blossoms,—but that it was fruit for which they should seek; that on this principle he should not hesitate to give his suffrage to the great Condé, were it not that fruit which is too ripe must soon decay; that Sobieski, in proposing that prince, considered only his heroic qualities:—but for himself, he could not overlook his age, his infirmities, or the habits which he had formed. Accustomed to a different climate—mode of warfare—manners and laws—alike ignorant of the language and the constitution of Poland—“How,” he asked, “could it be hoped that a prince like him, who must have imbibed all the ideas of arbitrary power, could acquire the new principles of a free government? or that, laden with years and infirmities, he could again recover the vigour of his brighter days? Sobieski,” pursued the palatine, “turns from himself to contemplate the blaze of glory which gilds the ruin of this hero; but is his overlooking his

own great claims, an adequate excuse for our forgetting them? In resolutely excluding a native from the throne, shall we not reflect disgrace on our country? Be assured that if our ancestors have not oftener elected one, it was because among so many subjects of equal merit they were fearful of exciting jealousy. But in the present instance this plea cannot be urged, since Poland possesses one son, whose transcendent merit places him above competition.— Behold him in person before you!—educated among us in the same principles, and imbued with the same sentiments. How often have we profited by his talents in the senate and the diet! how often been led to victory under his banner! His age, his health, his vigour, his genius, and his fortune, all loudly plead in his behalf; or rather in behalf of the country to which we are bound by duty. But above all his many claims to our gratitude and acknowledgements, let us remember that it is to him we are indebted for the liberty of sitting here, to dispose in freedom of our crown.”

Scarcely had the palatine of Russia ceased to speak, when the deputies, the castellans, and palatines, with many of the nobles, as if suddenly



awakened from a stupor which had rendered them insensible to the true interests of the republic, with one voice rent the air with cries of "Long live Sobieski!" These acclamations were echoed by the whole body of Poles: but the Lithuanians, influenced by their general, remained silent; and the Pazes, stung with mortification and resentment, abruptly quitted the assembly to enter their protest against the election, in the register of chancery. The crown, consequently, continued in abeyance during the succeeding night, which was passed by the Pazes in fruitless devices to prevent the election of the crown-general; while on the other hand prince Radzivil, vice-chancellor of the duchy, who had espoused the only sister of Sobieski, was very successful in bringing over to their side several palatines of Lithuania; which so greatly weakened the cause of the Pazes, that, yielding to necessity, on the following day Sobieski, by unanimous consent, was proclaimed king of Poland\*.

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\* Dr. Connor relates the following circumstance, as the real means by which Paz's opposition to the election of Sobieski was silenced. In direct violation of an established pri-

On this occasion the nation rebounded with shouts of joy. The senate, the equestrian order, the army, and the people, conducted their new king, with civil and military pomp, to the church of St. John, where solemn thanks were offered to Heaven for having so wisely directed their suffrages.

Sobieski, who had witnessed the tide of extravagant delight which had swept away common sense on the election of Michael, could scarcely have failed to find the remembrance of that scene temper the exultation which the homage he was now receiving was calculated to inspire. But had it been otherwise, he was soon to be taught, that his exaltation only rendered him an easier mark at which his enemies might aim their shafts of malice.

The Razes, with some others of the queen's partisans in the senate, enraged to see their plans defeated, procured such conditions to be

imposed on the gentry of Poland, he had sanctioned one of his officers (during the diet) in forcibly quartering himself at the house of one of that order. As a mild punishment for this illegal proceeding, (considered by the republic as a capital offence,) the marshals of the diet deprived Paz of his vote at the election.

inserted in the *Pacta Conventa*, as they knew must gall the high and generous spirit of Sobieski, and wound him in the tenderest part. These terms not only confined the royal revenue and authority within limits so narrow, that they could not be felt otherwise than as an insult to him, who should be expected to accept the crown, annexed to such conditions, but required that the king-elect should divorce his wife, and espouse the queen dowager.

While these intrigues were secretly carrying on against the unsuspecting Sobieski, he was employing himself in examining into the state of his private finances, that before ratifying his compact with the republic, he might ascertain if his means would enable him to perform a promise which he had made to the diet on the day of election. It was that of supporting, at his own expense, the army during six months. The examination convinced him that his purse, which on so many occasions he had emptied in the service of Poland, was inadequate at present to the strict performance of his offer. Disdaining, therefore, to receive the sceptre which would be conferred under expectations he was unable to fulfil; on the assembling of the diet

for the reading the *Pacta Conventa*, he frankly declared his inability to keep the word which he had pledged to them, observing, that if the fulfilment of this condition were necessary to entitle him to the crown, he must, with thanks for the honour they had intended him, decline accepting it.

The audience of Sobieski, struck with this instance of candour, and well knowing that had he concealed the fact till he had been actually seated on the throne, he might altogether have eluded an engagement, which they would not then have possessed the power to enforce, released him from his promise, under the conviction that whenever he could perform it, he would voluntarily do so.

The new *Pacta Conventa*, as dictated by the cabal, was then read, and Sobieski listened to it with undisguised sentiments of indignation; but no sooner did they come to the clause requiring him to abandon his wife and espouse the queen dowager (whose eagerness to retain the crown seemed to render her indifferent with whom she shared it), than, rising with feelings of disgust which he could no longer control, he exclaimed, "You have chosen me for your king,

but remember I have not yet accepted the instrument of election, which alone ratifies the compact between us. Be assured, that rather than subscribe to your insulting conditions, or submit to fetters which my predecessors would have spurned, I reject them and the crown together."

The tone of elevation and dignity in which this declaration was pronounced, imposed silence on those turbulent spirits, who had sought to disturb the public tranquillity. No one ventured on enforcing concessions which the former monarchs of Poland had not made; and the 5th of June was decreed for the formal delivery of the instrument of election to Sobieski, and the solemn acceptance of it on his part.

This ceremony was performed with the customary observance at the great church of St. John, on the appointed day; yet still the rite of coronation was requisite, to put the new king in possession of the exercise of sovereign power. So indispensable had this part of the ceremonial, till that period, been considered by the Poles, that the intervals had always been regarded as a continuation of the interregna; the government remaining in the hands of the primate, and the monarch signing himself only king-elect.

It is not easy to decide whence sprang the resolution of Sobieski to set out for the army, without awaiting the important ceremony of inauguration ; whether it originated in real indifference for power—whether pride stimulated him to return the mortification he had received, by giving proofs that he was by no means impatient to ascend the throne—or, whether the love of his country, and eagerness to defend her, were really paramount to every other passion in his nature.

It is not improbable that the intelligence of the Turks having taken advantage of the present occupation of the Poles, to recover Choczim, might have had a considerable share in influencing him ; but, whatever was his motive, his determination to set out without further delay, and devote himself to the conducting the war against the Turks, was not to be shaken.

The republic, surprised at this unexpected act of disinterestedness, requited it by one not less remarkable. The law which barred the king-elect from power was abrogated in this particular case ; and the *reign* of Sobieski was decreed to have commenced with his election.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE first use the king made of his authority, was the restoring to the family of Lubomirski the dignity of grand marshal, vacant by his own accession to the throne. To this office he had succeeded on the banishment of the distinguished father of the present object of his patronage. By so strong a proof of the esteem in which he held the memory of his early instructor in arms, and his oblivion of the injury his property had sustained during his rebellion, Sobieski excited the liveliest gratitude and affection amongst the surviving relatives of that unfortunate noble.

No sooner had intelligence reached Constantinople, that the crown general had ascended the throne of which he had been so long the able defender, and that he was marching towards the Ukraine with thirty thousand men, than Kiuperli sent some considerable levies, which he had hastily made, into that province for its protection; while Mahomet dispatched an in-

junction to the Khan to use his utmost efforts in its defence.

It was not till the beginning of September that Paz, at the head of his Lithuanians, joined the royal standard; and it should seem as if his first object in doing so, was to make Sobieski feel that, as a subject, he bore towards him no less enmity than he had done as an equal. A drum-major of the Lithuanian army, having in obedience to the king's command, ventured to beat the general, without first receiving the permission of Paz, he caused the poor fellow to be punished with immediate death, for what he denominated his presumption.

Sobieski, making a sacrifice of his personal feelings to the republic, allowed the insult to pass unnoticed; and his forbearance was warmly applauded by those senators who formed a part of his army; since they knew how fatal must be the consequences of fomenting divisions between the two armies at such a juncture.

Meanwhile the Cossacks on first learning the approach of the king of Poland towards the Ukraine—dreading equally the effect of his resentment, should they fall within his power,



and the continuance of the Turkish yoke, from which they were scarcely less anxious to escape, fled in large bodies to seek a new protector in Russia, leaving Bar, Nimirow, and Kalnic, so feebly defended, that these places surrendered at the first discharge of the Polish cannon. Pavoloc, on the contrary, which was strongly garrisoned, was prepared to make a very vigorous resistance. But the clemency of Sobieski towards a party of the besieged, who in an unsuccessful sally from the town, became his prisoners, produced an entire change in the sentiments of their brethren. The king caused them to be clothed and furnished with money; after which he sent them back safely to Pavoloc, charged with a letter to the inhabitants, advising them not to expose themselves to the last extremities, but pledging himself upon the word of a king, *and the word of Sobieski*, that if they surrendered without further resistance, not a single man should be detained who was desirous of joining their general Doroscensko.

The effect of this offer was the immediate surrender of the place; and the strict performance of the conditions so effectually subdued

the fears and enmity of the inhabitants, that, to a man, they returned to the interests of Poland.

Sobieski, who had divided his force in order the more speedily to reduce the Ukraine, had the satisfaction of learning that, while victory attended his own progress, the operations of his several detachments were not less successful. Every thing tended to justify his hopes of speedily accomplishing his first object in a campaign, which he now began to flatter himself he might close with the important achievement of the recovery of Kamienieck. But his brilliant prospects became suddenly clouded, by an additional instance of the habitual perverseness of Paz.

The enmity which that general had so long cherished against Sobieski, seemed to have acquired new strength by the necessity of contemplating in the light of a master, him, whom he had so impatiently viewed in that of a rival: and at length it urged him, at all hazards, to prevent the Lithuanian troops from further assisting to crown the eager wishes of the king. In pursuance of this resolution, he formally gave notice to his majesty, that the severity of the season, and the scarcity of provisions, had de-

terminated him on returning with his army to Lithuania for the winter.

It was in vain he was reminded of the many instances he had given, that he was incapable of shrinking from privations, dangers, or difficulties, where glory was to be the price of his encountering them. Paz was deaf to every remonstrance, and actually set out without delay for Lithuania, at the head of his army, leaving the disposable force of Sobieski so reduced by this measure, that an effectual check was, for the present, given to the further prosecution of his plans.

So greatly were the minds of the Poles inflamed at this defection, that they vehemently urged the king to arrest and punish as deserters, the grand general of Lithuania, and such of his officers as should refuse to lead back the troops to the royal standard. But Sobieski suffered himself not to be governed by personal feelings of displeasure, or guided by counsels which, if pursued, he foresaw must give a fatal blow to the republic. In early life, passion had hurried him into resenting at the hazard of his own life, the arrogance of a member of the house of Paz: but that of the grand general could not receive

its merited punishment, without the sacrifice of multitudes of lives, on whose preservation that of Poland rested. Fierce and daring in his spirit, popular among his troops, who in a considerable degree participated in their general's jealousy of the Poles, could it be expected that he would submit to an arrest, when by a word he might turn the weapons of the army which surrounded him, against that of Poland.

Few situations can be imagined more trying than that to which Sobieski was reduced; and let it be ranked among his rarer virtues, that with all his natural impetuosity, he in this instance gave a striking proof that he had not acquired greater power to subdue his enemies, than himself. A common man, in the early pride of sovereignty, would have seized on so popular an occasion to free himself at all risks from an enemy, the breath of whose envy had in so many instances nearly withered the laurels with which his own genius was on the point of crowning him. But Sobieski, by whose example and eloquence his countrymen had been roused to the present resistance of the enormous power directed to enslave them, was incapable of allowing any selfish considerations to inter-

pose between him and his noble aim, to terminate the contest by a peace, which should honourably re-establish the independence of his country.

Paz had rendered himself amenable to the republic; but the king, who knew him well, chose rather to stifle his own indignation, to soothe that of the Poles, and to reanimate the grand general's sense of duty by forbearance and generosity, than to waste lives so precious to their country, in civil conflict.

Relinquishing all thoughts of further conquest in that campaign, and distributing a part of his remaining troops among the places that had recently submitted to his arms, he retired with the rest to Braclaw, as the place of his own winter quarters.

Nothing could exceed the desolation to which this town had been reduced by the Turks, who had two years before sacked it; nor could any incitement short of the presence of the king, have reconciled his officers to suffer the rigour of a Polish winter, in a place destitute of the common necessities of life; but Sobieski's resolution to protect his kingdom from the inroads of the Tartars, who, on the departure of the

Lithuanians, had prepared to renew their predatory incursions into Poland, made him set such an example of patience and endurance, that not a murmur was heard to escape the troops, who saw their king voluntarily sharing the severest hardships to which they were exposed.

Frequent affairs, in which the Poles uniformly gained the advantage over the Tartars, occupied the attention of Sobieski during a great part of the winter; and before the arrival of the spring, an event occurred, which he could not fail to consider as of great importance to Poland. It was the death of the grand vizier Kiuperli, to whose sage counsels and military talents the dissipated Mahomet was indebted for all the glory of his reign. The lingering illness of that distinguished minister and general had already visibly tended to palsy the exertions of the Porte; and his loss was not likely to be supplied to the Turks by his brother-in-law, Kara Mustapha, whom the sultan appointed to succeed him.

The new vizier, however, began his administration by a show of activity, which was calculated to strike terror into the Poles. With the

avowed design of punishing what he termed their perfidious violation of the treaty of Boudchaz and rebellion at Choczim, he assembled at Bender an army of veterans, trained in the school of Kiuperli, which six times outnumbered the utmost force that Poland could muster to oppose it. The command of the Ottomans he intrusted to the seraskier.

It was now the month of April, and Sobieski, who had entirely freed his frontiers from the Tartars, re-enforced the garrisons which protected his late conquests, and acquitted himself of his promise to the republic by defraying out of his private purse all military expenses since his election, marched the small remnant of his troops to Leopold, for the double purpose of preparing to repel the Ottomans, and to reanimate the hopes of his despairing subjects.

He there learnt that the republic, relapsing into all her former diffidence of her own power, and consequent apprehensions of that of the Porte, was more disposed to reproach him for having roused her to spurn the treaty of Boudchaz, than to furnish him with adequate means to repel the approaching danger. But Sobieski never shewed himself so truly great as when

thrown on the resources of his own superior mind. The exertions which he had made to save his country, while only a subject, he was no less eager to perform now that he felt himself its sovereign.

He exhausted every means within his power to increase and discipline the few troops which were reluctantly granted him; converted his hereditary castle of Zloczow into a fortress capable of presenting a considerable barrier to the enemy, who, he doubted not, would endeavour to open to himself a passage into Poland by first seizing on the Palatinate of Red Russia. This fortress he garrisoned with six thousand men; and, as an additional protection to the province, he stationed himself, with the remaining troops he had succeeded in levying, consisting of fifteen thousand men, at Leopold.

These active preparations which personally engaged Sobieski, did not render him unmindful of taking the necessary steps to draw such assistance from the christian powers of Europe as might supply the deficiency occasioned by the exhausted and desponding state of Poland; and while the buoyancy of his spirits made him anticipate a happy issue to some of these nego-



ciations, he continued on the watch at the gates of Leppol, in constant expectations of the enemy's appearance. But July arrived without the king's having perceived any demonstration of the Ottomans' approach; when, to his astonishment, he learned that Ibrahim, declining to advance to the encounter of his little army, had poured his immense forces into the Ukraine, and was idly employing them in laying siege to Human, a place of comparative insignificance. Sobieski, highly elated at this intelligence, infused new hope into his soldiers by assuring them that, from this specimen of the seraskier's generalship, he foresaw they should give an excellent account of him and his army before the close of the campaign.

Had the judgement of Ibrahim in any degree equalled his strength, it seems impossible that any human power could have shielded the republic from the thunderbolt which Kara Mustapha had prepared to hurl for her destruction; but happily his representative possessed neither the capacity nor the skill requisite to the effectually aiming the intended blow. After a waste of fifteen days in the siege of Human, the capture of which was principally distinguished by the

savage cruelty exercised on its inhabitants, he marched his army into Podolia, where he employed it in taking possession of neglected and ruined forts, chiefly as it should seem, for the pleasure of indulging his ferocious passions, by impaling the unfortunate victims whom he found there.

At length, flushed with what he considered as glorious conquests, the seraskier resolved on the immediate annihilation of the king of Poland and his little army. Yet by no means desirous of undertaking that achievement himself, he sat down with forty thousand men to besiege the fortress of Trembula, while he detached Nouradin the Tartar prince, at the head of fifty thousand cavalry, to attack the royal forces; enjoining him to mark his path to Leopold, by scattering on all sides destruction and death. Nouradin willingly accepted the commission, boasting that he would bring back to Ibrahim Sobieski as his prisoner.

He performed his devastating march to Leopold with such rapidity, that no rumour of his approach had reached the Polish army, when the vast plains which skirted the foot of the hills that partly surround Leopold suddenly

presented to the king a moving mass of steel, and informed him that the moment was at hand of which he had been so long in expectation. Resolved not to await the attack of the enemy in his camp, he led his troops up an adjacent eminence, and causing his *Towaries* to plant their lances on its summit, to swell the appearance of his numbers, he promptly made his dispositions for receiving the foe.

Tremendous was the conflict that followed; but the skilful disposition of the Poles, who guided and animated by their king, performed prodigies of valour, ultimately triumphed over numbers. Fifteen thousand of the enemy perished, and the remainder, with Nouradin, favoured by the darkness of night, made their way back to Ibrahim, to fill him with rage and indignation at the disappointment of his hopes.

The mortifications of the seraskier did not, however, terminate here. Baffled alike in his attempts to get possession of the fortress by stratagem or force, he was suddenly struck with astonishment by the intelligence, that the king of Poland, with his victorious little army, was in full march to Trambula, for the relief of the

brave garrison. The confirmation of this event soon after, by the seizure of a peasant who was the bearer of a letter from Sobieski to the governor, filled Ibrahim with so much consternation, that he precipitately raised the siege, and repassed the Jarow with about half his army. The remainder was intercepted by the celerity of the king's movements, and compelled to an engagement in which, after an obstinate resistance, the Ottomans fatally experienced that, without an enlightened general, the bravery of troops can avail little. Those very veterans who had been accustomed to victory under the banners of Kiuperli, destitute of a commander to direct their efforts, were quickly thrown into irrecoverable disorder, and routed by a mere handful of Poles. Eight thousand were taken or killed, and the remainder fled for safety to Kamienieck.

Such was the general panic created among the Turks by these signal defeats, that the regiments which had been left by Ibrahim to garrison the places he had lately taken in the Ukraine and Podolia, voluntarily evacuated them, and joined the remnant of the army;

thus terminating a campaign, which at its opening threatened destruction to Sobieski and his kingdom, in the manifest confusion and total discomfiture of the enemy.

The king, happy in the opportunity which his successes offered him to give repose to his harassed troops, now sent them into winter quarters, and set out himself to join his family at his favourite seat of Zolkiew, which had descended to him from his maternal grandfather, the illustrious Zolkiewski.

## CHAPTER VIII.

**S**OBIESKI had scarcely tasted tranquillity in the bosom of his family, when he was summoned from it by the importunity of his people, who were impatient to behold once more a king whom they now again considered as the preserver of their country. The discontent and despondence which had withheld from him the necessary supplies in the preceding spring, had once more given place to confidence, gratitude, and generosity.

It was under the pleasing influence of these sentiments, that the Poles received their monarch, after an absence of eighteen months; a period which had been passed by him in the sacrifice of every personal consideration to their welfare. The general joy was proportioned to the important benefits of the result; and the day of his coronation was fixed for the 2d of February, 1676.

Though a considerable opposition had been excited by the enemies of Sobieski in the diet

of election, to his wife sharing with him in a solemnity necessary to entitle the queens dowager of Poland to a jointure from the republic; in the present temper of the times no one ventured to resist the avowed wishes of the king, that she should be crowned with him; and preparations were completed at Cracow by the appointed day for the double ceremony.

In Poland the rite of inauguration was always preceded by a solemnity well-calculated to prepare the mind of the new monarch for the sacred compact he was about to ratify with his people. It was that of his assisting in person at the obsequies of his predecessor.

On this occasion he, on foot, led the funeral procession, attended by all the officers of state, the deputies, and the ensigns, carrying the standards of every palatinate. Next to these were borne—pointed towards the earth—the crown, the sceptre, the globe, the sword, and other ensigns of majesty; which were immediately followed by the embalmed remains of the deceased monarch, whose hearse was surrounded by the bishops and other dignatories of the church. The procession was closed by the several companies of trade, bare-footed; each

company having an empty coffin borne before it, as admonitory of the certain close of all earthly views. On reaching the cathedral the marshals broke their staffs, and several other officers the insignia of their posts, over the tomb prepared for the deceased king, as an acknowledgement that with his authority, theirs had ceased.

It is a circumstance worthy of remark, that it fell to the lot of Sobieski, the day prior to his coronation, to assist in quality of king-elect, in the committing to the grave the body of Casimer—with whose elevation to the throne had opened his own patriotic career, and that of Michael—from the fatal consequences of whose imbecile reign, his single genius and unshaken fortitude had saved the republic.

On the day succeeding these mournful rites, every object presented an opposite aspect in Cracow. The sable garments of the nobles were laid aside for others of the richest colours; and the same individuals who had, with the humility of penitents the morning before attended on foot their late king to his place of sepulture, now mounted on beautiful chargers, whose housings were studded with jewels, pressed ex-



ultingly round their new sovereign, and conducted him in triumph to the cathedral.

In compliance with a custom which had been established to ascertain if it were the king's pleasure to have his consort crowned ; Sobieski led Mary Casamira from the cathedral gate to the archbishop at the altar, to whom he presented her ; after which, with the usual solemnities, they were consecrated king and queen of Poland (18). His majesty with the title of John the Third.

The public rejoicings on this occasion were followed by the opening of the diet, in which the thanks of the republic were addressed to the king, for the benefits he had conferred on it since his election, joined to an earnest exhortation that he would in future be more careful of a life whose preservation was essential to the prosperity of Poland.

These verbal compliments were succeeded by one of a more substantial nature ; a compliment which seems to have savoured somewhat more of adulation than patriotism in the proposers. Sobieski was solicited still to retain the important office of crown general ; but this measure he deemed so inconsistent with the spirit of the

constitution, that he positively declined it, and put a stop to all further solicitations by immediately appointing to it the lieutenant-general of Poland, who was of the same name and family as the late king. On his old friend Jablonski, palatine of Russia, he conferred the office vacant by the promotion of Wiesnowieski.

Sobieski was soon after these arrangements placed in a situation which must have proved to Paz, that he was never more disposed to pardon an injury than when he held in his hands the power to revenge it. Although the subsequent assistance which that general had afforded him at Leopold, had effaced from the king's heart his sense of his ill conduct in the Ukraine, that ill-timed defection had not been forgiven by the Poles, and a considerable party in the present diet, headed by Radzivil, the lieutenant-general of the dutchy, proposed as a necessary precaution against the future ill consequences which might arise from Paz's misconduct, that the division of the Lithuanian army, which was confided to the lieutenant-general, should be withdrawn from the grand general's jurisdiction, and placed under that of the crown general of Poland.

The partizans of this measure entertained no doubt that it would receive the cordial support of the king, who must, they thought, be desirous of humbling the pride of his enemy and abridging his power; but these expectations were disappointed. Sobieski declined all interference in the affair, which so dispirited the party, that in the end the design was abandoned as one which was evidently disagreeable to his majesty. The diet was not closed till a grant of an hundred thousand men, with an assignment of imposts to provide for their levy and maintenance, promised to enable Sobieski to take the field on the renewal of hostilities, with such advantages as he had never before been able to command.

Meanwhile the grand vizier Kara Mustapha, stung with rage and mortification at the disgrace which had overtaken the Ottoman arms in the last campaign, resolved by appointing a more competent commander in the next, to turn the fortune of war, and to efface the remembrance of that share of blame which was attachable to himself, for his ill-directed choice of Ibrahim as his seraskier.

After considerable hesitation, he fixed on a

bashaw who it was well remembered had given undeniable proofs of possessing military talents, though he had for some time been allowed to live in obscurity. This bashaw, in name alone bore any resemblance to his predecessor, for so remarkably had he distinguished himself by lucky stratagems of war, that the Turks had added to the appellation of Ibrahim that of *Shaitan*, signifying satan.

The intelligence which reached Constantinople, that the republic had granted a hundred thousand men to Sobieski, determined Mahomet on sending double that number to oppose him ; but it was not till the latter end of August, that his losses of the preceding year were supplied, and the Turkish army properly equipped to take the field under the new seraskier, Ibrahim *Shaitan*.

The king of Poland in the meantime had learnt from experience, that the impoverished state of the republic, rendered it impossible for her to fulfil to its full extent, the liberal promise which had been made him in the diet ; the utmost force with which she was able to furnish him fell short of forty thousand men. But he had been too long accustomed to cope with very

superior numbers, to feel dispirited by his disappointment; though he had recently received an additional one in the backwardness of the Christian powers to succour him, from not one of whom, except Russia, had he obtained more substantial offers of aid, than those of mediating between Mahomet and the republic.

Ibrahim in the interim had made his first demonstrations by throwing bridges across the Niester, not doubting but the king would dispute his passage of that river. This was a snare which he had prepared in the expectation of finishing at one blow, a contest which Mahomet had enjoined him to terminate without loss of time. Had Sobieski justified his calculations, it was seraskier's intentions while a part of his comparatively immense force (consisting of an hundred and twenty thousand Ottomans, and eighty thousand Tartars) were engaged in contesting the bridge with the Poles, that the remainder should cross the Niester higher up, and by marching to take them in flank and rear, should quickly surround and cut to pieces this insignificant force. But to his infinite mortification, after having wasted some time in waiting for the king, he learnt that that monarch

remained tranquilly in his camp at Leopold, apparently more occupied in receiving with due honours the English ambassador \*, whom Charles II. had sent to compliment him on his coronation, than in taking any steps indicative of his design to march towards the Niester. Ibrahim, losing all patience at this intelligence, precipitately destroyed his bridges, and crossing the river Bucovine, entered Pokrusia.

The king of Poland determined by this movement on his own plan of operation, persevered in carrying it into execution, though opposed

\* The honourable Laurence Hyde, afterwards Earl of Rochester, and son to lord chancellor Clarendon. Mr. Hyde was attended to Poland by his former tutor Dr. South, in quality of his domestic chaplain, who informs us that his excellency had first an audience of the queen of Poland, then at Dantzic, to whom he presented a rich jewel and magnificent cross of diamonds from the king of England to her infant daughter the princess Theresa Cunigonda, afterwards electress of Bavaria, to whom Charles had lately stood godfather by proxy. The ambassador then proceeded to the camp at Leopold, and Dr. South speaks with much satisfaction of the respect and kindness with which they were received by the king of Poland, and the courtesy with which he sent some of his principal officers to show them his army, and its mode of encampment, &c.

by his generals as impracticable. It was that of sparing Poland the horrors of renewed conflict, by fixing the seat of war on the frontiers. With this view he immediately led his army to the Niester, along whose borders the enemy was then marching. The king crossed that river at a distance from them, conducted his troops with the utmost celerity to its confluence with the Suwitz, in the neighbourhood of Surawnow, and entrènced himself on a spot already strongly fortified by nature. Here, after exhausting all the resources of military art to render the place impregnable, before which he caused a double defence of redoubts, and detached forts to be raised, he resolved to make a stand with his little army against the further progress of the enemy.

Ibrahim astonished at this boldness, and confident of making Sobieski dearly pay for it, soon drew up round his entrenchments an hundred and sixty thousand of his troops in a semicircle, of which the Niester formed the diameter; the other forty thousand, with Nouraden at their head, he stationed on the opposite side of the river, to cut off all supplies from the Polish army. Thus was the king, with the whole

strength of the republic, hemmed in on all sides by a force so superior that certain destruction seemed to await them.

During some weeks continual skirmishes took place between the hostile armies, the Turks making repeated attempts to seize on the redoubts, and parties of the Poles sallying out to beat them back, in which they so fully succeeded, that Ibrahim would have lost much of the sanguineness with which he had begun the blockade, but for the prospect of starving them into a surrender.

In reality the king's provisions began alarmingly to decrease, and his generals, who had from the first disapproved his plan, now scrupled not to tell him their fears that a fatal result to it was inevitable. Sobieski replied only by reminding them of situations apparently as desperate as the present, from which he had honourably extricated them; and put a stop to further expostulation by asking them if their present distrust of his judgement proceeded from an apprehension that "his head had been weakened by wearing a crown."

To prove, however, that he was not adverse to peace, provided he could obtain it on his own



terms, he declared his determination of trying, through the mediation of the Tartar chief, if an accommodation could be satisfactorily effected with the enemy. Yet the conditions which he proposed as the basis of negociation, from their extravagant pretensions (the relative situation of the two armies considered) bore more the appearance of defiance than any disposition to conciliate. They were no less than that the sultan should restore to the republic Kamienieck, with every other place which he had taken from the Poles, evacuate the Ukraine, and withdraw his protection from the Cossacks.

Ibrahim, as might well have been expected, deigned not to return an answer to proposals, whose presumption filled him with astonishment and indignation. This silence was regarded by the Poles as portentous of his meditated vengeance; and the whole army roused by a common sense of imminent danger, became animated as by one soul, resolving by patience, vigilance, and intrepidity, to fulfil their duty to their king as the best means of safety.

Sobieski in the meantime was in a condition far from enviable. The arrival of the Russian troops had been protracted so long beyond his

calculation, that his provisions and fodder began alarmingly to decline, and his ammunition to fail, but he had too much to hope from gaining time, to suffer any symptoms of anxiety to escape him. He knew that though tardily, Russia was actually arming in his defence; and other of the Christian powers had undertaken to threaten the Porte with hostilities; in case Mahomet should refuse their mediation between him and the republic. Still the king of Poland felt that his situation was highly critical, and that he was awfully responsible for the consequences of a war to which he alone had stimulated his country. But his fortitude continued unshaken.

Ibrahim had now turned his blockade into a regular siege, opened trenches and erected batteries, which were soon brought to bear heavily on the Poles. Sobieski immediately caused counter trenches to be dug, and the two armies which had so long remained stationary on the surface of the earth, now daily drew nearer to each other beneath it. During these operations the example of the king, who in spite of the remonstrances of his officers, exposed his person to all the dangers as well as hardships of his

soldiers, kept up their spirits and inspired them with enthusiastic zeal to serve him.

At length the moment drew near in which the fate of Sobieski, as well as that of Poland, was to be decided. Whether the many trophies he had raised, with all remembrance of his patriotic exertions for his country, were to be buried in the disgrace and ruin which must cover him, should he finally sacrifice her last resource to what she would then regard his chimerical plans—or whether he was on the point of adding a new wreath to his laurels by effecting a peace, of which her independence should form the basis.

Scarcely four more days provisions remained in the Polish camp; and the king came to the resolution, when that was exhausted, to attempt the opening himself a passage through the enemy.

The day preceding that fixed by him for the attack, he was engaged in arranging the order of battle, when a deputation from the seraskier, consisting of two bashaws, and twenty-four officers of the janizaries, arrived at his camp for the purpose of exhorting him not to sacrifice the remains of his brave army to the vain hope

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of freeing his country from a tribute the payment of which was inevitable. The bashaw was proceeding to state that Poland by becoming tributary to the grand seignor, would, like the Cossacks and Tartars, enjoy his powerful protection; when Sobieski impatiently interrupting the speaker by the declaration that the bare mention of the tribute determined him on hearing no more, abruptly dismissed the deputation, and resumed his employment.

In the evening, the king having settled every necessary preliminary for the onset, presented himself in the midst of his soldiers, whom he informed that it was his intention to commence the attack by day break on the following morning. He told them that in a conflict on whose issue every thing dear to the republic rested, he should expect nothing from them of which he would not set them the example, it being his fixed determination to vanquish or die.

The acclamations with which these sentiments were received, convinced Sobieski that although every thing else had nearly failed his army, courage and confidence in him still remained in full vigour to animate its efforts. Even the Lithuanian general Paz, won by the

generosity he had lately experienced from his majesty, or drawn towards the Poles by a common sense of danger, during the whole campaign had appeared to have no will but that of the king. Small therefore as was the force on which the fate of Poland depended, Sobieski had the consolation of knowing that unanimity consolidated its strength.

With such a commander it is impossible to decide how far the great objects for which they were contending might have rendered troops, who partook of his devoted heroism, capable of coping with an enemy out-numbering them nearly seven-fold, but who was not like themselves animated by the sacred cause in which they fought. Sobieski, during this trying crisis, betrayed no symptom of doubt but that the result would prove glorious to the Poles; yet with his native frankness, after the danger was over, he confessed to his friends, that, though sanguine in his hope of extricating his army with honour, in the whole compass of his eventful life, he had never passed a night of such intense anxiety as the greater part of that which was to have preceded the battle.

The eastern horizon had not yet warned the

Poles that the hour of trial was at hand, when the king was surprised by the return of the deputation, which he had in the morning so cavalierly dismissed. This surprise was quickly changed to secret satisfaction by discovering that the bashaws were now the bearers of proposals to which he could listen, since neither the words *tribute* or *tributary* found in them a place.

Sobieski proved by his conduct on this occasion, that he by no means considered his situation as desperate, since he opened negotiations in a tone of independence which silenced such demands as he was resolved on not conceding. He rejected, with unqualified indignation, a proposal that Poland should assist in repelling any attempt which his allies the Russians might make against the Porte; but to the other stipulations, with certain modifications, he consented. The terms of peace finally agreed on were, that Poland, retaining the two thirds of the Ukraine, which Sobieski had conquered the preceding year, should leave the Cossacks the quiet possession of the other third, who were to continue under the protection of the Porte. That Podalia, with the exception of Jaslowiecz

and Kamienieck, should be restored to the Poles ; that the prisoners on both sides were to be given up to their respective countries, and that a solemn embassy should be sent by the king and the republic to the Porte for the ratification of this treaty.

These conditions, after having received the sanction of the king of Poland, were carried to Ibrahim for his approbation, who, before signing them, added a clause, which though it appeared to Sobieski somewhat whimsical, he by no means felt inclined to make a subject of disagreement. This clause exacted, that the ambassador appointed by the king should be worthy, from his person and demeanor, to appear before the greatest monarch in the world \*.

That no differences might arise upon so nice a point as that of punctillio, the king—selecting his cupbearer Zaluski, as in his estimation unexceptionable in both the specified qualities—sent him to Ibrahim for his approbation, who declared himself perfectly satisfied with his majesty's choice, and signed the treaty of peace.

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\* The Turks, as well as the Greeks, have a proverb implying that a *noble soul* cannot inhabit a *mean body*.

Thus had Sobieski the happiness of at last bringing to a happy issue, a war in which, if he had involved Poland, it was because he knew it was the only means to save her from perpetual vassallage. Nor had he in its conduct showed himself unmindful of his subjects welfare, since to save them from the miserable consequences of rendering Poland its seat, he had ventured on a step so bold as to draw on him the condemnation of his generals, and in the end expose himself to perils from which nothing short of his invincible fortitude and exemplary conduct could have saved him.

If the wisdom or folly of political measures is to be judged by their consequences, Sobieski's march to Żurawno must be admitted to have been wise, since it protected the property and lives of his subjects. That he was ever reduced to the critical situation in which the pacific proposals of Ibrahim found him, was to be attributed to the tardy exertions of the Christian powers in his favour, and the unexpected delay of the armament which he knew Russia was preparing for his assistance. It was, however, finally, by the threats of the former, and fears produced by the menacing aspect of the latter,



that Mahomet had been induced to send a hasty but positive order to the seraskier to conclude without *délay* a peace with the republic, as the only means of preventing his becoming embroiled with many other powers. It was in obedience to this command that Ibrahim had sent his second deputation to the camp of Sobieski, which at once freed him from his difficulties without his having been compelled to put his fortune to the hazard of a battle.

The general opinion of his officers, that he had acted rashly, rendered a letter which the king on this occasion received from the prince de Condé, peculiarly gratifying to him. That great man highly applauded the policy of his conduct, and congratulated him on the talents which had ensured it success.

When the comparative resources of the Porte and the republic, at the rapture of the treaty of Boudchaz are considered, that Pole must have been sanguine indeed, who could have anticipated so favourable a result to his country. There was, however, one favourite point which Sobieski deeply regretted the impossibility of at that time gaining. It was the recovery of Kamienieck. Pleased, however, at having gained so

much, he looked forward with hope that an opportunity would some day occur for wresting that key of Poland from the Turks. .

Peace being thus happily established, Sobieski returned to Zolkiew, where he gave public audience to the English ambassador with great solemnity and magnificence. "At this audience," relates Dr. South, "his excellency delivered his master's compliments in a Latin speech, in which he gave assurances of the king of Great Britain's inviolable attachment to that prince's interest; congratulated him upon the last treaty of peace brought to a happy conclusion with the infidels, and made overtures to enter into such alliances with the crown and the republic of Poland as should be conducive to the honour and safety of both nations."

To this his Polish majesty gave a very agreeable and satisfactory answer, in the same language which he had readily *ad unguem*, and caused the ambassador afterwards to sit down at the same table with him, where he was attended by the chief officers of state standing\*.

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\* During the two months which the English ambassador passed at Zolkiew, among other fêtes, at which the king of

Meanwhile the grand cupbearer, Zaluski, in his capacity of ambassador to the Porte, had

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Poland assisted, was the celebration of the marriage of one of the queen's maids of honour; which Dr. South thus quaintly describes. "The first and second day her majesty gave a very magnificent feast, for which purpose a large hall was pitched upon, where three large tables were plac'd. At the first sate the king and queen, in a manner that both fac'd the entrance into the hall. Next the queen sate the couple that were to be married; and next the king the pope's nuncio and archbishop of Gnesna, with the foreign ambassadors. At the two other tables, extending the whole length of the hall, were plac'd the ladies, senators, and officers, except only such as attended upon the king and queen, all ranked according to their respective precedence.

"This feast began both days precisely at four in the afternoon; and it was observable that the senators eat very little, but drank *Hungarian wine* to an immoderate degree; nor did the bishops themselves shew any great symptoms of continence, they leaving their seats very often to go up to the king's table and drink his majesty's health on their knees. The ladies, out of modesty, only touch'd the top of the glasses with their lips, and so sate them down again, or pour'd them into their plates in such manner, that abundance more wine was spilt than drank by them. When they had sitten about five or six hours at table, the violins and a little sort of portable organ began to strike up, and then they spent the rest of the night in dancing. In this exercise every body join'd; and even I myself, who have no manner of relish for such unedifying vagarys, had a *madonna* put into my hand

given pretty evident proofs that a handsome exterior and graceful address, though in them.

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by the bishop of Plosko, (Zaluski the historian) whom I had the honour, as domestick chaplain to the ambassador from the king of Great Britain, to sit next to. Those who began this whimsical way of shaking the feet, were the most ancient senators and old ladies, who mov'd slowly about like so many fryars and nunns in procession ; yet though the dance began with so much gravity and formality, it was ended with a great deal of hurry and confusion.—On the second day all the guests presented the bride with something new, and none gave less than a piece of plate ; which presents were all made in the presence of the queen ; it being the custom to perform this ceremony just before they sit down to table. These make a good part of the bride's portion.—On the third day, the espousals were solemniz'd after this manner. All the guests accompanied the bride and bridegroom on horseback to church, as likewise in their way home. Trumpets sounding from the balconies on each side the way ; when the bride was conducted to her husband's house, where a noble entertainment had been prepar'd."

It may not, perhaps, be improper to give here, in Dr. South's words, the opinion he formed of Sobieski, in consequence of his two months' residence near his person at Zolkiew. "The king is a very well spoken prince, very easy of access, and extream civil, having most of the qualities requisite to form a complete gentleman. He is not only well versed in military affairs, but likewise through the means of a French education, very opulently stored with all polite and scholastic learning. Besides his own tongue, the Sclavonian,

selves valuable, were not the most essential qualifications to be sought in a person who was to be entrusted with affairs which required foresight, judgement, and prudence.

In the out set he endangered rekindling the flame of war between the two countries, by exacting a mark of respect from the grand vizier, which was absolutely contrary to the usages of the Ottoman court. It was that of his coming forth to meet him, at the gates of Constantinople. The haughty Kara Mustapha refused compliance with so unreasonable a demand, in terms of unqualified contempt. Zaluski's next requisition was an allowance of provisions, for

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he understands the Latin, French, Italian, German, and Turkish languages. He delights much in Natural History, and in all parts of physick. He is wont to reprimand the clergy for not admitting the modern phylosophy, such as *Le Grand's* and *Cartesius's* into the universities and schools; and loves to set people about him, very artfully by the ears, that by their disputes, he might be directed, as it happened once or twice during this embassy; where he shewed a poignancy of wit, on the subject of a dispute held between the bishop of Posen, and Father de la Motte, (a jesuit and his majesty's confessor) that gave me an extraordinary opinion of his parts."

*seven hundred persons*, whom he had brought in his suite, which drew from the grand vizier the sarcastic remark, that “if the ambassador of Poland were come to seize on Constantinople, his numbers were too small ; if he had brought them with a view to his own honour, they were too great.”

Sobieski, on being informed of these injudicious and dangerous expectations of his ambassador, at once put a stop to any further difficulties, by a peremptory command to exact nothing which it was not customary for the Porte to grant on similar occasions. This critical interference checked the growing animosities, and the treaty of peace was at length formally ratified by Mahomet.

Louis XIV. as a mark of esteem, accompanied his congratulations to the king of Poland on this happy event, by the insignia of the order of the Holy Ghost, of which he invited him to become a member. Sobieski accepted this compliment ; and his doing so was represented by the factious part of the ensuing diet, as a fit subject of animadversion.

It is the province of licentious malice, to

colour the most inoffensive actions of the illustrious with the hue of its own character. The hero, whose single greatness had rescued Poland from vassalage, was on this occasion insulted by the very people who owed to them their freedom, with reproaches for condescending to wear the *livery* of France.

## CHAPTER IX.

**P**EACE, so long banished from Poland, thus restored to it through the valour and firmness of its sovereign, began to spread her blessings over the republic ; while Sobieski aided her benign influence, by devoting this happy interval of tranquillity to the exercise of those civil talents, by which he was no less distinguished than by the military abilities, that so often rendered the republic his debtor.

During the first years of peace Dantzic, which had long flourished under the protection of Poland, became convulsed by intestine feuds, and the king found himself urgently called upon to repair thither, that by the interposition of his authority he might restore it to order and obedience.

He found that the same spirit of freedom which had prompted that city to enter into the Hanseatic League, from long indulgence had, at this epoch, degenerated into one of insubordination, which threatened the immediate downfall of this wealthy little republic.



These unhappy dissensions had first arisen from the citizens disputing the authority of their magistrates, on the plea, that under the sacred sanction of their office, they had become the oppressors of the people; while the magistrates in their turn, maintained that the severity of which the citizens complained, had been rendered necessary by the ungovernable and dangerous spirit that had seized them. The tumult caused by the animosity which governed all parties had already risen to an alarming height—imprisonment and punishments, on the part of power, by spreading rage and vengeance on that of the people, presented the dreadful prospect of a civil war, when the king of Poland, happily, arrived to avert by his justice and persuasive wisdom, the bloody ruin which the Dantzicers were rashly drawing on their own heads.

Sobieski found that the magistrates and people were equally impatient to lay their grievances before him; each party confident of experiencing a patient and impartial hearing, and each confident of the justice of its own cause.

That he should discover great faults on both sides, the king of Poland was prepared to expect; but his benevolence and knowledge of the hu-

man heart prompted him to examine with peculiar care into the origin of the citizen's discontent; well aware that authority is not always under the guidance of moderation as well as justice. In the present instance, he found that the conduct of those in power had been far from faultless, and he did not conceal from them his sentiments.

The magistrates, in their justification urged, that the contempt which had been shewn to their persons and authority was a violation of the laws; and that if strength and weight were not given to their official capacity by the free exercise of the power invested in them to punish the seditious, a continued state of warfare must inevitably be the fatal consequence.

Sobieski admitted the justice of this plea; but at the same time pressed upon them with much severity the fact, that the strength and duration of a free state must depend upon the wise, equitable, and disinterested discharge of the duties of its magistrates; a discharge which could alone form between themselves and the people that bond of union necessary to the preservation of their authority, and the voluntary obedience of the citizens.

That impressive eloquence which had on so many occasions given Sobieski unlimited power over the passions of those he wished to influence, failed not in the present instance to produce its accustomed effect. The people were won back to present order, and the magistrates to the conviction that lenity should be ever inseparable from authority.

The king next proceeded to cement the good understanding which he had so happily revived between the magistrates and citizens of Dantzic, by carefully examining into their laws, regulating the administration of them, and redressing such grievances as he found had pressed heavily on the people. He inspected also the public treasury, and introduced into it order and economy; lessened and modified the proportion of the taxes, so as to prevent their falling with oppressive weight on the lower classes. In fine, he reformed the abuses which had crept into each department of the executive government with such strict justice, that, through his wisdom, peace strength and order once more gave stability to this little republic, which had been so lately on the brink of falling a sa-

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crifice to the blind fury of its people, and the ill-judged severity of its magistrates\*.

This work of benevolence accomplished, Sobieski repaired to his capital. Although ambitious of glory he loved peace, as the source of happiness and abundance to his people, and scarcely less so as the cherisher of the arts and sciences. To these he had been from his youth greatly attached ; even amidst war and tumult seeking in them his best relief from the anxious cares inseparably connected with the career to which his high spirit had so early directed his choice.

The fruit of this genuine taste for learning was an extensive knowledge of languages. This valuable acquisition enlarged the scope of his literary pleasures, by bringing him acquainted with the most celebrated writers in the Latin,

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\* Jean Hevelke, a celebrated astronomer of Dantzic, proved the gratitude with which the king's conduct towards his fellow citizens had impressed him, and his high respect for that prince's love of science, by naming a cluster of fixed stars, of which he was the discoverer, the constellation of Sobieski. "Ce fut Jean Hevelke," says Lacomb, "qui remarqua le premier une espèce de libération dans le mouvement de la Lune."—Louis XIV. granted him a pension.

French, Spanish, German, Italian, and Turkish tongues. In music and painting he took particular delight, and was himself a candidate for some portion of poetic fame; but his favourite studies were metaphysics and natural history.

Sobieski left behind him proofs of the deep attention he gave to books, in the many marginal observations with which his pencil enriched his family library; observations that bore testimony to the extent of his erudition, the refinement of his taste, and the solidity of his judgement.

Under the united influence of these intrinsic and shining qualities in its king, the republic beheld the court of Poland become the favourite resort of foreigners of distinction, from every part of Europe. Men of letters and genius also sought and found a generous patron in this accomplished prince; whose own cultivated mind enabled him to appreciate their several talents; while the affability which prompted him to admit them to his table with confidence and respect, met its reward in the enjoyment their unrestrained conversation afforded him.

Thus richly gifted in mental resources, and ever active in the service of the republic, the

seven years tranquillity which gave leisure for the cultivation of the arts of peace ought to have been years of enjoyment to Sobieski. But, unfortunately, this period of repose and growing greatness to his country was embittered to himself by the intriguing disposition of his queen; who for the aggrandisement of her own family, or the gratification of her personal resentments, was perpetually forming plots hateful to the noble nature of the king, the consequences of which were present disappointment to herself and future mortification.

Nor was it by his consort alone that the unsuspecting temper of Sobieski was betrayed, and his name degraded by being used to assist the prosecution of plans, of whose existence he was, at the time they were going forward, entirely ignorant. In every individual of the queen's family, by whom he was surrounded, he had in the end the mortification to discover that he had been harbouring a traitor.

The station of ambassador of France, which was filled by the marquis de Bethune, certainly ought to have put the king on his guard against giving way to his native frankness in that noble-

man's company—a frankness which, though it forms one of the charms of social life, cannot be indulged by a sovereign with safety, in an intercourse with the wily servant of another master. The marquis, in consequence of his marriage with the queen of Poland's sister, unfortunately was received on a footing of intimacy in the family of Sobieski, which gave him too frequent opportunities of seizing on those unguarded moments of the king which must at times occur, when ceremony yields to friendly freedom, to wrest from him communications which, as ambassador, he turned to his own advantage.

To great abilities as a statesman, the marquis de Bethune added courtly accomplishments, and remarkable powers of pleasing; which rendered the refined artifice that lurked beneath them extremely dangerous to such a character as Sobieski, who was not capable of suspecting in another that which he would have himself disdained to practise. A remarkable circumstance, however, occurred to the king of Poland, which revealed to him the true character of the man in whom he had imprudently confided.

Some time before the elevation of Sobieski to

the throne, Louis XIV. had offered him, in case the ingratitude of the republic should ever induce him to quit his country, an asylum in France, and with it the choice of a marshal's staff, or a dukedom. The probability of requiring in his own person either of these distinctions had long passed away; but the queen, who was well acquainted with the promise of the French monarch, importuned Sobieski incessantly to claim the latter in favour of her father.

Few things could be more unreasonable than such a proposal, since the revenue of the marquis d'Arquien was scarcely sufficient to enable him to support with propriety the rank which he held of captain in Monsieur's Swiss guards; yet such was the perseverance of the queen in tormenting Sobieski with her complaints, that her father was no more than a *titular* nobleman, that she in the end prevailed on him to comply with her wishes.

The result did not surprise the king of Poland. The French monarch informed him, that he regarded the marquis d'Arquien's present want of fortune as an insuperable obstacle to the preferment in question; but this decla-



ration was softened by the assurance, that whenever he should become possessed of an estate adequate to the maintaining with due dignity the honour to which he aspired, he would willingly accede to the wishes of his Polish majesty.

Meanwhile the marquis de Bethune (who was acquainted with the former offer of Louis to Sobieski, but who was ignorant that it had been lately claimed in behalf of her majesty's father,) conceived the project of obtaining for himself this dukedom, by soliciting it of his master in the name of Sobieski, as an honour he was desirous of seeing conferred on the brother-in-law of his queen.

This enterprise of the marquis had not reached the knowledge of Sobieski, when a friar of the order of Carmelites arrived at Warsaw, and earnestly solicited of his majesty the indulgence of a private audience, alleging that he was charged with dispatches of a secret nature, which he was anxious to deliver into his own hand.

On obtaining his request, the friar opened his commission by presenting to Sobieski a letter, whose contents greatly surprised him. It

was from the marquis de Briscacier, who began his address to the king of Poland, by reminding him of an attachment which had subsisted between the marchioness de Briscacier his mother, and that monarch during his early residence in France. To that attachment the writer declared he had recently discovered that he owed his existence. After an explanation of these circumstances the marquis added, that it was with deep regret he found himself compelled, by the scanty provision left to him by his *supposed* father, to compromise the honour of his mother by claiming the protection of his real one; and entreating that his majesty would obtain for him, as his acknowledged son, the French dukedom formerly offered by Louis to himself.

Sobieski had no sooner perused this epistle than the friar presented him with a second, which proved to be from the queen of France, to whom the marquis de Briscacier at that period filled the office of secretary. Her majesty's letter also contained very urgent entreaties that the king of Poland would acknowledge to Louis that de Briscacier was his son; and exert his

influence with that prince to secure the investiture of the marquis with the dignity of which he was ambitious.

The friar closed his extraordinary commission to the king of Poland, by the delivery of a packet, whose contents it should seem were designed to obviate the objection which it was natural Sobieski should urge against complying with this unforeseen request, since the acknowledged want of fortune in Briscacier must have rendered that young nobleman, in the opinion of the French monarch, equally disqualified for supporting the rank to which he aspired as the marquis d'Arquien. The packet contained also the picture of Briscacier's royal patroness, a present which seemed tendered as a pledge to the king of Poland, that she would support the interest of the claimant.

Whatever might have been the immediate effect of these communications on Sobieski, it appears that reflection disposed him to admit the validity of the plea urged by de Briscacier in favour of his petition, since he in the end acknowledged its justice to Louis XIV.; and requested, in consideration of the near claim which the young man had on his protection

and patronage, that that monarch would confer the honour on Briscacier, which he was not disposed to grant to the marquis d'Arquien.

What might have been the result of this second application, had not treachery interposed between the request and its accomplishment, is very doubtful; but the affair was decided through the unguarded openness of Sobieski towards the marquis de Bethune, and the ungenerous use he made of it. Ignorant of that nobleman's schemes to secure to himself the French dukedom, the king of Poland unfortunately confided to him an affair which had considerably perplexed himself. The ambassador instantly perceiving that this application in favour of de Briscacier was likely to give a death-blow to his own hopes, contrived to retain possession of the queen of France's letter to Sobieski, which he dispatched without scruple to Louis.

It found that monarch surprised at the discovery of a son of the king of Poland among the persons forming the household of his queen; and discontented that three several candidates for the same dignity should have been recommended to him by Sobieski. The evidence,

consequently, which the epistle bore, that his consort had taken a very lively interest in the support of the new claimant, filled Louis with displeasure towards her majesty; who alarmed at learning that her letter had fallen into his hands, positively denied the signature.

However successful this measure might have been in pacifying the anger of the king against herself, it proved fatal to the unfortunate de Briscacier. That unhappy young nobleman was, in consequence, consigned for life to the Bastille; whether as a sacrifice to the domestic peace of the royal family of France—of Poland—or of both, is buried in mystery as impenetrable as that which involved the identity of the victim, who in the same reign was doomed to perpetual imprisonment under the concealment of an iron mask.

Calculated as was the whole of this affair to wound and mortify the king of Poland, he was soon after its lamentable termination vexed by new intrigues of the queen and her family; which led to scenes of great violence and animosity between her majesty and the marchioness de Bethune her sister.

The queen, highly incensed at Louis's excuse

for not at once conferring on her father a rank which she thought his due on account of his near affinity to herself, wrote to desire that the marquis d'Arquien would immediately sell his commission in the Swiss guards, and after properly equipping himself by means of the produce, that he would repair to the court of Poland.

These arrangements her majesty did not conceal from the marchioness de Bethune, little suspecting that by this unreserve she had ruined all her schemes, since the knowledge of the proposed sale of her father's commission instantly suggested to that lady the opportunity of getting possession of the marriage portion, which had been promised but never paid her by her father. She accordingly wrote without loss of time to Monsieur, stating her father's nonpayment of her portion, and petitioning that his royal highness would detain the sum due to her on that account.

Monsieur complied with the request of the lady; in consequence of which the queen of Poland, instead of seeing her father arrive at Warsaw with a well appointed retinue at the expected time, received a narrative of the dilemma

to which the marchioness de Bethune's contrivance had reduced him.

Nothing could exceed the rage with which her majesty assailed her sister at this discovery, except the artifice of the marchioness to parry the anger of the queen, and lull her into the belief that to oblige her she would relinquish her claim on the contested money, while in reality she persevered in taking such measures as effectually secured it to herself.

When in the end it became manifest that Monsieur was resolved on gratifying the wishes of the marchioness de Bethune, in preference to those of the queen ; her majesty lost all self-command, and wrote in terms of so much haughtiness and asperity as drew from him an answer full of bitter taunts and sarcasms.

This affair, therefore, was the means of creating lasting animosity among all the parties concerned ; which blazed forth on the side of the queen of Poland whenever the king was disposed to support in any public measure the views of the king of France. On these occasions she ever took care, by her interference and cabals, to ruin every project ; and at length carried matters so far that Louis recalled his ambassador from Poland.

## CHAPTER X.

**S**OBIESKI in the mean time, although harassed by these family feuds, and disappointed in many of his political views by the daring interference or secret machinations of the queen, had neither been an indifferent observer of the proceedings of the Porte, nor unmoved at the enormous preparations in which she had been some time engaged, with an obvious design to crush some other power, though against whom the meditated blow would be aimed remained long doubtful.

That a potentate, assuming an aspect so menacing, should possess the key of Poland, in which light Kamienieck was justly regarded by the republic, filled Sobieski with extreme uneasiness, and convinced him that in order to the general safety it became necessary to repossess that natural barrier against the Turks.

The occasion for which the king had been long watching at length presented itself. Mahomet, to swell the vast armament he was col-



lecting, withdrew so many of the troops which had garrisoned that place since the peace, as to present the fairest prospect of recovering it by a *coup de main*. As a preliminary to this important undertaking, Sobieski assembled a diet with a view to explain his object and intentions; and to gain its sanction to the measures he had in contemplation.

The encouraging eagerness with which the different orders attended to him when he was laying open to them his wishes, evinced a disposition in the assembly to enter into his views, which little prepared him for the mortifying issue; for it was even while painting with the full force of his fervid rhetoric the strength and security which would be confirmed to the republic by the repossession of that bulwark of Poland, that the words *Veto sisto activitatem* (19) were pronounced by the senator Breza—the diet was dissolved, and the members instantly dispersed.

Full of regret and astonishment, the king of Poland, when next he met the assembled senators, gave free expression to the acuteness of his feelings, on the sudden annihilation of his hopes, in an harangue which pointed its severest

shafts against the faction that had sacrificed the interests of the republic to the mean gratification of depriving him of honour. His indignant eye marked the persons of whom he knew it to be formed, as he proceeded to expose the weak and short-sighted policy of leaving to the casualties of the future an enterprise so momentous. He warmly contended that no time could be more favourable than the present—no opportunity more promising. With all the strength of reason, and all the ardour of one whose whole soul was devoted to the yet winning for his project the suffrage of the senate; he placed in every possible point of view the fatal consequences of procrastination; and vehemently called upon its members to restore to their country the safety of which they had deprived it—the glory of which they had robbed it.

But envy, refusing to listen to the voice of truth, triumphed over patriotism; and the king on this occasion, as on many others, was condemned to pay the penalty of his greatness, by seeing his wisest plans and best intended efforts for his country's good, frustrated and enfeebled through the influence of that baneful passion.

Sobieski deeply felt the overthrow of his important project as a patriot and a king; he was not long after destined to experience a disappointment which touched him very nearly as a parent.

The daughter of his only sister, the duchess of Radzivil, having been intrusted by the will of the deceased prince her father to the guardianship of his majesty, with the very large possessions which he had bequeathed her, had been destined by him, under the triple authority of uncle, guardian, and king, to be the wife of his eldest son James Louis; and the marriage was delayed only on account of the nonage of that prince.

In the interim, the elector of Brandenburg, desirous of bringing into his own family the riches of the young princess, sent his son privately to pay his court to her. The lover had the good fortune to please the lady, and pressed his suit with so much success that he actually bore off the prize before any intimation of his designs reached the king of Poland, which could enable him to counteract them.

The irritation naturally excited in Sobieski by these repeated vexations, had scarcely sub-

sided, when the Pazes vehemently urged the enforcement of a law, which had been passed in 1673, during the weak reign of Michael; enacting that the diets, hitherto confined to the city of Warsaw, should in future be held every sixth year in Lithuania.

Eight years had already elapsed since the enactment, and the measure had never been adopted. The grand general of the duchy, however, who had no doubt that Wilna, from its size, situation, and resources, must necessarily be fixed on as the place of assembling, flattered himself that as palatine of that district he should derive considerable emolument from enforcing the law; and such was the clamour he soon raised on the subject, that the king deemed it prudent to yield at once to the demand of the Lithuanians.

Yet in doing so he was neither obliged to gratify the avarice of Paz, nor disposed to allow the opportunity thus forced on him to escape, without marking the displeasure which the enmity of that family towards him had been so long calculated to excite. In issuing his *letters circular*, therefore, he made use of his royal prerogative, and appointed Grodno, instead of

Wilna, as the place of rendezvous; by which measure he conferred on the starost of that town, for whom he entertained a friendship, the benefit which had been so greedily coveted by the grand general of Lithuania.

It is probable that Sobieski, who had himself so frequently submitted voluntarily to the severest personal privations, whenever by such sacrifices he was enabled to serve his country, must have been secretly amused at the excessive discomposure of the members of the diet, at the poverty, scarcity, and want of accommodation at Grodno, in comparison with Warsaw and Wilna. It is certain that he paid no regard to the strong expression of dissatisfaction which not unfrequently reached his ear during the sitting; and his forbearance, the natural offspring of his own contempt for the luxuries on which others set so high a value, was industriously construed by those who hated him, into a proof that despotic feelings were gaining ground in his once patriotic character.

A little incident, however, occurred before the dissolution of the assembly, which must have convinced the liberal part of it, that though the king—vexed as he was with many cares—

might at times be hurried to error through the impetuosity of his nature. Yet, like Henry IV. of France, to whom in more than one feature he bore a great resemblance, he was ever open to conviction—patient of deserved reproof—and generous in acknowledging his faults on discovering that he had committed them; qualities incompatible with the cold, the selfish, and the iron-hearted character of despotism.

The queen had been for some time desirous of getting an augmentation to her annual allowance, and had accompanied the king to Grodno, for the express purpose of endeavouring to accomplish this object during the sitting of the diet.

Sobieski, on learning the discontent of the members, on account of the inconveniences attending the place of meeting, earnestly recommended her majesty to postpone to some fitter moment the pressing on them her request. But she was not of a disposition to yield her wishes to those of the king, even if she had not secured a sufficient party to support her interests in the assembly; but this she had craftily effected with due precaution.

His majesty, who had no suspicion of these

intrigues, flattered himself that for the present he should hear nothing further of her projects; but in this he was quickly undeceived. The queen's impatience would not brook delay; and on the very next meeting of the diet, after taking her seat in her usual place of concealment, from whence she could hear every thing that passed, that princess dispatched her chancellor to the king, with a request that "he would think of her."

Sobieski, surprised and highly offended at this conduct, repulsed the bearer of the request with much severity, who returned to report the ill success of his mission to the queen. But her majesty was not so easily discouraged as her emissary. By reiterated commands she forced back his reluctant steps; and a second time he approached the throne with his unwelcome message. The king now, irritated beyond endurance, and not making a just distinction between the indiscretion of the queen and the conduct of an officer who dared not disobey her commands, treated him with such an ebullition of unbridled indignation, as to draw from the chancellor a remark, the dignity and respect.

ful firmness of which carried instant compunction to the generous heart of the king of Poland.

"If," said the chancellor, "your majesty forgets the consideration due to the sacred functions of the priest, you should remember that which a Polish noble may command."

"It would have been to my honour," returned Sobieski with noble candour, "if I had remembered that you are, like myself, a *man*. I acknowledge that I have been to blame."

This little sally of impetuosity on the part of his majesty, which at first threatened the overthrow of the queen's projects, from the present turn given to his feelings by regret at his injustice to the chancellor, terminated exactly as she wished. The subject thus unintentionally on his part brought before the diet, to his surprise, was received with great indulgence, and the demand was accorded without any serious opposition.

But however complaisant the queen had found means to render the majority of the diet towards herself, half the necessary business had not been transacted by the assembly, when the



king was again made severely to feel the difficult situation of a monarch, fettered like himself by the senseless whims of individuals, and checked in his wisest measures by the licentious use of the *liberum veto*.

By this preposterous privilege any disaffected or corrupted member possessed the power of annulling the proceedings of the rest, and dissolving the diet.

In the present instance it was exercised by a disaffected deputy, on the frivolous ground of the king having violated an established order, by desiring candles to be introduced on the close of the day, for the quicker dispatch of business which remained unsettled. This was the second time that Sobieski had been thus insulted.

It does not appear what motive actuated the deputy to palsy by his *veto* the functions of the diet; but his abuse of the privilege that empowered him to do so, strongly evinced the danger with which it was replete; and how defective that government must have been, which left to the caprice, treachery, or private malice of an individual the right of silencing deliberations, on the result of which must have often

depended the prosperity of the community at large.

But the Poles, notwithstanding the frequent instances in which the exercise of this dangerous privilege must have proved prejudicial to the interest of their country, ever gloried in their *liberum veto*, as an unequivocal symbol of their independence, and as such, were accustomed to style it the "soul of liberty"—forgetful that the vesting in each individual so pernicious a freedom, deprived the nation and the diet collectively of all real liberty.

No resolution had been taken during the sitting at Grodno, on the subject of Kamienieck, though the Porte was still proceeding in her warlike preparations; and the king had the inexpressible grief to perceive from this perverseness, that Poland must ultimately sacrifice her independence to some external enemy, through her overweaning propensity to cramp the regal authority, and fetter the actions of her sovereign\*.

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\* During the reign of Sigismund II. a band of wits endeavoured to hold up the mirror to the follies of the different orders of the republic, by establishing an epitome of its

government in a little community which extravagantly satirized their leading foibles. It was called *the republic of Babina*; and consisted of a king, senate, great officers of the crown, &c. The criterion by which the members were chosen to fill those offices was, their being particularly disqualified for discharging them properly. Thus, the pre-eminent blunderer of the society was compelled to take the chancellorship—the most meddling, the bishoprick—the greatest *tragadocio*, the crown generalship, and so on. According to Sarnatius, in his Annals of Poland, this community, begun in sport, effected very beneficial purposes; since it not only taught its own members, through the force of this ingenious mode of satirizing their peculiar foibles, to become “judicious censurers, wary talkers, modest observers, humble performers, and true relaters of any exploits; but it even reformed many of the abuses and *indecorums* which had crept into the government of Poland.”—Sigismond was so far from taking offence at this institution, that he liked to hear the details of its members’ proceedings; and one day asked the *starosta of Babina*, who was their king? To which that dignitary solemnly replied, “Far be it from us, most serene monarch, to choose any other king during the life of your majesty!” The gravity and readiness of this answer greatly diverted Sigismond, who humoured the subject with a degree of pleasantry which afforded much mirth to the court. If Sarnatius did not greatly overrate the correcting power of the *republic of Babina*, Sobieski had reason to lament that from its “decline and fall” all traces of its beneficial effects on the turbulent spirit of the Poles should have been lost before he was called to govern them.

## CHAPTER XI.

ON the following year\* the anxious suspense with which the king of Poland had long been studying the intentions of the Porte, was dissipated by the discovery that it was against the court of Vienna, not the republic, that her meditated hostilities were about to be directed.

Emeric Tekeli, a Hungarian noble, whose father Stephen count Kersmark had been implicated in a conspiracy against Leopold, had on the death of his parent, and confiscation of his property, taken refuge in Poland at the age of sixteen; from whence he had vainly endeavoured to procure from the emperor the restitution of his patrimony.

At length, rendered desperate by finding his attempts fruitless, he repaired to Abaffy prince of Transylvania; and after first serving as a volunteer in an army sent from that territory for the assistance of the malcontents of Hungary,

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\* A. D. 1682.

Tekeli had, by his military talents and the influence of his family, been appointed in his twentieth year to its command. So formidable had he from that time rendered himself to the emperor, that that monarch had been induced to offer, as the price of peace, the restoration of the former government of Hungary, which he had arbitrarily overturned, with the restitution of all the confiscated property, &c. to those families which had suffered for the former conspiracy.

But Tekeli, who had now procured a promise of assistance from the Turks, and was suspicious of the emperor's sincerity, declined accepting the proposed concessions; and to increase Leopold's mortification at this refusal, his application soon after to the court of Constantinople for a renewal of the truce of 1664, which was now on the eve of expiring, was answered on the part of the Porte, by the demand of such conditions as would have scarcely left him a shadow of authority even in his hereditary dominions. France, ever eager to humble the emperor, had been the industrious instigator of these extravagant pretensions.

Galling as they were to Leopold, however, he

was in no condition to resent them. The numerous enemies with whom he was already obliged to cope, and the difficulties he found in recruiting his armies daily decreased by desertion as well as by the sword, forced him to bridle his indignation, and to dispatch count Albert Carprara as his ambassador extraordinary to the Porte, vested with full authority to avert, by any means within his power, a storm so big with danger to Austria.

Before the arrival of Carprara at Constantinople, Tekeli had been proclaimed by Mahomet, king of Upper Hungary ; and by his marriage with the widow of Ragotski had rendered himself master of the vast riches of that family, with the strong fort of Mongatz. Ten thousand Turks had already marched to the frontiers to his support, and had been joined by twelve thousand Tartars, besides numbers of protestants, who, in resentment of Leopold's breach of promise respecting their religious privileges, had enlisted under the banners of Tekeli.

These circumstances, followed by the intelligence that several places of importance had already submitted to the prince of Hungary, prepared the sultan to demand still harder terms

of the Austrian ambassador than he had before required of his master ; for to his former exactions was now added, that the emperor of the West must thenceforth pay an annual tribute of five hundred thousand florins to the emperor of the East.

This unbending haughtiness of the Porte, with the sight of the horses' tails waving over the Seraglio, convinced Carprara that all further attempt at negotiation was vain ; and that he had no time to lose in making his escape from Constantinople, if he would avoid the inconveniences of an arrest.

Leopold, on learning the total failure of his embassy, perceived the necessity of making immediate preparations against the tremendous storm which was already rolling towards him : yet harassed by difficulties, and cramped in his means of completing his levies to the extent the urgency of his situation required, he cast his eyes round him in search of some powerful arm to interpose between him and the ruin which threatened him. Such a one was near him in the king of Poland : yet in many instances he had treated that monarch with so mean an arrogance as to render it a painful humiliation, in the hour of

danger, to solicit his aid. Leopold, however, abject in adversity as he was haughty in prosperity, was at length determined by his increasing fears, and the advice of Innocent XI., to crave the assistance of Sobieski; and in doing so he was strongly recommended by the pope to make such concessions to that prince, as must obliterate from his mind the recollection of the insolence which he had formerly experienced from the emperor.

In pursuance of these counsels of his holiness, Leopold prefaced his application to the king of Poland by acknowledging his right to the title of *majesty*, an honour which he had till then denied him; offered him one of the archduchesses, his daughters, for the consort of his son prince James Louis; and proffered to unite his power with that of the pope, to render the crown of Poland hereditary in the family of Sobieski.

France on her side, through the medium of her new ambassador, Forbin bishop of Marseilles, left no means unessayed to attach the king of Poland to her interest; a measure which she deemed of the utmost importance to the success of her meditated ruin of the emperor. To the offer of immense treasure as the price of



his neutrality, Louis added the same voluntary proposal which had been tendered by Leopold, of fixing the Polish crown in the family of the present king.

But these proffers of the French ambassador were rejected with disdain by Sobieski. His line of policy was obvious; the occasion most auspicious for assisting to cripple a power which he with reason regarded as the natural and perpetual enemy of Poland and of her religion. Could he reject the opportunity of punishing the Ottomans for the miseries they had brought on his country, of diminishing their strength, which otherwise would be again directed against her, when, leaving his subjects to the enjoyment of internal peace, he might go forth to grapple with them on a foreign soil! All memory of the petty insults of the emperor faded before this glorious prospect, and he resolved on making common cause with the monarch, for whose destruction the Porte was preparing her vast armaments.

The policy of Sobieski was embraced by all orders of the state; and a treaty offensive and defensive, with an engagement that neither party should make peace with the Porte but by

mutual consent, was ratified between the emperor and the republic. It was further stipulated that Leopold should provide sixty thousand men, and Poland forty thousand, to be employed wherever it was deemed necessary for the general service; and finally, that a subsidy should be furnished to the republic by the empire, for the payment of which his holiness was guarantee\*.

That potentate, who had never forgiven the threat of the late grand vizier, Küperli, that he would "lay the see of Rome in the dust," still

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\* Benedict Odeschalchi ascended the papal throne by the name of Innocent XI. He was the son of a banker of Milan, and his having been elected pope on Saint Matthew's day gave occasion to Pasquin to remark, "*Invenimus hominem sedentem.*" "They have met with a man sitting at the receipt of customs." That wit would have been in no danger of offending his holiness had he made the observation in his presence; since, according to Menage, he was ignorant of the Latin language: yet so ambitious is he said to have been of leaving behind him the reputation of a learned man, that when *Favoriti*, his secretary, used to read him the briefs which he had drawn up in that language, and explain them to him in Italian, Innocent would weep for joy, and exclaim "What will posterity say of us when they shall see our fine Latin style!"

further strengthened the cause of the emperor by the zealous exertion of his power over the princes of Germany, by which most of them were induced to join the Christian league\*.

Meanwhile the king of Poland, as a preliminary step to his obtaining the "sinews of war," issued *letters circular* for assembling the diet; when, instead of finding that they were obeyed with the alacrity which the approbation of the several orders of the state to the late treaty with Leopold had prepared him to expect, he learnt that they were received with murmurs of disapprobation. The Lithuanians in particular, in-

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\* While Innocent was thus busily exerting himself in behalf of the emperor, it appears he was not less active in reforming the dress and extravagance of the ladies of Italy. So greatly was he scandalized at their occupying themselves more with the display of their persons than with the danger of Christendom, that in the midst of his own anxiety he fulminated a bull (says Bayle) commanding all females to cover their necks as high as the throat, and their arms as low as the wrist, with some "untransparent stuff," on pain of excommunication if this edict were not obeyed within six days. Such was the fury of his zeal to enforce obedience, that he extended this penalty to all fathers, husbands, masters, and other heads of families, by whose leave or connivance his bull should be evaded.

stigated by the artifices of the Pazes, manifested a reluctance to obey the king little short of rebellion, while the Sapiehas, on whom his majesty had showered riches and honours which rendered them powerful in the duchy, disappointed by their languid obedience and tardy motions the confidence which he had reposed in their fidelity.

A change so sudden and unaccountable in the sentiments of the nation surprised and for a short time embarrassed the king; but he was soon led to suspect that some secret enemy must have been busy in sowing the seeds of disaffection among his people. This idea led to a scrutiny, which soon developed to his majesty the intrigues that were on the point of depriving Austria of that support which he had with such perfect sincerity promised her; a support not less essential to the future safety of the republic, than to the immediate preservation of the empire.

The discovery of the secret engines which had been set at work was effected by means of an intercepted packet of letters: one of these, written by the ambassador of France to his court, put Sobieski in possession of the clue by which

he soon unravelled the whole tissue of duplicity in which the affair had been involved.

This letter from the archbishop Forbin contained a frank avowal that he had been baffled in his attempt to detach the king of Poland from the interest of Austria. It affirmed that he found that monarch equally proof against the power of gold and of ambition, since the seducing offer on the part of France to procure the nomination of prince James as his successor to the throne had failed to draw him into a breach of faith towards Leopold. He then proceeded to state, that the ill success which had attended his endeavours to corrupt his majesty had turned his views to the more accessible republic; which had fully answered his expectations, and given him great reason to admire how active an agent the precious metal had proved in the recruiting Polish traitors. He asserted that the grand treasurer Morstin had been seduced by it to disclose to him all the secrets of the cabinet of Warsaw, and that he had found the grand treasurer of the duchy, and the Lithuanian family of Sapieha, not less easy to secure to the interests of France. The loyalty of Jablonski, he said, he had undermined by dazzling

his senses with a distant hope of the crown ; while by introducing into the provincial diets distrust, contradiction, and defiance, he had put an effectual stop to the raising the supplies necessary to enable his majesty to take the field. Such was the French ambassador's triumphant account to his court of the result of his recent machinations in Poland.

His letter was accompanied by one from the grand treasurer Morstin, which unequivocally proved his entire devotion to France, and the treachery with which he had laid open to her ministers the secrets of the Polish cabinet. There were also several dispatches written in cyphers, which the king conjectured were the details of the plan by which the sudden revolution in the sentiments of the nation had been effected ; but for want of the key he was unable to ascertain this point.

Impatient to communicate to the senate these dark proceedings, Sobieski repaired on its first sitting to the senate-house, and laid before its members his discovery of the conspiracy. Various were the expressions depicted on the countenances of his auditors, while listening to the details—pride and indignation on those

of the innocent, shame and confusion on the guilty—while glances of inquiry and suspicion were exchanged on all sides—till the general attention became concentrated in the king, who, with that generous confidence in his friends which was a leading feature in his character, thus addressed the assembly:

“I know not in what light these intercepted letters may appear to you: for myself, credible as it is that such characters as Morstin may have swallowed the bait offered them, I can never believe that the Sapiehas would barter their honour for dross, nor that Jablonowski would pave his way to the throne by betraying his country and his king. Far more probable does it appear to me, that an ambassador whose schemes must be effected in the dark, and who would shrink from no sacrifice to acquire the favour of his master, should flatter both his sovereign and himself with ideal success; that by one so circumstanced, a doubtful expression, a dubious gesture, should be eagerly seized as a tacit sign of acquiescence in his plots; and that to swell his own importance at his court, he should exaggerate the number of those whom he had really found traitors. In regard to what

the ambassador has affirmed of me, no falsehood can be laid to his charge: he has had the temerity to attempt my honour by the offer of his gold, and to attack the weakness of the father by the promise of securing to my son the crown of Poland. In rejecting his treasure I found no difficulty—the silencing the voice of nature was not so easy. Yet respect for the republic teaches me my duty; and if another Sobieski be destined to ascend the throne, let him rise to it by the free election of his countrymen. Senators, the ambassador of France has dared to represent us as a people lost to honour and to honesty. Let us refute his base aspersions by our faithful adherence to our treaty with the empire—a treaty which you well know was ratified with the approbation of all orders of the state. Every principle of policy and prudence urges us to make common cause against the Ottomans at this moment assembled in arms for the destruction of Vienna, since, should Vienna fall, what is to ensure the safety of Warsaw!”

Sobieski had no sooner ceased to speak, than a considerable body of the senators, amongst the foremost of whom was Jablonowski, de-



manded that instant search should be made for the abettors of Morstin's treachery, the lieutenant-general appearing to be sensibly wounded by the accusation of double treason against his friend and his sovereign.

The king, however, who perceived bitter animosity to be arising in the senate, and who dreaded nothing so much as that the precious moments which should be given to action, were about to be spent in fierce debate and useless recrimination, exerted his returning influence to persuade them that, the discovery of the treason having disarmed the concealed traitors of their ability to injure the common cause, it were far wiser to leave them to the punishment which the constant fear of detection must inflict, with the mortification of witnessing the triumph of the league, than to allow the public mind to be occupied at so important a crisis with the investigation of their guilt.

The arguments of the king prevailed; and with the exception of the grand treasurer, whose crime was too manifest to admit of doubt, it was agreed that the affair should be allowed to drop. The examination into the extent of his

guilt, and its due punishment, was referred to a general diet; with which resolution the senate broke up.

Morstin, however, in the interim took care to place himself beyond the jurisdiction of the republic, by effecting his escape into France, to which country he had also found means to convey the whole of his ill-gotten wealth.

## CHAPTER XII.

**T**HE flight of the grand treasurer, which was regarded by the general diet as an unequivocal acknowledgement of his guilt, disposed that body to acquiesce with a show of alacrity in all the wishes of the king.

The happiest re-union appeared to be established between him and the states; and he was empowered to assemble, regulate, and recruit the armies of the republic to the extent requisite to fulfil its pledge to the empire.

After this auspicious change Sobieski thought only of repairing the mischief that had arisen from delay. He recalled his troops from the frontiers, which since the peace of Zurawno he had stationed there with the paternal view of saving the Polish peasantry from the depredations that in time of peace, as idlers, they were accustomed to commit; while, by supplying from his private purse the deficiencies of the public one, he endeavoured to increase them to

the stipulated number, and prepare them to take the field.

Leopold, who on his part had obtained a vote of credit from the German diet, employed the palatine Esterhazy to levy an army of insurrection. Yet such was the dilatoriness with which the measure was executed, that on the duke of Lorraine's appointment to the command of the imperial troops, he found that they scarcely amounted to forty thousand men. Inadequate as was this force, however, he resolved on opening the campaign by laying siege to Newhasel.

Meanwhile the Turks had completed their ever slow but ever magnificent preparations for war, and assembled with the armies of the Tartars, the Walachians, the Moldavians, and the Hungarians—all tributaries of the Porte—in the plains of Adrianople; each vassal prince heading his own troops. There Mahomet, seated on an elevated throne, commanded his various hosts to pass in review before him.

Perhaps no spectacle was ever more calculated to gratify the self-love of a despot, and to inflame him with a thirst for universal dominion, than that now presented to the monarch of the Ottomans.

Two hundred thousand men filed off beneath his throne, all devoted to obey the mandates of his ambition. These regulars were followed by numerous volunteers, officers of baggage and provision, servants and mechanics of every description, the retinues of five sovereign princes and of thirty-one bashaws, while three hundred pieces of cannon closed the magnificent procession.

The grand vizier, Kara Mustapha, was the last of the train who approached the sultan, by whom he was honoured with the highest mark of esteem and confidence which he could bestow. Mahomet presented to him his imperial catescherif, an instrument which invested the grand vizier with the same unlimited authority which the sultan would have himself possessed had he headed the Ottoman army.

Mahomet, inflated by the many brilliant triumphs of his arms under the command of Kiuperli, while he had been himself immersed in the effeminate pleasures of his seraglio, seems to have been culpably indifferent as to whether or not the successor he had appointed to that great man was capable of sustaining the reputation which, under him, the Ottomans had

acquired. While the armament, commencing its march on the right of the Danube, proceeded to cross the Save, the sultan retook his road to Constantinople, amusing himself as he journeyed with the diversion of hunting.

Kara Mustapha, in order (as he expressed himself) "to level the tree first that the branches might more easily fall into their possession," resolved on marching directly to Vienna; and his approach toward Newhasel with the whole of the Turkish force, induced the duke of Lorraine to raise the siege of that place, and, after throwing a part of his infantry into Raab and Comora, to fall back with the remainder and his cavalry on Vienna.

That capital was already in a state of the utmost confusion and distress. On the first intelligence of the rapid advance of the enemy, Leopold with his whole family and court had fled for refuge to Passau; and the pusillanimous part of the inhabitants, eager to follow his example, crowded every avenue from the city with trains of carriages, in which they had deposited their most valuable effects. Happily, many of those firmer citizens who remained behind to brave the approaching foe, were ani-

mated by nobler feelings. Every effective man, whatever his rank or profession, flew to arms for the preservation of the capital, eager all to share in the severest military duty; while the duke of Lorraine, after aiding count Staremberg the governor in repairing the dilapidated fortifications, and in placing the city in a posture of defence, reinforced the garrison with eight thousand infantry, and retired with his cavalry behind the Danube, where he encamped on a spot favourable for watching the motions of the enemy and intercepting his communications, till by the arrival of the expected succours he should be in a condition more effectually to cope with him.

The 14th of July, the day following that on which the duke had finished his arrangements, the Turkish army reached the vast plain before Vienna, and in a short time completed the investment of the city, and began its offensive operations.

Unfortunately for those shut within its walls, the ardour with which the king of Poland had laboured to put his army in a condition to march to their relief, was so ill seconded by the grand general of Lithuania, that though Vienna

was at length reduced to a state of the utmost distress and danger, the troops of the duchy were still unprepared to join the royal standard.

Had Sobieski been capable of harbouring the passion of personal revenge, the humiliating concessions, to which this delay reduced the late haughty emperor must have given him secret satisfaction, amidst the vexations and disappointments to which the perverseness and disobedience of Paz once more exposed him. While the king was awaiting the arrival of the Lithuanians, Leopold, under his own hand, addressed to him the most humble entreaties that he would no longer postpone placing himself at the head of the German forces. It was now too late, he remarked, to hope that the Polish army could arrive in time for the preservation of the capital; but as the name alone of Sobieski, so terrible to the enemy, was sufficient to palsy his efforts, he expected every thing from *his majesty's* presence.

Forcibly as this letter proved the desperate situation of the capital, the duke of Lorraine's dispatches still further confirmed the fact, that if Sobieski would save the city he had not a day to lose in marching to its assistance.



Every resource that valour and patriotism could inspire, had been nearly exhausted by the noble Staremberg and his adherents; but famine and disease had at length assailed them, the Turks had possessed themselves of the principal outworks of the city, and the garrison was in hourly expectation of being taken by storm. The duke of Lorraine, whose post was too advantageous to be quitted till he was joined by some of the promised succours, had effected every thing within his power by sending frequent detachments from his little camp, who had interrupted the communications of the vizier. At the head of one of these parties, the duke of Baden captured an immense convoy of provisions and ammunition, which was travelling from Hungary for the use of the enemy; and he had also the good fortune to intercept and put to flight Tekeli, on his progress to Presburg; whither Kara Mustapha had dispatched him to secure that important passage across the Danube. Still these partial successes had afforded no alleviation to the distresses of the besieged. All that the duke of Lorraine could do for them was to revive if possible their expiring hopes, by promises of

speedy relief. His communication with the city seemed totally cut off; yet he found among his soldiers a man, whose readiness in undertaking his hazardous mission proved him to be not inferior in heroism to Pontius Cominus, the emissary of Camillus \*. The Austrian soldier, by swimming across several arms of the Danube and braving every impediment, conveyed to the governor of Vienna the grateful promise of speedy deliverance.

The king of Poland was indeed hastening to render him his utmost aid. On receiving the last gloomy intelligence from the empire, he resolved on no longer allowing the Poles to await the arrival of the Lithuanians; but, placing his whole disposable force, consisting of twenty

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\* Pontius Cominus, by swimming across the Tiber and climbing the most craggy part of the hill of the Capitol, while Rome was in possession of the Gauls (year of Rome 366), found means to inform the citizens that their banished general Camillus was in a condition to set them free, and willing to do so provided the Romans would, *in the Capitol*, sanction the enterprise. Cominus had the good fortune to return to the general with his appointment to the dictatorship. The Austrian, less happy, perished by the hand of the enemy in attempting to re-cross the Danube—and his name found no place in history.

thousand men, under Jablonowski, with orders to march with all possible expedition to join the duke of Lorraine, he departed himself with an escort of only two thousand cavalry, and traversed "with the rapidity of a Tartar horde" Silesia, Moravia, and that part of Austria which lay between him and the German troops. In this route, rendered extremely dangerous with so slight a guard by the numbers of Turks and malcontents who infested those countries, he was accompanied by his eldest son prince James, who had earnestly besought the king to let him share his perils.

Sobieski directed his march to Tulln (a town fifteen miles west of Vienna), at which place the emperor had engaged that he should find the whole German force assembled to receive his command. Great were his surprise and indignation, therefore, to perceive that these promises were so far from realized that the bridge was scarcely half constructed; and except two battalions of horse which guarded its head, no other troops were collected there to receive him than the handful of men under the duke of Lorraine.

This breach of promise on the part of Leopold

in a moment roused the impetuosity of Sobieski's temper, and in his anger he exclaimed, "Does the emperor mean to treat me as an adventurer? Solicited by him I have left my own army, that without delay I might take the command of his—Forgets he that it is for him, not myself, I am come to fight?"

But this ebullition of passion was soon allayed by the judicious interference of the duke of Lorraine, for whose noble character the king of Poland entertained a high esteem; and with his native good humour all his pleasantry was not long after restored, by an event as agreeable to him as it was unexpected. So zealously had Jablonowski followed up the directions of his master, that the Polish army, which had been left by him at so great a distance, actually arrived at Tulln before the new levies of the empire.

The king, in a high flow of spirits at this circumstance, was surrounded by the German princes (who on intelligence of his arrival had preceded their troops to compliment him); when, as the Poles were passing in review, Lubomirski whispered his master, that it would be for the credit of the republic to cause a

shabbily accoutred battalion, which was in the rear of a fine body of horse, to halt till the obscurity of night should enable it to escape remark. But Sobieski, whose affection for even the meanest of his brave companions in arms made him revolt from showing them an indignity, far from acquiescing in the proposal of his officer, fixed general attention on the battalion, and at the same time imparted to it a portion of his own happy hilarity, by humorously exclaiming, "Pray admire that invincible body: it has sworn never to wear other clothes than what it captures from the enemy. During our last war every man was clad in the Turkish habit."

It was on the 5th of September that the Polish army reached Tuln, and on the 7th they were joined by those of the empire. The army thus assembled scarcely amounted to seventy thousand men, a number nearly tripled by the enemy; but the king of Poland on this occasion remarked, that in weighing the probable event of the encounter, they ought rather to take into account the grand vizier's military capacity than the magnitude of his army. "Is there a general amongst you," asked he, "who

at the head of two hundred thousand men would have suffered this bridge to be constructed within five leagues of your camp? The man is an absolute driveller."

Tuln was separated from the plain in which the Turks were encamped by a chain of mountains, offering but two roads to Vienna, one over their summits, the other at their base. The passage of the first was attended with danger, difficulty, and fatigue; but as it was considerably the nearer, Sobieski, who trembled lest the city might yet fall before he should be able to make an effort for its preservation, resolved on scaling it.

In making this election the king erred. Accustomed to see his soldiers surmount obstacles greater than those which threatened the present march, he did not foresee that a part of the army would be involved by them in great perplexities.

The Germans, after repeated but ineffectual efforts to drag their cannon across the mountains, were compelled to abandon the attempt as hopeless. The Poles, on the contrary, found their exertions crowned with success, and had the honour of having conveyed to the field of

battle the whole of the artillery which was used at the relief of Vienna.

But while by three days of incessant toil they were performing this essential service, the miseries of the besieged city had reached their acme. Many officers of the first rank and merit had already fallen in its defence, many more were hourly swept off by famine and disease. The cannon now but feebly manned, or dismounted, could no longer return with effect the fire of the enemy ; while the progress of the miners, who had already penetrated to the foundation of the imperial palace, kept the surviving inhabitants in hourly dread of perishing by the resistless power of that tremendous engine of destruction. The chief support of the citizens, the intrepid count Staremberg, whose last billet to the duke of Lorraine had contained only these expressive words, " No more time to lose, my lord, no more time to lose ! " was himself attacked by the fatal malady which contributed to devastate the capital. Hope seemed absolutely to have expired, when the king of Poland, reaching the heights of Calemberg, gave the renovating signals to the city that succour was at hand.

While Vienna was obscured from Sobieski's sight by the fire and smoke which enveloped her, the intermediate space exhibited to him a spectacle calculated to fill him with indignant surprise. As if in mockery of the want and desolation to which the grand vizier had reduced the late magnificent seat of the western empire, the Ottoman camp, spreading its gaudy pavilions over the vast amphitheatre beneath and the several islands of the Danube, displayed with ostentatious profusion every luxury which art could furnish to gratify the sated senses. The scene rather resembled an Asiatic pageant than a besieging army. Yet while the inquiring eye of the king of Poland, assisted by his telescope, took in its magnitude and splendour, he discerned symptoms of the want of that order, energy, and discipline, which could alone render it formidable to him.

Kara Mustapha had indeed given sufficient proofs that Mahomet could not have intrusted his armament to less worthy hands. The city might have been long before taken by storm, had not the avarice of the grand vizier withheld him from sharing with his soldiers the spoils of the capital, which he meant wholly to



appropriate. The janizaries had penetrated into his motive for protracting a siege of which they were heartily weary, and disaffection had sprung up amongst them; while the vizier, blindly trusting for security to his numbers, abandoned himself to dissipation, and neglected to perform the necessary duties of his station.

No sooner had the king of Poland reconnoitred the enemy, than he declared to his generals that they could gain no honour by defeating the grand vizier, so easy would the task be rendered by his manifest ignorance and presumption.

## CHAPTER XIII.

**M**EANWHILE those signals from the Christian army which were hailed with grateful rapture by the besieged, overwhelmed with astonishment and confusion the chief of the besiegers. Scarcely could Kara Mustapha credit the evidence of his senses, which told him that the united forces of the empire and Poland were approaching to relieve Vienna over mountains which he had till then considered as impassable.

Stunned by this unexpected event, he suffered the night to wear away in perplexity and irresolution: but at sun-rise the following morning (12th of September) he was roused from his stupor by the information that the hostile army had actually begun its descent from the mountains. Immediately quitting his pavilion, he hastened with the vassal princes to a spot favourable for reconnoitring the strength of the enemy; from whence he perceived, with no very

pleasing feelings, the firm and orderly movements of the allies, who marching in close ranks, and preceded by their cannon, stopped at intervals to fire on the advanced parties of the Tartars, and to reload their artillery.

The grand vizier at this sight impatiently issued orders for the immediate storming of Vienna by his janizaries, while the remainder of the army should march to oppose the advance of the Christians. But scarcely had he spoken, when a discovery of the khan of the Tartars struck a universal panic into his troops. Pointing to the banderols, just then discernible, which were streaming from the lances of the Polish guards, that chief exclaimed, "By Allah, the king is at their head!"

This was a stroke for which the Ottomans were wholly unprepared. It brought back instantly to their memory in all their original terrors the defeats of Choczim—of Leopold—of that before Trembula, where the numbers of Sobieski had been still more disproportioned than the present; and from that moment they anticipated as inevitable a repetition of those scenes of dire disgrace.

It was now too late for Kara Mustapha, who bitterly repented his late inactivity, to endeavour at rekindling in his troops the ardour which his own misconduct had damped, or to infuse into them hopes of victory in which he could not himself indulge. Instead of perceiving that his long-wished-for command to storm the city had rekindled in the janizaries the fire which had been suffered to consume itself in idleness and discontent, he had the mortification to discover that they prepared to obey him with undisguised reluctance, sullenness, and contempt.

An assault made under the influence of such feelings, against a garrison roused to the height of enthusiasm by the near prospect of deliverance, was happily no longer fraught with the same imminent danger to Vienna as must have attended its earlier attempt; since the besieged, forgetful of hunger and disease, rallied round their posts, and repulsed every effort of the assailants with the most admirable constancy.

In the mean time the king of Poland, ably supported by the German princes, compelled the Ottomans, who attempted to dispute his

descent into the plain, to retire with precipitation towards their camp, on the border of which they drew up in line of battle. Sobieski halted for a short time to restore the Christian army to the order which had been deranged by the late contest, and then led it forward to a general attack of the grand vizier ; who, as a last resource to renovate the courage of his mussulmen, erected beside a red pavilion in their centre the standard of Mahomet, usually esteemed by them a sacred pledge of victory.

An awful pause succeeded to the moment which placed the hostile armies face to face. It was broken by Sobieski's commanding the Polish cavalry *to charge* ; when, as if animated by one spirit—and that the spirit of their king—they rushed towards the sacred standard which marked the vizier's station—pierced the lines of the enemy—and with irresistible impetuosity penetrated to the squadrons which encircled the Turkish chief.

While their further advance was for awhile, desperately opposed by the spahis, who on that memorable day were the only Ottoman troops who fought bravely, the German princes made

a fine attack on the right wing of the enemy, Jablonowski one of equal skill on the left, and the duke of Lorraine fell on the centre with his wonted firmness and ability; the king of Poland, who had planned, directing and animating the whole.

The Ottoman army, dispirited, and without confidence in its commander, very feebly sustained the shock of this onset; while the spahis, seeing themselves unsupported by the janizaries, or the tributary powers who had been so uniformly defeated when opposed to the king of Poland that they seemed to have lost the capability of contending with him—found that their utmost efforts in favour of Kara Mustapha could no further avail, than to allow him time to secure his personal safety by a disgraceful flight.

With the grand vizier disappeared the standard of Mahomet; and intelligence of his desertion spreading rapidly from wing to wing of the Turkish army, irretrievable anarchy succeeded. Each individual of that vast multitude, now being actuated solely by the wish of self-preservation, thought only of escape; so that the rout

became general ; and Vienna was thus, in the space of a few hours, rescued from the merciless grasp of the Turks\*.

The extreme darkness of the night, which had by this time closed in, induced the king of Poland, in opposition to the wishes of the duke of Lorraine, to forbid all pursuit of the enemy beyond the field of combat ; or any attempt to enter the deserted camp of the Ottomans before morning, on pain of death.

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\* According to Bayle, the relief of Vienna was not more disastrous to the Turks, than to an attempt of Monsieur Jurieu to establish the reputation of Drabicius, one of Comenius's three prophets. That sage personage had left behind him a prediction, purporting the ruin of the house of Austria, the capture of Vienna, Rome, &c. by the Turks, and the accession of the king of France to the imperial throne. This work, which had been for years contemned and forgotten, was revived by Monsieur Jurieu when the Turks invaded the empire in 1683 ; and he was on the point of reprinting it, enriched with his own learned arguments in support of the prophet, when news arrived at Paris of the defeat of the Ottomans. On this composition Bayle remarks, " Had Vienna fallen, it would have been more talked of than the grand vizier ; but Jurieu's performance came to nothing with regard to the memory of Dabricius, by the raising of the siege ;—the mighty Sobieski destroying, at the distance of two or three hundred leagues, a book just going to the press."

This unpopular command was neither the offspring of improper timidity, nor an over-weening fondness for exercising supreme power, but resulted from wisdom and experience. The uncommon obscurity of the night, which had saved a considerable portion of the enemy from slaughter, and which rendered pursuit highly hazardous to the victors, would have favoured an enterprise against which Sobieski thought it necessary to be prepared. He well remembered the imminent danger to which the Poles had exposed themselves, when fortune had decidedly declared in their favour, by a premature eagerness to share in the spoils at Choczim ; and now perceived that, by yielding to the present impatience of the army to take possession of the treasures left in the fugitives' camp, he should expose it to the risk of a still greater danger. Well versed in all the wiles of the enemy he had routed, he felt the necessity of guarding against his stealing back, under cover of the darkness, to rush on the Christians while they might be intent on plundering his abandoned pavilions ; since, if taken unprepared, they might even in the moment of exultation fall an easy prey to their lurking and vindictive foe.



Firm in his determination to trust nothing to chance, when vigilance could with certainty preserve the signal advantages he had gained, the king of Poland was equally regardless of murmurs or remonstrances ; and strictly enforced obedience to his command, that the whole of the Christian army should remain under arms on the field of battle during the remainder of the night.

## CHAPTER XIV.

EARLY on the following morning the king of Poland gave the signal for the Christian army to take possession of the Ottoman camp; a permission which was eagerly seized by the soldiery, who rushed forward impatient to remunerate themselves for their past privations, by dividing the rich spoils of the enemy.

On entering the deserted pavilions of the mussulmen, however, they were for awhile checked by a spectacle which chilled with horror even the hardiest of those veterans who had just quitted the sanguinary field of combat. All the Turkish women, many of them young and beautiful, who had accompanied their husbands in this fatal expedition, lay murdered in their tents by the hands of those very dastards who, though equally bound by honour and humanity to have protected them, preferred this savage alternative to the incumbering their flight with these unhappy victims, or leaving them to the

disposal of their conquerors. This scene of slaughter was rendered still more affecting by numbers of little deserted creatures, whose lives their ferocious fathers had spared; many of whom, too young to be conscious of their forlorn condition, were seeking that nourishment from their inanimate mothers which death had deprived them of the power to afford. More than five hundred of these helpless innocents were collected with great tenderness, and placed under the care of the bishop of Newstadt; who benevolently undertook to see them properly protected, and educated in the Christian faith.

The treasures which had been abandoned by the Ottomans were found to be immense, and were duly apportioned according to the several claims of the victors. All the cannon which Mahomet had transported into the empire with the presumptuous design of her perpetual subjection, was justly decreed to remain with her, as a future protection against similar attempts. So valuable was the share allotted to the king of Poland, that he was induced with his accustomed pleasantries to write to the queen that the grand vizier had left him his residuary legatee; and that on his return to her he was in

no danger of meeting with the reception of a Tartar husband when he carries back no booty to his wife\*.

On the morning subsequent to the battle count Staremborg, the governor of Vienna, went to pay his respects to Sobieski; and to invite him, in the name of the grateful inhabitants, to visit the city which he had rescued from such an extremity of wretchedness.

The king of Poland willingly consented; and surely no triumph was ever more calculated to touch the heart than that which crowned his entrance into the German capital! a triumph gratifying to the pride and ambition of his noble mind, but still more so to all the kindlier feelings of his benevolent heart.

Such was the excess of gratitude which animated the citizens, that they pressed round him with an enthusiasm which long impeded his progress, eager to kiss the feet, touch the garment, and behold the countenance, of him whom they unanimously hailed as their deliverer, their father, the best and greatest of princes.

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\* The Tartar women tell their husbands they are no men, if they return from their military expeditions without spoils.

Sobieski shed tears as he contemplated these genuine effusions of gratitude in creatures whose pale and emaciated faces too plainly demonstrated the extreme of pinching misery from which he had rescued them; and he declared to his friends near him, that neither glory nor dominion was capable of affording him a joy comparable to that which he experienced in the consciousness of having been instrumental in restoring to happiness this late suffering people.

At length the king was permitted to proceed to the metropolitan church, in which he piously offered up thanks to the Omnipotent, who had in the hour of battle strengthened the arms of the Christians and confounded their enemies. After the performance of this sacred duty he consented to indulge the citizens, who were still anxious to be near him, by dining in public. In the evening he returned to the camp, followed by the same rapturous acclamations which had greeted his entrance into Vienna.

The warmth with which the inhabitants of the capital testified their gratitude to the king of Poland seems first to have roused the emperor to a sense of the ignominy attending his

having wholly abandoned to another, those exertions for the preservation of the empire which honour and duty alike called on him to have at least assisted to perform. It would be irrational to expect that a monarch, who had been thus negligent of his own glory, could possess the magnanimity requisite to enable him to meet with due gratitude a rival whose services to Germany rendered still more conspicuous by comparison his own disgrace. Leopold, dissatisfied with himself and disgusted with the crowd of flatterers who had advised and shared his flight, set out on his return to his capital in a state of feelings far from enviable.

As he proceeded, melancholy instances of the havoc and desolation which the enemy had scattered on all sides increased his discomfiture: but when he drew near the city, and heard the discharges of artillery in honour of the king of Poland, his irritation reached its climax; and bitterly reproaching the counsellors of his flight, he refused to proceed, that he might spare himself the humiliation of witnessing in his own capital the triumph of another.

Thus feeling, it is not surprising that he should gladly have seized on the frivolous pre-

text afforded him by some doubts started by his courtiers, as to the proper formalities of his interview with the king of Poland, to postpone that event. The point was discussed with considerable warmth before the duke of Lorraine, who was asked in what manner he thought an emperor ought to receive an *elected king*? "With open arms," replied the generous prince, "if, like Sobieski, he has saved the empire."

Leopold, however, thought otherwise, and refused to abate the smallest article of the prescribed ceremonials, in case the meeting should be required to take place in the imperial palace. The king of Poland, disgusted at the flimsy veil with which the emperor endeavoured to hide his secret jealousy, desired that the interview might pass in the open plain, as a measure which would remove all difficulties.

At the appointed time Sobieski, mounted on a noble charger and accoutred in the armour he had worn at the relief of Vienna, approached the emperor. The air of majesty which always distinguished him was on this occasion heightened by his sense of Leopold's ingratitude; and it is probable the mean attempt of

that monarch to diminish the splendour of his glory in the people's eyes, by refusing him the honours due to an hereditary king, prompted him to bear on his arm that day a shield, on which were represented all the great actions of his life;—thus tacitly contrasting the validity of claims to consideration, which were founded on real merit, with those which rested solely on adventitious circumstances.

The conference was short, and far from satisfactory. Sobieski made light of the recent services he had rendered a prince who acknowledged them with a constraint and reluctance which gave pain to all his real friends, but particularly to the duke of Lorraine. The king of Poland presented his son prince James to the emperor, as a young soldier whom he was educating for the service of Christendom; but he did not condescend to inform him that the prince had been the companion of his own dangerous and rapid march through the hostile countries he had traversed, in his impatience to comply with his imperial majesty's entreaties that he would hasten to save the empire from the Turks.

Sobieski preserved throughout this interview



all his dignity ; and checking one of the palatines who seemed inclined to descend from his, he put a period to a scene disagreeable to all parties by voluntarily retiring\*.

After the departure of the king of Poland, it appears that Leopold repented the coldness with which he had treated one to whom he was so greatly obliged, since on the second day subsequent to the meeting he caused excuses to be conveyed to him, in which he imputed his seemingly ungracious conduct solely to the emotion which on that occasion agitated him. This apology was accompanied by a splendid sword, destined to prince James as a mark of his imperial regard.

The candour of Sobieski disposed him to receive with indulgence this concession of the emperor, while his generosity and keen sense of honour taught him to make due allowance for the very painful situation in which Leopold must have felt himself placed on returning to the capital which he had so ignobly deserted.

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\* "Not being yet familiar with German manners," observes prince Eugene in his Memoirs, "I was much amused at the emperor's haughty interview with the king of Poland."

On carefully considering the talents exhibited by Sobieski in the relief of Vienna—an action which from its extensive importance is the most celebrated of his life—it becomes obvious that that achievement afforded less field for the exertion of his genius, than almost any other of his glorious career, since the great superiority of the enemy's numbers was rendered unavailing by the imbecility and cowardice of their commander. The most striking honour reflected on the king of Poland, as a warrior, on that memorable occasion, was the involuntary homage paid him by the terror which his name alone excited throughout the hosts of the Ottomans—a terror which prepared them to become an easier conquest to an army whose inferiority in numerical strength was compensated by the discipline and order of the soldiers, and the zeal and ability of their officers. It was the great reputation *previously* acquired by the king of Poland, therefore, rather than any call for extraordinary talents in the hour of combat, which principally rendered his assuming the command of the Christians so propitious to their cause; since, while it confounded the invaders, it diffused that confidence of suc-

cess among the allies which usually insures it ; and silenced some very dangerous contentions which had at first arisen among the German princes, each of whom advanced pretensions to the honour of filling the important office of commander in chief.

The king of Poland's acceptance of that post could alone have restored the harmony which these various candidates had disturbed at a moment so critical to the empire ; every prince willingly yielding that palm which they refused to one another, to a hero whose claims to preference no one ventured to dispute.

## CHAPTER XV.

**T**HE oblivion of the past, which had been wrought in the magnanimous breast of Sobieski by the emperor's apology, had by no means extended to his troops. They, on the contrary, still glowed with resentment at the ill requital they had seen their revered sovereign receive for the essential benefits he had conferred on Leopold ; and they unanimously besought him, by returning immediately to Poland, to leave his imperial majesty for the future to his own resources.

Such a measure, however, neither suited the policy, the patriotism, nor the love of glory which animated the heart of Sobieski. The so humbling the Ottoman power as to prevent her from ever again aspiring to render Poland her vassal, was a consummation which could alone fully appease the indignant feelings with which he recollected the degradation to which the republic had been on the point of submitting,

when his victory of Choczim re-established her independence. The immense armament lately sent forth by Mahomet for the destruction of the empire had been broken, routed, and dispersed, but not annihilated; and Sobieski thought that to leave the fragments to re-unite against his deserted allies, was in effect to frustrate his own wishes, and render ineffectual what he had already accomplished against the most dangerous enemy of his country. He resolved, therefore, to remain firm to his engagements.

Yet such was the dissatisfaction created even in the German princes by the haughtiness of the emperor, that it was not till five days subsequent to the relief of Vienna that the necessary arrangements could be made for putting the army in motion to pursue the retreating enemy.

The king of Poland's first step was to lead it across the northern bank of the Danube, for the purpose of wresting Fort Barcan from a body of Turks which had taken post there. It seems probable that the ardour with which he began the onset was not heartily shared by his soldiers, but that they still secretly disrelished

the idea of fighting what they considered the battles of the emperor. However this may be, Sobieski pushed on his cavalry to the attack, with an impetuosity which involved him in an ambuscade of the enemy, at which critical juncture the greater part of the Poles suddenly took to flight. This unexpected desertion would have proved fatal to that great man, but for the bravery and presence of mind of his guards, and the timely succour of the duke of Lorraine.

On the following morning the king of Poland had the satisfaction of retaliating on the foe by the most signal defeat. Fort Barcan was taken by storm, many thousand Turks were put to the sword, and many more perished in attempting to escape across the Danube; while the allies repassing the river invested Gran, a place which had been seventy years in possession of the infidels, and after a short siege compelled the garrison to surrender at discretion.

These successes were rapidly followed by the recovery of those towns which in the first panic of invasion had submitted to the Ottomans; and the small remnant of their late powerful army, thus forcibly expelled from Hungary, fled for refuge to Belgrade.

After delivering up to the duke of Lorraine all these conquests, in trust for the emperor, Sobieski thought himself entitled to mediate with that monarch in behalf of Tekeli, to whom during his early misfortunes he had afforded a shelter in Poland. But Leopold not only refused to listen to his appeal, but treated it as a measure which covered some sinister views of his own. These suspicions filled the king with so much just indignation, that he resolved thenceforth to confine his exertions solely to the Turks, leaving to the forces of the emperor the task of subduing the insurgents. He accordingly took leave of the imperial army, greatly to the satisfaction of his own; the German princes, who were equally dissatisfied with Leopold, at the same time withdrawing their troops, and returning to their several principalities.

This campaign proved no less glorious to Sobieski than it was destructive to Kara Mustapha. The sultap retributed the disgrace and misfortunes in which that commander had involved the army of the Porte, by sending him the fatal *bow-string* \*.

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\* It appears from baron de Pöllnitz, that although Sobieski drove Kara Mustapha from before Vienna, he did not pre-

After quitting the Germans, the king of Poland had a very long march through a country full of difficulties to conduct an army, before he reached the Carpathian mountains, which separate Hungary from Poland ; so that he was

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vent him from ultimately entering that capital ; which happened from the following remarkable circumstances : On the taking of Belgrade by the imperialists some years after that vizier's execution, the Austrian soldiers opened his tomb, fully expecting to discover treasure in it. To their disappointment, however, they found nothing but the corpse enveloped in a garment, on which were inscribed some Arabic characters, and a Koran. The governor remembered that Kara Mustapha, when besieging Raab, had declared that if he took the place he would send the head of its bishop count Leopold de Collonitz to the sultan, as a punishment for his having encouraged the garrison to so vigorous a resistance. That prelate had since become a cardinal ; and it occurred to the governor, that the body of the grand vizier as well as his head could not fail to be a welcome present to him. He accordingly caused Kara Mustapha's remains, with the Koran, to be inclosed in a shrine of crystal ornamented with silver, and forwarded them to his eminence at Vienna, who not regarding them as proper relics for his chapel presented them to the arsenal—" where," says the baron de Pöllnitz, " I both saw and handled the mussulman, and I longed also to pluck a few hairs from his mustachios : but the guardian of this *precious treasure* watched my hands too closely."



unavoidably exposed to all the severities of winter on those inclement heights.

It was not till the latter end of December that he arrived on the territories of the republic, near the frontiers of which he found the grand general of the Lithuanians and his army, which had been assembled in July for the relief of Vienna. Paz, with his incorrigible contumacy, had contrived to raise so many impediments to its being put in a condition to follow the king, that it had only begun its march when the Poles, after having gloriously attained the object of the campaign, were actually returned crowned with victory to their country.

This was the last proof of enmity which that turbulent general had ever an opportunity of giving the king of Poland. He died very soon after; though, it is probable, not before he had repented that his spirit of disobedience had deprived him of participating in the honour, as well as riches, which the Poles shared after their defeat of the grand vizier.

Sobieski, no doubt, well remembered the mean attempts of Louis XIV., through the intrigues of his ambassador, to prevent him from succouring the empire, when, after having ex-

pelled the Turks from Christendom, he wrote a letter of congratulation to that monarch, on an event which he remarked must be peculiarly gratifying to his majesty, "as the eldest son of the Church." At the same time he complimented Innocent by sending him the standard (supposed to be that of Mahomet) which had been found near Kara Mustapha's pavilion,—a trophy which his holiness deposited with great satisfaction in the chapel of Loretto.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE king of Poland, after sending his army into winter quarters, repaired to Cracow, where the queen and his children were awaiting his return.

The lively interest her majesty took in his successes was peculiarly gratifying to Sobieski, the stability of whose affection had survived the many proofs she had given him of her selfishness, spirit of intrigue, and duplicity. Still retaining much of her early beauty \*, and all that fascination of manner which had first won his partiality, she continued to preserve her empire over a heart whose candour and love of domes-

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\* The queen of Poland was in her thirty-third year when Dr. South was introduced to her, notwithstanding which (he says) she scarcely appeared more than twenty. Dr. Connor affirms, that although her majesty was fifty-four when he attended Sobieski in quality of physician, a short time before that prince's death, he should not have supposed her to have been above forty.

tic peace rendered him but too easy a dupe to her artifice.

The queen had borne him four children, the princes James, Alexander, and Constantine, and the princess Theresa, to all of whom Sobieski was tenderly attached. Already beginning to feel with severity the injury his constitution had sustained by a life of anxiety, danger, and privation, he enjoyed with peculiar pleasure a short interval of repose, after his late toilsome march, in the bosom of his family.

It was during this pause from labour that the king received the congratulations of all the Christian potentates on his late splendid successes, while the ambassadors from Muscovy and Venice were charged by their respective governments to solicit the alliance of a prince, with whose reputation they were desirous of associating themselves by joining the Christian League.

Poland had never before seen either of her monarchs so generally honoured by other nations; and such was the ardour roused in many of the young noblesse of France by Sobieski's fame, that several of them eloped from the court of Louis XIV. to seek glory under his

banners ; displeasing as they must have known such a proceeding could not fail to prove to their own sovereign. Among these enthusiastic young men of rank was the marquis de Souvré, second son of the minister Louvois.

Meanwhile the several orders of the state in Poland, participating in the general exultation, were earnest that the king should immediately undertake the exploit which they had with so much pertinacity not long before withheld from him the means of accomplishing, the recovery of Kaminiéck.

At that time it had been an object of easy attainment: at the present epoch it was far otherwise ; since such had been the alarm excited at Constantinople by the late disasters of the Porte, that all means had been taken to secure from all attacks of the Poles, a citadel which was now considered by the Ottomans as a barrier necessary to protect them against the victorious Sobieski, so greatly were they humbled since they had seized on it with the design to subjugate Poland. Kaminiéck had consequently been placed in the best state of defence, and was garrisoned with ten thousand chosen troops.

The king, who had replaced the late grand general of Lithuania by the eldest brother of the four Sapias, and put his army in a condition to take the field, resolved on opening the campaign of 1684 by the recovery of Jaslowicz, the second fortress in point of importance in Podolia.

Yielding to the wishes of the queen, who had been complimented on the glory of his majesty till she had persuaded herself she had caught a portion of his own heroic spirit, he consented that she should accompany him, with the whole court, into Podolia, and witness the bombardment of Jaslowicz. It appears, however, that the specimen of war afforded her by the carrying that fortress sufficed her majesty for that time; as on the surrender of the place she took leave of the army and repaired to Leopold, where she resolved on waiting the return of the king.

Sobieski found as he proceeded that the whole of Podolia, that once fertile province, had become under the iron reign of the Turks a gloomy desert. Every town and village had been either burnt or razed to the ground, and the late happy inhabitants had been transported into uncultivated regions beyond the Danube:

—mournful proofs of the fatal consequences which had attended the loss of Kamienieck!

Fully apprized of the strength which had now been given to that citadel, and anxious if possible to spare the effusion of Polish blood, which must attend its recovery by force, Sobieski determined on throwing a bridge across the Niester, and by entering Moldavia to cut off the supplies of the garrison, till he starved it into surrendering.

Scarcely had he begun the construction of a bridge, however, when this plan was defeated by the sudden appearance on the other side of the river, of immense swarms of Turks and Tartars, under the command of the bashaw Soliman. This crafty commander, who well knew his point of strength, shunned with address every effort of the Poles to bring him to action, while through the medium of his Tartars he annoyed them incessantly. Inured to every species of danger, and early exercised in the most daring feats of horsemanship, those desultory warriors perpetually swam their horses across the Niester; sometimes to destroy the foraging parties of the king, sometimes to pillage his camp,—but taking to flight and recrossing the

river, on perceiving any danger of their being forced into a regular engagement.

Sobieski, sensible that to recover Kamienieck before he had first compelled Soliman to give him battle was impracticable, employed himself in erecting a fortress opposite to that citadel on the river Smotrick, which river, after nearly encompassing the base of Kamienieck, pours its waters into the Niester. The utility of this fortress was to enable the Poles for the future to dispute the passage of all succour sent to the garrison. This proceeding, as the king was prepared to find, excited the jealousy of Soliman, and at length drew him across the Niester; but on the approach of Sobieski he retired with precipitation under the cannon of Kamienieck, leaving the Poles from that time to the uninterrupted completion of their work.

In six weeks it was accomplished, named by the king Fort Trinity, and so effectually defended and garrisoned, as to be rendered during the remainder of the time Kamienieck continued with the Turks, the means of extreme annoyance to that citadel.

In order to avoid still further diminishing the



strength of his army, Sobieski fell back with it on Leopold, before the soldiers had begun to suffer seriously from the approach of winter in the uncultivated province of Podolia. Declining to visit his capital that year, he continued with his troops on the frontiers for the purpose of guarding Poland the more effectually from the inroads of the Tartars, well satisfied to secure the repose of his subjects at the expense of his own.

During this period of comparative inaction, the king of Poland formed a new plan for opening the campaign of 1685, the ultimate object of which was the recovery of Kamienieck; but a violent and dangerous illness which seized him as he was on the point of putting his army in motion, compelled him to intrust its command to the crown general Jablonowski. The principal design of the campaign was not obtained, for the Turks at its termination still remained masters of Kamienieck.

While suffering from a debility which for some time hung heavily on the king after his recovery, he sought amusement in exercising his taste for the fine arts, by building an Italian palace on a beautiful site bordering the

banks of the Vistula, which he afterwards took pleasure in decorating with classic elegance; and with a view at the same time to inure himself by degrees to bear once more the fatigue of arms, he daily exercised himself in hunting. But nothing could restore to the king of Poland that vigour of constitution which had formerly seemed to render him invincible. He had now seen pass over him fifty-six years, a considerable portion of which had been spent in the severest toil; and he had of late been often subject to great sufferings from the consequences of a wound he had received in his head in a battle, so early as the second revolt of the Cossacks, during the first epoch of the reign of Casimir.

But these considerations had not power to dispose him to swerve from the promise he had solemnly pledged to the League, that he would never make a separate peace with the Ottomans; though Mahomet at this period endeavoured to tempt him to it by the alluring bait of offering to restore Kaminieck to the republic, and to pay her besides a considerable sum of money as a reimbursement for the share of her expenses in the war.

No doubt could exist but that this offer was highly advantageous to Poland, admitting that the republic, in spite of her solemn pledge to the contrary, should not scruple to abandon those powers by whose co-operation she was indebted for now finding herself placed in so high a station as to see the once dreaded Ottoman power sue for peace at her hands.

Sobieski spurned the idea of granting it separately, as base and dishonourable. He knew that, however feebly the war might be carried on by the Poles, they must of necessity create a considerable diversion in favour of the duke of Lorraine, who had recently defeated the new grand vizier Ibrahim before Strigonia, and taken Newhasel by storm.

The several orders of the republic of Poland did not accord with the king in his opinion of the propriety of rejecting the offers of Mahomet. They were too anxious to secure a peace at any rate, which would once more see them masters of Kamienieck, to enter into Sobieski's views of the subject;—forgetful that he, who by his single genius had broken the treaty of Boudchaz and restored Poland to her independence—whose thoughts had been since inces-

santly bent upon fixing her freedom on a durable basis—whose line of policy (in spite of the jealousy which had often fettered his actions, and the treachery which had crept into his councils,) had at length surmounted every obstacle to the great end he had in view—was best entitled, as well as qualified, to decide on a question not less important to himself than to Poland.

Notwithstanding the disapprobation of the republic, the reiterated intrigues of France, and the repeated overtures of the Porte, the king persevered in refusing to acquiesce in a separate peace; and continued during the next five years to keep up a constant diversion in favour of the common cause, sometimes in Moldavia and Walachia, sometimes in Podolia; thus compelling the Ottomans to maintain a large army to prevent his permanent occupation of those places.

During this period, the internal discontents generated at Constantinople by a long series of misfortunes, arose to such a height as to occasion the deposition of Mahomet IV. and the elevation of his brother Soliman to the throne. This revolution, however, produced no change

in the policy of the League, though the new sultan repeatedly and earnestly sued for peace.

Although these campaigns on the part of Poland ultimately tended to secure a glorious peace for herself as well as Christendom, they could not add to the high reputation which had already been established by the king of Poland.

## CHAPTER XVII.

**T**HE intervals designed for rest between these labours were unhappily not seasons of repose to Sobieski, whose declining years were too generally imbittered by the turbulence of the diets and the mischievous cabals of the queen.

The year 1689 had been rendered peculiarly gloomy to him by a disaster which no human prudence could oppose, no foresight avert. The winds of Asia suddenly brought with them clouds of locusts, which landing in Poland consumed in their destructive march the corn, the grass, the fruits, the leaves and even the bark of trees, with a voracity which threatened an universal famine. The accomplishment of this last dreadful calamity was, however, providentially averted by the timely setting in of the frost, which destroyed these desolating insects, leaving their remains to repay the soil in manure for the plunder of its produce.

After the year 1691 the king of Poland never resumed the command of the army; his in-

creasing infirmities totally incapacitating him for performing the arduous duties attached to it. Sensible as he was of the advantages attending an experienced veteran, like himself, uniting the kingly authority with that of general in chief, it must have cost him much to resign to another the post which he had so long filled with glory to himself and advantage to Poland. But wholly unable to bear the fatigue of remaining long on horseback, even in some faint attempts he made to follow the chase he was soon compelled to get into a carriage, where, he said, he felt himself less a man than usual.

At such a period to have seen harmony reign in his family, if not among the different orders of the states, would have afforded some alleviation to the sufferings of Sobieski: but it was not his fortune to see it reign in either.

Such was the queen's unhappy propensity to disturb his quiet, that she contrived to implant a rooted animosity between the two eldest princes, by inspiring in Alexander the hopes of succeeding the king on the throne of Poland, and kindling the fiercest jealousy in the bosom of James, by encouraging him in the suspicion that his father wished to advance the interest

of his brother with the Poles to his future prejudices.

When all the services which Sobieski had rendered the republic, and the extraordinary care with which he educated his sons, are considered, it appears far from improbable that he might have indulged the secret hope that Poland would one day testify her gratitude to his memory, by rendering the crown hereditary in his family; while his experience of the disorders inseparable from her present random mode of disposing of it, must have convinced him that it would be a measure as beneficial to herself as honourable to his house.

Admitting that such thoughts had actually occupied the king of Poland, nothing could be more absurd than the supposition that he meditated the setting up a younger son to the prejudice of his first-born, who was not only an accomplished prince, but had displayed during the German campaign, as well as the Polish ones which had succeeded it, a spirit of gallantry, which, while it ingratiated him with the army, was regarded by his father as a happy presage of future distinction. Such a scheme must have obviously tended to the exclusion of



both princes, by dividing the Sobieski interest with the republic. But the fact was, the queen, who never failed to involve her own mischievous designs in a maze of art, took this absurd method to cover some intrigue (she was) carrying on with a view to pave the way for raising her favourite Alexander to the royal dignity on the demise of the king; thus weakly acting the part which the most implacable enemy of her children might have chosen, as the best adapted to bar every one of them from the throne.

The king of Poland's heart was pierced at witnessing the growing spirit of contention which was perpetually blazing forth between these rival brothers, anticipating from it the certain ruin of his family. Yet neither these domestic afflictions nor his increasing illness prevented him from continuing to fill the throne in the senate, though he was seldom able to remain there till the rising of that assembly.

To complete the measure of his trials, neither gratitude for his past services nor sympathy for his present sufferings procured him, from that turbulent body, the respect and consideration which they had presumed to deny him, even in his brighter days. The milder virtues

of his character were never more conspicuous than on some of these occasions, when the decaying hero bore the injurious language of intemperance with a patience, and replied with a magnanimity, which proved that, if his corporeal energies were gone, he still preserved all his mental dignity.

Soon after the king of Poland had retired from the command of the army, the emperor proposed to him a match for prince James, to which he listened with considerable satisfaction. The lady named by Leopold was the daughter of the elector palatine, by a union with which princess the house of Sobieski would become allied to all the crowns in Europe\*.

A marriage so much calculated to fix Poland more firmly than ever in the interests of the Christian League was highly displeasing to Louis XIV.; and the marquis de Bethune, who under the pretence of visiting the queen in quality of her brother-in-law was then at Warsaw, put in practice numberless devices to break off the treaty.

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\* The princess Hedwige—four of whose sisters had been severally given in marriage to the emperor, the king of Spain, the king of Portugal, and the duke of Parma.

Although they ultimately proved ineffectual, his interference roused so much resentment at the court of Vienna, that a clause was introduced into the marriage articles stipulating that the marquis should immediately quit Poland.

Every difficulty having been at length removed, the princess, habited in the Hungarian dress, was escorted as far as Olenisc by her brother prince Charles of Newburgh; where, after assuming the Polish costume, she was presented to prince James, who was at the same time invested with the order of the golden fleece. The nuptial procession then set out for Warsaw, at some distance from which city it was met by the cardinal primate and the several great officers of the crown.

The satisfaction which had thus far reigned over the bridal ceremonies was interrupted by a little incident which, by touching a very discordant string in the breast of prince James, disturbed the harmony of his feelings. The grand marshal, either from inattention to prescribed formalities, or from a desire of doing honour to the bridegroom on this occasion, on first joining and preceding the prince bore his staff erect: but being called to order by the

primate, and reminded that such an honour was due only to the king, he lowered the ensign of his office. This circumstance, which probably recalled to prince James a sarcasm which had fallen from the marquis de Bethune, in allusion to his not possessing those personal advantages which distinguished his brothers, gave him infinite pain.—“ He carries a bill of exclusion from the throne in his face,” observed that nobleman in so unguarded a manner that the saying soon became public, and was pretty generally echoed\*.

The incident of lowering the marshal's staff, joined to the continuance of the marquis in Poland in spite of the express stipulation to the contrary, threw an air of gloom and discontent over the wedding festivities ; while de Bethune busily employed himself in addressing memorials to the principal members of the republic,

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\* Dr. Connor, who was well acquainted with prince James, thus describes him : “ This prince is black, has a thin and meagre look, and is more like a Frenchman or a Spaniard than a Pole. He is very sociable, courteous and liberal.” Of Alexander the doctor remarks : “ He is a tall proper young man, of a true Polish complexion.” Constantine is said to have been an exact likeness of the king his father.

calculated to draw their interest from the League, and to disgust them with the marriage of prince James.

These proceedings were at length carried to such extremes, that a challenge was given and accepted between the marquis and the count de Thun, the Austrian ambassador; nor could any thing short of the personal interference of the king of Poland prevent these exasperated noblemen from measuring swords.

Louis XIV. soon after spared the marquis the mortification of being compelled to quit Poland, by appointing him his ambassador at the court of Sweden, in which country he not many months after died.

The nuptials of prince James were followed by proposals to the king of Poland, from the elector of Bavaria, for his only daughter the princess Theresa in marriage; which meeting his approbation, the union soon after took place\*.

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\* Dr. Connor thus describes this princess, and details the particulars attending her marriage with the elector of Bavaria: "She is now about twenty-three, and though not a complete beauty, yet is a very comely lady, of a middle size; and though she has not the life and vivacity nor the

This event afforded Sobieski the last gleam of pleasure which broke through the increasing gloom of his departing life.

air and wit of the queen her mother, yet has she a great deal of sense, modesty, and all the accomplishments becoming her birth. She is well versed in the French, Italian, Latin and Polish languages. Though she seems in her carriage and discourse to be humble, obliging, and of an easy affable temper, yet she is herself high-spirited and imperious. She was married in my time to his highness the present elector of Bavaria; who twice sent thither baron Zell, and afterwards baron Simeoni his envoy extraordinary, to negotiate and conclude the marriage: for the duke of Bavaria having had but one son by his deceased duchess, the emperor's daughter by the infanta of Spain, younger sister to the late queen of France; and this young prince being designed to be king of Spain; if the present king should die without issue, as is likely to be, the Bavarians were afraid their country should be reduced into a province, and therefore desired the elector to marry a second time, to have more children that might reign over them in case the eldest son should be called to Spain. The king and queen of Poland agreed to the match, and gave 500,000 rix-dollars for her portion, besides jewels and other expenses in her journey, and the third part of her mother's personal estate when she dies, which is reckoned 500,000 more. The marriage ceremony was performed in the month of August at Warsaw, in the year 1694, with great splendour and magnificence. Most persons of quality, and their ladies and children, came to this solemnity from all parts of the kingdom; for there

A temporary calm which had followed the departure of the marquis de Bethune was not of long duration. The pernicious effects

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had not been a princess of Poland married for 150 years before. The ladies were very richly dressed, and I saw at that time more jewels in that court than in any other that ever I was at. The gentlemen and ladies, after the usual custom of Poland, gave presents to the young princess; some fine pieces of plate, some watches set with diamonds, some precious jewels, every one making to her a compliment in a very formal manner. It was thought the presents amounted to the value of 100,000 rix-dollars. The hospodar of Moldavia sent her a pair of pendants of great value. Upon the day of marriage, prince James took upon him, by the king and the elector of Bavaria's consent, the quality of ambassador for that day. He went three miles out of town in the morning, and about two o'clock in the afternoon made a solemn entry on horseback, having his brothers prince Alexander on his right hand and prince Constantine on his left, preceded by a great number of coaches with six horses, and a noble cavalcade of the Polish gentry, who went two and two. Thus he marched through the city, where he was received by the king and queen; and after half an hour the great officers of the crown, the palatines and other senators, with an incredible number of gentry, began to march from the palace on foot two and two, upon scarlet cloth spread along, to St. John's church. After them prince James led the bride; the French ambassador, monsieur de Polignac, led the queen; and the king came last alone with a grave majestic countenance. The ceremony of the marriage was performed

of his intrigues with the Polish nobles were still felt in their murmurs and complaints; while the marriage of prince James, by which

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by cardinal Radziowski, the present primate. Afterwards they returned to the palace, where they were nobly entertained four days together with feasts, balls, fire-works, and an Italian opera made upon this occasion by the secretary of the pope's nuncio. After the ceremony was over, a splendid equipage was prepared for the princess's journey from Warsaw to Brussels. The bishop of Ploskow was named ambassador, and the lady of the palatine of Wilna was appointed ambassadress: M. Zaluski, the bishop's brother, and his lady were also named, besides abundance of gentlemen and forty of the king's life-guards, to attend her electoral highness. The ambassador represented to their majesties, that in such a long journey of near 1000 miles and frosty weather, it was necessary to send a physician with the princess for fear of any accident or distemper; and they did me the honour to name me physician to wait upon the princess in her journey, which I was very ready to comply with."—The retinue of the new electress, the doctor informs us, consisted of 200 persons, and she was every where received by the palatines of the provinces through which she passed with great respect and splendour. In that of Posnania she remained two days, and received from the city and its chiefs handsome presents and gay entertainments. In the electorate of Brandenburg officers came forth to compliment her and conduct her to Berlin, within two miles of which the elector and electress, splendidly attended, waited for her in their coach, and conveyed her to the capital



the king had hoped his family would have been rendered less unhappy, in reality introduced into it new sorrows and disquiet.

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amidst the roar of cannon, ringing of bells, &c. At night fire-works were exhibited which displayed the names of the king and queen of Poland. On the princess's arrival at Wesel on the Rhine she was met by the elector of Bavaria. "I happened to be in the room (continues the doctor) when he came in alone by way of the back stairs and saluted the princess with all the tender expressions of joy and affection; and after having spent half an hour with her in compliments, he turned to the ambassador and to the rest, and thanked us all for the trouble and fatigue of so long a journey. The next morning there was a rich Hungarian suit of clothes, given from the king of Poland, to wear that day; it was a long coat of crimson velvet, the button-holes set with clasps of massy gold, and a waistcoat of cloth of gold set with diamond buttons, and a girdle of fine Turkey leather wrought with gold, with massy gold clasps likewise set with jewels, a scimitar with the handle richly adorned with diamonds and rubies, and an emerald ring of great value, with a rich Zibelin muff. In the afternoon we all passed the river, and the next day the baggage followed. All the coaches and the king's guards and most of the retinue returned back to Poland; for by the articles of marriage nobody was to stay with the princess except two pages, two women, and a female dwarf. The elector's guards and coaches were on the other side the river to receive her. We arrived at Brussels (the elector was then governor of the Low Countries) the 12th of January."—The doctor adds, "I never saw a gen-

The princess of Poland, who possessed a due share of spirit, could not brook certain airs of haughtiness on the part of the queen towards her, and the prince warmly espoused the cause of his bride ; so that scenes of altercation were perpetually occurring, which soon established an inveterate dislike between the parties.

In this posture of affairs an act of usurpation in the grand general of Lithuania, and of intemperate zeal on that of the bishop of Wilna, pushed to the utmost point the accumulated distresses of the king. Sapięha assumed the right of quartering his army on the privileged lands of the nobles and clergy ; an act which highly exasperated the latter, particularly the bishop of Wilna ; who declining to seek redress of the diet, after thrice admonishing the delinquent without effect, pronounced sentence of excommunication against him *and his adherents*—" separating them from the society of

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teeler court, better order, more formalities, more variety of dresses, nor the punctilios of honour and courtesy more strictly observed. There were great rejoicings all the first week until the court received the unwelcome news of the death of our queen Mary."

Christians, and delivering them up to the power of Satan and eternal fire."

This sweeping anathema, which comprehended within its scope all the officers of the Lithuanian army and every one acting under their orders, not only occasioned an universal feeling of indignation throughout the duchy, but excited the warmest resentment in the generals of Poland, who all espoused the cause of Sapieha against the bishop, as that of an injured brother.

The king, who had at first expressed strong displeasure at the lawless proceeding of the grand general of Lithuania, and had summoned him to answer for his conduct to the republic, soon found it necessary to turn his attention equally towards the exasperated bishop, to whom he addressed a mild but earnest exposition, pointing out to him the destruction he was drawing on his country by inflaming the passions of her children, and instigating them to turn against each other those energies which ought to be united to oppose her external enemies. He reminded the prelaté that a love of peace, and a disposition to forgive injuries, were not only the highest glory of the sacred

profession he filled, but that they were duties particularly enjoined by that sublime pattern of excellence, whose divine doctrine it became him to inculcate by example as well as precept.

These arguments, however, were so far from influencing the bishop of Wilna, that he carried his spirit of vengeance still further, by extending his sentence of excommunication to all secular clergy throughout the kingdom, who should refuse to publish his original anathema (20).

The primate of Poland, equally with the king deprecating this intemperance, as a remedy for the growing evils took on himself the privilege of annulling that prelate's sentence of excommunication; while on the other hand Santa Croce, the pope's legate in Poland, under pretence that his holiness was alone competent to decide a case of so much intricacy, annulled in his turn the sentence of the primate.

Such became the distracted state of Poland when the strong arm and powerful mind of Sobieski, yielding to the irrevocable laws of nature, was daily sinking beneath the accumulated afflictions of bodily and mental sufferings.

Those who were not absolutely dead to every sense of gratitude and feeling were affected to see the dying king making zealous though fruitless efforts to restore unanimity among his subjects—to hear him remind them of all he had done for Poland—of his labours and his victories—of the flattering prospect which his line of policy and the successes of their allies presented them, that an early and an honourable peace would reward the temporary sacrifices they had made for its attainment—and pathetically exhort them not to allow the great object of his life, that of teaching the Ottoman power thoroughly to respect their independence, to be frustrated by civil broils, which must disunite the republic and prepare her to become an easy prey to some external enemy.

As the only means left to allay the tempest which threatened speedy ruin to Poland, the case of the grand general of Lithuania and the bishop of Wilna was at length submitted to the pope.

That potentate, desirous above all things to prevent these unhappy disagreements from becoming seriously injurious to the cause of the allies, took a middle course between the enraged

parties, by suspending the sentence of excommunication for the space of one year, without absolutely annulling it.

This expedient stopped the progress of the evils, but could not remedy them. Though the Tartars, after this decision of the sovereign pontiff, were no longer allowed to make incursions into Poland with impunity by the armies of the republic, (who had been some time before too warily engaged in taking part with the several disputants to attend to the duties of their professions,) the same heart-burnings and animosities existed between the partisans of Sapieha and of the bishop; the same turbulence and spirit of contradiction prevailed in the senate and diets.

The king, in the few intervals of ease he now experienced, saw around him nothing but a variety of ills—his kingdom distracted by factions—his family divided—his two eldest sons busy in forming separate parties; each in hope of securing for himself the crown, which his illustrious father, after having worn it with so much honour, was on the point of resigning without regret—the queen madly using every endeavour to increase the interest of her

younger son to the prejudice of her eldest.—  
In this hopeless state of affairs, Sobieski too certainly perceived the approaching destruction of the republic, and the overthrow of his house.

Amidst these severe trials his wounded spirit, next to the consolations of religion, sought to lose its too keen sense of his misfortunes in the conversation of men of letters\*. Sometimes when too ill to take a part in their discourse he

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\* Dr. Connor mentions that the king one day drew him in to take a part in one of these conversations. Father Vota, a learned and ingenious jesuit, (a great favourite of Sobieski,) and the bishops of Posnania, Ploscow, and Wilna, bore principal parts in it.

His majesty, addressing Dr. Connor, requested that he would inform him in what part of the mortal frame he supposed the soul to reside?

The doctor, desirous of evading the question, replied, that his profession had led him to confine his inquiries chiefly to the body; leaving to divines the study of the soul.

Sobieski rejoined, that since the passions of the mind often distemper the human frame, he conceived that the soul as well as the body formed an essential branch of the physician's study.

Thus challenged, the doctor declared it to be his opinion that the soul was seated in the brain; an opinion which was warmly combated as heretical by father Vota, who contended that the immortal spirit pervaded every part of man.

would listen to them with a depth of attention and evident satisfaction, which showed that the early taste he had imbibed for literature and science, a taste which he had cultivated even in the midst of war and tumult, had survived in his breast every other earthly pleasure.

The companions who best appreciated the mind of the king, and who unremittingly de-

His majesty remained an attentive auditor of the debate, which, from the bishops taking different sides in it, lasted several hours. At length, in consequence of Dr. Connor's comparing the soul to a pilot, who cannot guide the vessel till the wind has first put it in motion ; and maintaining that neither could the soul controul the body till the breath of life had first given it action—the king broke silence to ask him, what then he considered to be properly death ?

Dr. Connor replied, that he conceived death to be occasioned by some defect of the organs ; which losing their due disposition and mutual correspondence, all action ceased ; when the soul, finding them incapable of receiving its influence and obeying its commands, quitted the body. According to his ideas, therefore, the separation of the soul from the body was not properly the *cause* of death ; but the death of the body was the cause of the soul separating from it.

The king, without either dissenting from his opinion or agreeing to it, gave the doctor a flattering proof that he had seized the point of his argument by thus illustrating it—“as an organist, when his instrument is broken or out of tune, ceases to play on it.”



voted themselves to soothe his last hours, were the abbé de Polignac (Louis the Fourteenth's new ambassador) and father Vota; with the former of whom his majesty sometimes recalled with interest the events of his early residence in France, and the reflections to which his observations on the Gallic character had then given birth. He said the gallantry, politeness, and gaiety of the *noblesse* had excited his warm admiration; yet their versatility, and toleration of vice, provided that vice bore no stamp of the ridiculous, had struck him as highly censurable. Glowing too with all the fervour of enthusiastic patriotism himself, he confessed that he had remarked with pain, in the French, a want of that deep interest in the fortunes of their country, which allowed them to laugh and trifle while France was torn with civil broils;—thus proving how deeply rooted, even at that early period, were the principles of virtue and patriotism, which had been with so much care implanted in his heart by his father, and cherished by his noble mother.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

**G**RADUALLY but visibly sinking under a complication of bodily and mental sufferings, the king of Poland lingered till the spring of 1696, when he caused himself to be conveyed to his palace of Villanow, in the hope that the fine air of those gardens would enable him to respire with less difficulty.

It was here that the queen prevailed on the bishop of Ploskow to undertake the delicate commission of disposing his majesty to make his will; a measure to which he was utterly averse, from the conviction that to satisfy his family was impossible, and that the republic would insult his memory by disputing his testamentary dispositions.

The prelate, therefore, conceiving that too much precaution could not be used in entering on so ungrateful a subject, took a very wide circuit before he ventured to draw near the point he had in view, which he at length approached

by informing the king that he was about to set out for his diocese, for the purpose of issuing orders that public prayers might be put up for his majesty's recovery.

"The prayers would be more gratifying to me, were they offered up without orders," replied Sobieski. "Be advised, therefore, and remain where you are a little longer: you will have sufficient leisure to grow weary of your retreat at Plockow."

"Weary I can never be, sire," answered the bishop, "since, when I have discharged my pastoral duties, I find inexhaustible pleasure in conversing with St. Ambrose, St. Chrysostom, Isocrates, and Plato. Yet reflecting lately," pursued the prelate, now winding round to his point, "that all these great men are dead, I bethought myself of making my own will."

"Your will!" echoed the king, smiling, and repeating from Juvenal, '*O medici, mediam pertundite venam*,'—"he fancies the living cannot settle their affairs without the consent of the dead."

Though this unexpected sally somewhat disconcerted the bishop, he resolved on prosecuting his design, and proceeded to urge his

majesty to follow his example in regulating his temporal affairs by testament, insisting on its importance to the interest of his family and the tranquillity of the republic.

This expostulation restored all the gravity of Sobieski, and he sorrowfully called on him to point out what evils he could possibly avert by such a measure. "Do you not perceive," pursued the king, "that integrity is banished Poland—that a spirit of madness has seized the nation—and can I flatter myself that my last will can restore her to sanity? Sovereigns must be weak indeed, who, having experienced the misery of seeing themselves disobeyed while living, can hope their will should be respected after death. Of what avail have been the testamentary regulations of the kings my predecessors? Yet you would persuade me to make a will! Let me hear no more of it."

This was spoken in a tone of decision which prevented any one from presuming to renew the subject.

On the 17th of June the king appeared somewhat renovated, and after walking in the gardens of Villanow he was able to take his place at table with his family. But this ap-

parent amendment was of short duration : not long after dinner he fell suddenly from his chair in a fit of apoplexy, and remained some time inanimate. The means used for his majesty's recovery restored him for a short time to consciousness ; when looking round him with an expression of regret at finding himself roused from the sleep of death, he exclaimed in his favourite language "*Sta bene.*"

The short time that Sobieski survived the recovery of his senses he spent in recommending unanimity to his children ; in supplicating the queen to have no interest in view but theirs, if she would preserve the crown in her family ; and in exhorting the senators who were present to preserve mutual concord for the love of the republic, whose welfare he declared would be the object of his wishes, even in the presence of the great Source of all power before whom he should so soon appear.

These last and fervent proofs of his affection to his family and to Poland closed the life of Sobieski ; he expired the same evening in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and the twenty-second of his reign.

Born in a private station, it was to his virtues

and his talents that he owed his elevation to the royal dignity—a dangerous elevation, which, as he early predicted, must, from the constitutional jealousy of the republic, convert those who as equals had been his friends, into enemies when inferiors.

The Poles accused Sobieski, as a king, of avarice, because, knowing the true value of wealth, he never lavished it on the worthless; but after as well as before he ascended the throne, he unsparingly employed the fruits of his wise œconomy in administering to the wants of his country. Often as he was undeservedly insulted by his turbulent subjects, not a single act could be adduced by them to prove that he ever exercised the supreme authority to punish his personal injuries. His forbearance towards Paz in instances of the most trying arrogance, and his declining to avail himself of the disposition of the diet to punish the audacity of that general by depriving him of his military power, are proofs of magnanimity to be equalled in rareness, only by that steady kindness to his friends which was never diminished by the knowledge that he no longer wanted their services. The warmth of Sobieski's feelings made

him prompt to take fire ; yet the candour of his generous nature rendered him equally ready to soothe the pain which his impetuosity sometimes inflicted. His religious zeal was fervent, yet so truly tempered by the mild spirit of Christianity, that, during that epoch of Roman catholic intolerance, no one who lived under the protection of his government was ever persecuted on account of his peculiar tenets.—“Sobieski possessed a fine figure ; he was tall and graceful ; the nobility and elevation of his soul were depicted in his countenance, his features, and his air.”

In the diet and the camp the power of his eloquence was equally felt and acknowledged. It triumphed in annulling the treaty of Boudchaz, and in engaging Paz in the battle of Choczim. At the head of armies his happy confidence and intrepidity animated and supported his troops ; while the quickness of his glance taught him to seize and profit by the least advantage given him by the enemy ; qualities which enabled him to accomplish with equal glory to himself and to his country the daring enterprises in which he engaged her. He told the diet during his last illness, that “being but

man he was liable to err:" and certainly his weak indulgence towards the queen was an error of no inconsiderable magnitude. From this sprang most of the misfortunes which clouded his last years; and the ill use she made of it gave birth to his melancholy presentiment of the ruin of his house. In contemplating a character like that of Sobieski, it is impossible not to regard as one of his prominent misfortunes, that of not living to witness the dearest object of his patriotic exertions consummated in the glorious peace of Carlowitz\*.

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\* In 1699 plenipotentiaries were assembled at Carlowitz from all the allied powers, and a general peace under the mediations of England and Holland was concluded, which restored Kamienieck with the provinces of Podolia and the sovereignty of the Cossacks to Poland. These sacrifices, which the Porte was compelled to make on this occasion to the several Christian states, cost her nearly half her European possessions; from which diminution of strength, she, who had at the beginning of the war threatened universal subjugation, ceased to be formidable to Christendom. It is obvious that a premature peace on the part of Poland must have given a less favourable issue to the war; since the considerable diversions she occasioned throughout the contest contributed greatly to aid the accomplishment of the object which Sobieski had steadily kept in view,—that of effectually humbling the Ottoman arrogance and contracting her power.



No sooner was the slight check removed, which some remains of involuntary respect for the talents and services of the departed hero had imposed on the queen and on Poland, than all discretion and propriety were set at defiance by both. The natural result of these proceedings was the exclusion of all his sons from the throne, to make way for a Saxon prince whose profligacy had rendered his youth notorious.

"The great number of Poles," writes a *modern Pole*\*, "who *sold* to Frederic Augustus the sceptre of Sobieski, opened their hearts with avidity to the baits of corruption, as during the election they debased their souls and seared their consciences with the venality of slaves. As soon as the new king was placed on the throne, still surrounded with the laurels and trophies of the heroic deliverer of Vienna, vain pomp and a depravation of manners entered with him under the roofs of the Piasts and the Jagellons. Nothing was seen at the court of Frederic Augustus but the effrontery of mistresses, a scandalous prodigality, and, what was

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\* In his letter to Pinkerton, published in that author's *Travels in France*.

still more shameful, brutal excesses of wine. In a short time the Polish grandees who surrounded this luxurious sovereign became like the companions of Ulysses during their residence in the island of Calypso, and fatally forgot that they had once been the comrades of the Sarmatian Achilles.—John Sobieski, the best informed, the most eloquent and the most valiant among the Poles of his time, closes the seventeenth century, and the glory of his country, as well with regard to literature as to military spirit.”

# APPENDIX.

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## REMARKS ON POLAND.

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*Note (1), Page 1.*

**STAROSTY.**—A government, the lands attached to which were originally part of the royal demesnes, but granted to certain nobles for the purpose of enabling them to defray the expenses of military expeditions, the king appointing to all vacancies. No individual could possess more than two considerable starosties.

*Note (2), Page 2.*

*Marshal of the diet.*—The duties of this officer were in several respects similar to that of the speaker of our house of commons; and it was not till the moment of his entering on his functions that the diet received its power to act. A marshal was chosen on the convoking of every new diet, and the extensive rights and privileges with which he was invested rendered the contest for this office one of singular violence. It was of the utmost consequence to the court and senate secretly to secure the appointment of one who was a friend to peace, the public, and the crown, for the support of whose interests eloquence and policy were absolutely necessary.

*Note (3) Page 2.*

*Castellan of Cracow.*—This office, which conferred the title of *highness*, empowered its possessor to take precedence of the palatines, to head the nobility at the assembling of the Pospolite, and to fill the second place in the senate; for, as the primate was head of the ecclesiastics, the castellan of Cracow was first lay-senator.

*Note (4), Page 7.*

*Stephen Battori.*—Prince of Transylvania, who after the abdication of Henry of Valois had been elected king of Poland. The intrepidity and prowess of this prince made him feared by his enemies, while the wisdom and temperance of his government acquired him the love of his subjects. He used to maintain that God had reserved three things to himself,—“to make something out of nothing, to foreknow events to come, and to direct men’s consciences.” The government of this prince was consistent with these principles. To him the Poles were indebted for the establishment of courts of justice, for augmenting and disciplining the army, and for still more strengthening the republic by gaining the affection of the Cossacks, tribes inhabiting the islands of the Borysthenes, where they subsisted solely by plunder and piracy, till Battori by a series of friendly services attached them to the interests of his crown. He then formed from them a military corps consisting of forty thousand men, which he established in Lower Podolia and Volhinia, to keep the Muscovites and Tar-

tars in check; and afterwards incorporated them with the colonies which he settled in the Ukraine. By these means he secured the frontiers of his kingdom and doubled its military strength, while he cultivated a barren spot which soon became the most fertile in his dominions. Doctor South found in an ancient manuscript in the Clergy's Library at Dantzic the following eulogy on this prince :

In templo plusquam sacerdos.  
 In republica plusquam rex.  
 In sententia dicenda plusquam senator.  
 In judicio plusquam jurisconsultus.  
 In exercitu plusquam imperator.  
 In acie plusquam miles.  
 In adversis perferendis injuriisq; condonandis plusquam vir.  
 In publica libertate tuenda plusquam civis.  
 In amicitia colenda plusquam amicus.  
 In convictu plusquam familiaris.  
 In venatione ferisq; domandis plusquam leo.  
 In tota reliqua vita plusquam philosophus.

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*Translation by J. B. Esq.*

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In performing the duties of the temple  
 More than priest.  
 In transacting the business of the republic  
 More than king.  
 In council more than senator.  
 In judgement more than jurist.

At the head of an army more than commander.

In the field of battle more than soldier.

In the endurance of adversity and forgiveness of injuries

More than man.

In the defence of public liberty

More than citizen.

In the cultivation of friendship

More than friend.

In the intercourse of private life

More than the most ingratiating companion.

In field sports and subduing wild beasts

More than lion.

In all the other concerns of life

More than philosopher.

*Note (5), Page 8.*

This conduct of Uladislas appears to have been very inconsistent with the general tenor of his administration, which was distinguished for beneficence and generosity. Perhaps, so near the close of his reign, he had not sufficient firmness to expose himself to the hatred of the Polish nobles, which he must have done had he espoused the cause of the Cossacks; though by refusing to do so he irreparably injured the republic, by alienating a people who might have been considered as its firmest barrier against the natural enemies of Poland.

*Note (6), Page 10.*

*Casimir.*—This prince, who as the last of the race of Jagalon was called to the throne of Poland, had been

ill qualified, by the tastes he had acquired in a life of seclusion, to be placed at the head of a republic which was continually agitated by tempestuous contention.

*Note (7), Page 16.*

*Standard-bearer to the crown.*—This officer carried the banner of the republic at the coronation and funerals of the kings of Poland, and also at the *Pospolite*, or gathering of all the nobles under the banners of the king at any time and place appointed by him. Whenever he resolved on summoning the *Pospolite*, he made known his will by letters circular into all the palatinates and districts of the kingdom. These letters, on reaching their places of destination, were fastened to a staff and carried three times within a month round to all the chief noblemen; besides which, their purport was publicly proclaimed in the several cities. On the completion of these ceremonies all courts of justice (except those of the vice-starosties) were suspended, and eligible persons were compelled to assemble within a given time, under pain of entire forfeiture of property to the crown. The castellans marched the levies thus raised within their several jurisdictions to the place of general rendezvous, and delivered them up to the king; whose personal appearance to receive them was deemed so indispensable, that even illness was not admitted as a sufficient excuse for his absence.

*Note (8), Page 24.*

*George Ragotski, prince of Transylvania.*—After the

death of Uladishas VII. he had demanded the crown of Poland for himself at the head of thirty thousand men; but the majority of suffrages proving in favour of the deceased king's brother, Casimir, he was foiled in his wishes. The ambition of this prince, however, induced him still to watch with eagerness for some favourable opportunity to wrest the sceptre from the feeble hands of Casimir; and his views were promoted by the intrigues of certain Polish Unitarians; a sect which at that time was allowed the free exercise of its religion in that country. This faction was, however, punished, after the humiliation of Ragotski, by the banishment of the whole sect from the republic.

*Note in Page 28.*

*Grand marshal of the crown.*—He was at the head of the police. This officer introduced foreign ambassadors, appointed their place of residence, and taxed articles of trade and merchandise. To these functions was added the power of punishing criminals with death, and from his judgement there was no appeal.

*Note (9), Page 31.*

*Lubomirski.*—When, in consequence of the non-appearance of Lubomirski at the diet (convened for the purpose of examining into the merits of his cause), so severe a sentence had been passed on him, the deputies protested against it; which by the laws of Poland rendered it invalid; notwithstanding which, Casimir had



proceeded to strip him of his employments and proclaim him an outlaw. Opinions on this affair so widely differed, that while on one hand Lubomirski was represented as an incendiary, desirous only of disturbing the public tranquillity; he was, on the other, considered as an incorruptible senator, who was persecuted by the king on account of the constancy with which he opposed his innovations. Perhaps truth lay between these two extremes. The severity, however, with which Casimir in the first instance treated Lubomirski, when contrasted with his clemency towards the Cossack rebels, proves either that that prince had lost much of the moderation and forbearance with which he began his reign, or that he could more easily pardon an act of hostility committed against his predecessor than himself.

*Note (10), Page 35.*

*Crown general.*—In the absence of the king he was supreme in the command of the Polish army; and though he received his appointment from the monarch, he was answerable only to the republic for his actions. Among his many important privileges was that of quartering his troops on what estates he pleased; which, joined to his extensive power in other respects, rendered him formidable to all the nobility.

*Note (11), Page 43.*

Perhaps the history of no other prince presents an

example of such extraordinary vicissitudes as that of Casimir V. Though descended from a family which had reigned nearly three centuries over the Poles, he embraced from inclination a monastic life; and had been a jesuit and a cardinal before the death of his brother Uladislas had turned the eyes of Poland towards him to fill that vacant throne. The first unpopular act of Casimir was that of temporizing with the Cossacks; his second proved a more just as well as lasting source of discontent to his subjects. It was that of espousing the widow of his brother, a princess whose love of power made her ever eager to usurp it even at the expense of her husband's honour. To the disgust which in a moral point of view this union created in Poland, soon became superadded that arising from the queen's interference with public affairs, and the empire which she acquired over the will of Casimir. It was to oblige her that he made the unwise attempt to get the duke d'Enghien, who was betrothed to her niece, declared his successor; nor could he be prevailed on to disappoint her, by relinquishing his endeavours, till he had seen the blood of his people profusely shed in civil contests arising out of this illegal project. From the death of Louisa he became at the same time oppressed with grief for her loss, and remorse at having ever formed an union which he now considered as incestuous. In this frame of mind, persuaded that Heaven had inflicted the misfortunes of his reign as a just punishment for his of-

fences, the weight of government became an insupportable burthen, from which he at length resolved to free himself. Accordingly in the year 1668, after having gone through all previous forms required, and witnessed some farcical scenes of pretended regret in the senate, which secretly rejoiced at his determination, he abdicated the throne on which he had reigned twenty-one years. Dr. Connor says, he was assured by several gentlemen at Warsaw who had witnessed it, that the day after Casimir's resignation the Poles scarcely paid him the common respect due to a gentleman. It is not therefore surprising that he should hasten his retirement into France, where Louis XIV. presented him with the abbey of Saint Germain; on the revenues arising from which he subsisted the remainder of his life, as his late subjects, who had promised to allow him a pension of three hundred thousand florins, considered that he had forfeited it by quitting their country. The inconsistencies of Casimir did not terminate with his reign, as his becoming an abbot proved no bar to his consoling himself for the loss of his queen, by privately espousing the celebrated Mary Migat, widow of marshal L'Hospital. On his decease, which happened four years after his abdication, his heart was deposited in the abbey of St. Germain, and his body was conveyed to Cracow, in the cathedral of which city it was interred. If the following epitaph, written on him by Father Default, was not composed in the spirit of irony, it is perhaps not the

least remarkable part of his history, that such an extravagant eulogist should have been found for Casimir :

Æternæ memoriæ  
Regis Orthodoxi.  
Heic  
Post emensos virtutis  
At gloriæ gradus omnes,  
Quiescit nobili sui parte  
JOHANNES CASIMIRUS  
Poloniæ  
Ac Sueciæ Rex ;  
Alto e Jagellonidum  
Sanguine,  
Familiâ Vasatensi.  
Postremus  
Quia summus  
Literis, armis, pietate.  
Multarum gentium linguas  
Addidicit, quo illas propensius  
Sibi devinceret.  
Septemdecim præliis, collatis  
Cum hoste signis,  
Totidem uno minus vicit,  
Semper invictus.  
Muscovitas, Suecos, Brandenburgenses,  
Tartaros, Germanos  
Armis ;  
Cosacos aliosque rebelles  
Gratiâ ac beneficiis

Expugnavit;  
 Victoria regem eis se præbens,  
 Clementia patrem.  
 Denique totis viginti imperii annis  
 Fortunam virtute vincens,  
 Aulam habuit in castris,  
 Palatia in tentoriis,  
 Spectacula in  
 Triumphis.

Liberos ex legitimo connubio  
 Súscepit, quæis postea orbatns est,  
 Ne, si se majorem reliquisset,  
 Non esset ipse maximus;  
 Sin minorem, stirps degeneraret.  
 Par ei ad fortitudinem

Religio fuit,  
 Nec segnus cælo militavit.  
 Quam solo.

Hinc extracta monasteria et  
 Nosocomia Varsavia,  
 Calvinianorum fana in  
 Lithuania excisa:  
 Sociniani regno pulsi  
 Ne Casimirum haberent regem,  
 Qui Christum Deum non  
 Haberent.

Sehatns a variis sectis ad  
 Catholicæ fidei communionem  
 Adductus,  
 Ut ecclesiæ legibus  
 Continerentur

Qui jura populis dicerent.

Unde illi præclarum

Orthodoxi nomen

Ab Alexandro Septimo

Inditum.

Humanæ denique gloriæ

Fastigium prætergressus,

Cum nihil præclarius agere

Posset,

Imperium sponte abdicavit

Anno M.DC.LXVIII.

Tum porro lachrymæ, quas

Nulli regnans excusserat,

Omnium oculis manarunt,

Qui abeuntem regem non secus

Atque obeuntem patrem

Luxere.

Vitæ reliquum in pietatis

Officiis cum exegisset,

Tandem auditâ Kameciæ

Expugnatione, ne tantæ cladi

Superesset,

Charitate patriæ

Vulneratus occubuit

XVII cal. Jan. M.DC.LXXII.

Regium cor monachis hujus

Cœnobii, cui abbas præfuerat,

Amoris pignus reliquit;

Quod illi istoc tumulto

Mœrentes condiderunt.

*Translated by J. B. Esq.*

In perpetual memory  
 of the Orthodox King  
 Here reposes,  
 After having mounted all the steps  
 of virtue and glory,  
 The noble part of  
 JOHN CASIMIR  
 King of Poland and Sweden;  
 of the illustrious blood of Jagellon  
 and of the family of Vasa.  
 The last, because the most eminent  
 in letters, in arms, in piety.  
 He learnt the languages of many nations,  
 in order to attach them more closely to his  
 Interests.  
 In seventeen pitched battles (with  
 exception of one only) always conqueror.  
 He subdued the Muscovites, the Swedes,  
 The Brandenburgers, the Tartars, and the Germans.  
 The Cossacks, and other rebellious nations,  
 he mastered by acts of kindness and favour:  
 exhibiting himself a king in victory,  
 a father in clemency.  
 Lastly, during the course of twenty  
 years of empire,  
 winning fortune by valour,  
 He held his court in the camp,  
 his palace in the tented field,  
 and displayed his shows in his triumphs.

He had children born in lawful wedlock,  
 which he was destined afterwards to lose,  
 lest, had he left behind him a superior  
 to himself, he should have ceased to  
 be greatest : if an inferior, his  
 progeny had degenerated from their  
 Great Original.

His religion was commensurate to his valour ;  
 nor did he fight with more zeal  
 for an earthly than a heavenly crown.

Thus monasteries and infirmaries were  
 erected at Warsaw, and

Calvinistical churches destroyed in Lithuania,  
 The Socinians were expelled the kingdom,  
 that they who refused to have Christ  
 for their God might not have  
 Casimir for their king.

The Senate, composed of various  
 discordant sects, was guided into the  
 Communion of the Catholic faith,  
 that they who enacted laws for the people  
 might themselves be governed  
 by the laws of the Church.

Whence the illustrious name of  
 Orthodox

was conferred on him by Alexander the Seventh,  
 Having at length surmounted  
 the pinnacle of human glory,  
 when nothing more noble was left  
 for him to accomplish,  
 He voluntarily abdicated the throne  
 In the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-eight.



Then streamed the tears from every eye,  
 Tears never before drawn,  
 from those who mourned the departing King  
 as they would mourn an expiring father.  
 Having spent the remainder of his life  
 In acts of piety,  
 When he heard of the siege of Kamienieck,  
 that he might not survive such destruction,  
 He died of the wound  
 which the love of his country inflicted,  
 on the 17th calend of January,  
 in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-two.  
 He left his royal heart,  
 as a pledge of his love,  
 to the monks of this monastery,  
 of which he was abbot.  
 They with sorrow have buried it  
 in this tomb.

*Note (12), Page 44.*

*Ceremonial of the election.*—When the election of a king of Poland was about to take place, a general diet was convoked by the archbishop of Gnesna. On the appointed day the forms of the election were opened by the senate, the deputies, and nobles repairing to the great church of St. John, to petition that Heaven would direct their choice of a king. They then proceeded to the field of election; a plain near Warsaw, on which was erected, for the convenient and safe deliberation of the senate, an immense hall called by the Poles

*szopa*\*. This hall had, but three entrances, and was surrounded by a broad deep fosse. The deputies and nobles, armed and on horseback, held their session in the open field. Their first proceeding was that of choosing their marshal; who, after binding himself by oath to the faithful discharge of his office, was introduced into the *szopa*, to assist in regulating the most pressing concerns of the state, and redressing grievances complained of. The ambassadors of the several candidates for the throne, and of the princes interested for them, were next admitted, and harangued the senate in Latin on the merits of their different claimants. They were answered on its behalf by the archbishop of Gnesna, and on that of the deputies and nobles by their marshal. The diet then invoked, on their knees, the assistance of the Holy Ghost to enlighten their understandings, and proceeded to the ballot; when, if the voices were found to be unanimous, all went well, and the archbishop *proclaimed* the king elect, as did the marshals of the crown and Lithuania. But if there were a division in the diet (which generally happened) all became tumult and uproar. The stronger party in the end carried it by violence over the weaker, and compelled the archbishop, as the price of his safety, to proclaim its favourite. Whatever scenes of bloodshed and disorder might have preceded his compliance, the ceremony always terminated by the whole diet singing *Te Deum*.

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\* Signifying a place of shelter.

*Note (13), Page 44.*

*Uncle to the great Jagellon.*—The Poles reckoned three races of sovereigns before the time of Henry de Valois ; after whose abdication, as the crown continued to pass from family to family without fixing in any one, he has been considered as the beginner of a fourth class. Lechus, a Sarmatian by birth, was the founder of the first class in 50. He began by conducting his countrymen some steps towards civilization ; and afterwards became their ruler, under the title of duke. On the extinction of his race every thing fell into dreadful disorder ; nor was any fixed and safe government re-established till 820, when Piastus, the founder of the second class, who was a native of low origin, but great virtue and prudence, was chosen their sovereign. The posterity of Piastus long reigned after him ; one of whom, Boleslaus Chroby, was raised to the dignity of king by the emperor Otho III. ; and so great was the veneration in which the memory of the founder of this race of sovereigns was held in Poland, that the name of Piastus was ever given to such *natives* of that country as were raised to the throne. After the extinction of this second race ; Jagellon, duke of Lithuania, was received by the Poles as their king, by which event the crowns of Poland and Lithuania became united. He formed the head of the third class of Polish sovereigns. By him Christianity was introduced into Lithuania ; and he governed with so much wisdom and popularity, that his

memory after his race became extinct was still revered by the Poles.

*Note (14), Page 46.*

*Pacta Conventa.*—A convention which was entered into between the sovereign of Poland and the diet, before he could be proclaimed king. It was of as ancient origin as 1355, when, during the reign of Casimir the Great, the republic drew up and ratified its first *Pacta Conventa* with Louis, king of Hungary, the nephew and successor of the above monarch to the crown of Poland. After having fallen for some time into disuse, the *Pacta Conventa* was revived in 1573 on the election of Henry de Valois; from which period its ratification by every succeeding monarch was uniformly enforced by the republic. The fundamental conditions of the *Pacta Conventa* were, that the king should not name his successor, or in any way interfere in the free choice of that successor. That he should neither make war nor peace, introduce foreign troops, change the laws, nor marry, without the consent of the republic. That he should profess the Roman catholic religion; and that he should not purchase any estates in Poland. To these conditions were occasionally added others, dictated by the temper of the times, and the desire of the nobles to increase their power at the expense of that of the crown. These encroachments were sometimes submitted to, at others contested, by the monarchs who were required to accede to them.

*Note (15), Page 61.*

*Higher order of nobility.*—All persons who were born free, from the king's son to the gentleman who possessed no more than an acre of land, were, by the constitution of Poland, *noble*. The rank and privileges of the *higher order* (or senators) were not hereditary; but acquired by the appointment to certain dignified stations, such as the ten great officers of the crown, the archbishops, bishops, palatines, and castellans.

*Note (16), Page 92.*

The army of Poland and that of Lithuania had each its general, who severally possessed supreme command in his own camp; and although the grand general of Lithuania yielded precedence to the crown general of Poland; yet, except when the armies were actually engaged together in battle, he was not in any respect subservient to his orders. Hence arose many of the difficulties with which Sobieski had to contend in his command of national forces thus discordantly organized.

*Note (17), Page 102.*

*Primate.*—During the interregna the primate became regent with great authority. This title was first granted by the council of Constance in 1514 to the head of the ecclesiastics of Poland. In rank and power he was second only to the king, on whom he possessed the privilege of intruding at pleasure. On these occasions

he displayed great pomp, and his majesty was expected to advance to the ante-room to welcome him. By the council of Lateran he was granted the right to style himself the pope's legate *born*; and one curious mark of distinction was his privilege, as first senator, of having drums beating and trumpets sounding at the gates of his palace, when about to take his seat at table.

*Note (19), Page 175.*

The word *Veto* pronounced by any individual of the diet possessed the power of suspending the subject then in deliberation; but the sentence "*Vetosisto activitatem*" operated still further, and absolutely dissolved the diet itself. Notwithstanding the injury Poland sustained from the frequent abuse of this pernicious privilege, Leczinski (father of Stanislaus king of Poland) proclaimed in full diet his tenacious prejudice in its favour, by asserting that he should ever prefer a *dangerous liberty* to what he called a *safe slavery*.

*Note (20), Page 266.*

At this very period the Samogitians of the deserts were permitted the exercise of an idolatrous rite, which they had derived from their Pagan ancestors. It was that of sacrificing in the month of October to a God called Zimiennich in the following manner. On a cloth spread over straw were ranged a certain number of loaves, between each of which were placed large pots of beer. Various kinds of animals were then led before

the officiating augur, who, after consecrating them, struck each victim with his wand, when immediately all present followed his example, exclaiming at the same time "O Zimiénnich! these offerings we make to thee for having hitherto so mercifully protected us; and we most humbly implore thee to have the like compassion on us for the future, and continue to preserve us from fire, sword, pestilence, and our enemies."

Part of the offering was then taken from the allotted portion of each, and strewed around the place of sacrifice, the worshippers ejaculating "O Zimiénnich! graciously partake our sacrifices, and favour thy adorers."

The ceremony then concluded by eating and drinking heartily of the offerings in honour of their idol.

Michalon, a Lithuanian author, brings this Pagan sacrifice in support of his assertion that the Lithuanians were descended from the ancient Romans. "It is past a doubt," he proceeds, "since our language is half Latin, and we have not long since had the same customs and ceremonies, as burning the dead, divining by augurs—nay, which we still retain in many parts of this country, especially the worshipping the God Æsculapius under the form of a serpent."

## ORIGIN OF THE POLISH FASHION OF WEARING THE HAIR\*.

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When the mother of Casimir I. fled from Poland in consequence of the hatred with which her misconduct, as queen regent, had inspired his subjects, she made her son the companion of her flight into Saxony. From thence she sent him to complete his education in France; where, considering the crown of Poland lost to him for ever, he became a monk in the abbey of Clugny. Meanwhile the Poles, unable to agree in their choice of a successor, at length came to the resolution of ending the anarchy and dangers of an interregnum by inviting Casimir back, and at the same time soliciting the pope to absolve him from his religious vows. To this his holiness consented, on condition that, for every head except the nobles and clergy, the Poles should pay a farthing a year to maintain a lamp perpetually burning in the church of St. Peter's at Rome, and moreover submit for ever after to have their heads shaved about their ears like monks. This fashion continued to be generally adopted till the close of Sobieski's reign.

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\* See the Portrait.



## AUTHORITIES PRINCIPALLY CONSULTED IN THIS WORK.

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Letters on Poland, by Dr. Connor, partly composed from materials collected by himself, while holding the situation of physician to Sobieski and his sister the duchess of Radzivil, and partly from those personally furnished him by Zaluski, bishop of Ploczsko. This prelate left behind him, in 1711, a collection of interesting letters, chiefly on the same subject.

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