The dissentions in Sigismund's camp became intensified by the failure of the negotiations. Open warfare between the so-called allies seemed more than probable. Sigismund therefore decided to abandon the siege of Prague, and to dismiss his German allies, whose arrival—in consequence of the old hatred between the two races—had had as principal result the diminution of the already scanty number of the king's adherents in Bohemia. Before leaving Prague, Sigismund caused himself to be crowned King of Bohemia in the cathedral of St. Vitus.[1] The ceremony of the coronation of their kings has, with the Bohemians, as with the Hungarians, always been surrounded by a peculiar sanctity; by submitting to it, Sigismund hoped to strengthen his claim to the Bohemian throne. It was, however, noticed that neither representatives of the towns of Prague nor the holders of many of the great offices of state were present.

On August 2, 1420, the king left the neighbourhood of Prague and retired to Kuttenberg. The crusaders dispersed to their various countries.

CHAPTER VI

FROM THE CORONATION OF KING SIGISMUND TO THE DEATH OF KING LOUIS AT MOHÁČ (1420–1526)

THE skirmish at Sudoměř and the battle at Žižka's Hill mark the beginning of the Hussite wars.

The period from the battle on Žižka's Hill (1420) to that at Lipany (1434), which decided the fate of the Taborite party, is the most eventful one in Bohemian history. The renewed crusades against Bohemia; incessant local warfare between the utraquist nobles and townsfolk, and those who were on the side of Rome; occasional warfare among the utraquists themselves, when the Taborites and Praguers fell out with each other; the rise and fall of Tabor; the temporary hegemony of the city of Prague over a large part of Bohemia; the attempt to re-establish monarchy under a Polish dynasty, are only some of the events and movements crowded into these few years. The intellectual activity of the people (manifested where, under the given conditions, it could alone manifest itself, namely in the field of theolo-

[1] The cathedral is situated close to the castle on the Hradčin, which was held by the royal forces.

gical controversy) was also unparalleled in the history of the country. The theological disputations between the papal, the Calixtine, and the Taborite ecclesiastics were constantly renewed, and, as was inevitable in a country so thoroughly absorbed in religious controversy, fanatical and grotesque doctrines often came to the surface. We read of preachers who asserted that the millennium had already begun, and of the Adamite enthusiasts, whom Žižka almost immediately suppressed, and whose importance has been most unduly exaggerated by Aenaeas Sylvius and other adherents of the papal cause. It is much to be regretted that—as Palacký, the great Bohemian historian, tells us—contemporary records for these years are scarcer than almost for any other period.

King Sigismund left Prague in a state of the most violent irritation against the Bohemian nation. He attempted to organize the adherents of Rome by appointing certain of the most prominent nobles who belonged to that party leaders or commanders of each district of the country, instructing them to maintain peace and extirpate heresy.

This measure, which, as the greatest part of the land was in arms against the king, was of little practical importance, only tended to increase the animosity of the Bohemians against Sigismund. The Praguers, even before the king had raised the siege of their town, had decreed very severe measures against the priests and Germans who had left the city before the siege. All their property was confiscated for the benefit of the town. The once very strong German element in Prague was for the time completely annihilated. Dissensions had at this moment already broken out between the citizens of Prague and their Taborite allies, whose fanaticism in destroying churches and convents caused great exasperation. Žižka and his followers therefore left Prague and marched to Southern Bohemia, where in a campaign, for which want of space makes any lengthier mention impossible, they defeated several of the papal lords who still maintained the cause of King Sigismund. The Praguers, meanwhile, continued the siege of the Vyšehrad, the occupation of which by King Sigismund's troops was a permanent menace to their town. Sigismund, hearing that the garrison was sorely pressed, marched to its relief with an army of 20,000 men, the greater part of whom were Hungarians. Many of the

utraquist lords, exasperated by Sigismund's decision to employ German and Hungarian soldiers against his Bohemian subjects, now joined the national cause, and one of them, Hynek Krušina, Lord of Lichtenburg, became the commander of the Bohemian forces.

A very sanguinary encounter took place in the valley which is situated at the foot of the Vyšehrad on All Saints' Day (November 1, 1420). Several lords, seeing that the men of Prague were well entrenched, advised the king not to disturb them, as his troops might suffer severe losses, but the king said: "I must fight with these peasants to-day." The Praguers at first wavered, when Lord Hynek called out with a loud voice: "Dear brethren, do not turn back, but be to-day brave knights in Christ's battle; for it is God's, not our fight, we are fighting to-day. Be certain that the Almighty God will deliver all His and your enemies into your hands to-day." Before he had finished his speech the cry arose: "The enemy is flying." [1]

King Sigismund's troops were decisively defeated, and the losses, particularly among the Bohemian and Moravian warriors, who still sided with him were very great. The king was said to have exposed them more than his other troops.

The patriots deeply mourned the fate of their countrymen. Though they had adhered to the feudal system which had obliged them to war for their liege-lord King Sigismund, the dead men had belonged to the national utraquist Church, and those who had not immediately succumbed to their wounds had, before dying, received communion in the two kinds. The contemporary chronicler Laurence of Březova thus describes the mournful aspect of the battle-field: "What man, who was not more cruel than a pagan, could pass through these fields and vineyards and view the brave bodies of the dead without compassion? What Bohemian, unless he were a madman, could see these dainty and robust warriors, these men so curly-haired and so comely without deeply bewailing their fate?" The castle of the Vyšehrad surrendered to the Praguers immediately after the battle.

The intense animosity caused by the policy of King Sigismund had led a considerable party in Bohemia to plan his deposition, and to meditate on the choice of another sovereign. Those among the utraquist nobility who had

[1] Palacký, quoting a contemporary chronicler.

abandoned all hope of securing from Sigismund toleration for their faith, as well as the men of Prague, favoured this project, which, on the other hand—probably through the influence of Nicholas of Hus—was opposed by most of the Taborites. Žižka, however, in this matter disagreed with the larger number of his party. It was decided to offer the Bohemian crown to Vladislav, King of Poland, under the sole condition of his accepting the Articles of Prague, and promising to defend them. This declaration was signed by many of the utraquist nobles, the magistrates of the town of Prague, and of those towns that accepted its direction, and by Žižka alone on the part of the Taborites. Nicholas of Hus, who most violently opposed the choice of a foreign king, died by a fall from his horse towards the end of the year (1420).

Though he had been one of the earliest leaders of the party of reform, there is no doubt that the death of Nicholas of Hus at this moment was advantageous to his cause, for it made Žižka uncontested leader of the more advanced or Taborite party; and as he was then inclined to act in agreement with the Praguers and the utraquist nobles, it prevented, at least for the moment, a split among the Bohemians opposed to Rome.

In the early part of the year 1421, Žižka's troops and the Praguers completely subdued Western Bohemia, where Sigismund's authority entirely ceased. Even the city of Pilsen concluded a truce, during which the citizens were obliged to tolerate worship according to the Articles of Prague in their town and its territory. The united utraquist forces now attacked Kutna Hora, which was still in the hands of the adherents of Sigismund, though the king had left Bohemia early in the year (February 1421). This town was more odious to the utraquists than any other, because of the cruelties its inhabitants had committed. The citizens were soon obliged to surrender and to do public penance, but the utraquists sought no further revenge, an almost unique occurrence on the part of either of the opponents during the Hussite wars. After the fall of Kutna Hora many other towns and castles surrendered, and many of the utraquist nobles, abandoning Sigismund, joined what had by this time become the national cause throughout the land. Among these nobles was Čeněk of Wartenberg, who now again renounced the allegiance of King Sigismund.

It was still a greater blow to the papal party that about this time the Archbishop of Prague, Conrad of Vechta, "to the surprise and horror of all Christendom," solemnly announced his acceptation of the Articles of Prague (1421). On the other hand, the strength of the utraquist party was weakened by the attitude of the Taborites, whose distrust of the more moderate reformers was increased by the fact that that party had now been joined by the most eminent prelates of the Church of Rome. The University of Prague attempted to mediate between the different factions of the reform party, and numerous disputations between the rival divines took place, in which even the minutest questions of dogma and ritual were discussed with the utmost thoroughness and obstinacy.

Having subdued nearly all Bohemia, the utraquists were preparing to invade Moravia, when envoys from that country, in which utraquism had many adherents, arrived and sued for peace. It was agreed that the Estates of both countries should assemble at Caslav. This Diet began its session on June 1, 1421, and included the Archbishop of Prague, the Lords Čeněk of Wartenberg, Krušina of Lichtenburg, Victorin of Poděbrad (father of the future King George), the supreme magistrates of Prague, John Žižka and other leaders of Tabor, as well as representatives of the papal party. The contemporary records of the assembly at Časlav are both vague and contradictory. It seems, however, certain that the Articles of Prague were almost unanimously confirmed, and that King Sigismund was declared to be deposed, though not without some opposition, especially on the part of the Moravian nobles. It was further decided that, pending the negotiations with Poland—though this reason was not specially stated—twenty regents should be elected. Of these, five were to be chosen from among the nobles, four from the citizens of Prague, two from the community of Tabor, five from among the knighthood, and two from the other Bohemian towns (*i. e.* with the exceptions of Prague and Tabor). This scheme undoubtedly organized a coalition government—to use a modern phrase—on the broadest base, and even this attempt at compromise is a proof of the comparative political maturity of the Bohemians of that period. Among the new regents we find Ulrich of Rosenberg, head of the papal lords, Čeněk of Wartenberg, Krušina of Lichtenburg, and John Žižka.

About this time the castle of Prague on the Hradčany Hill surrendered. Sigismund's influence disappeared in Prague; but Bohemia was still menaced both by internal disturbances and by foreign foes. New religious troubles broke out in Prague, caused by the fanatical monk John of Želivo, and at Tabor public order was disturbed by the violence of fanatics.

Žižka soon quelled these disturbances in the barbarous fashion common to all religious parties at that period. He caused about fifty enthusiasts, men and women, to be burnt for denying the real presence of Christ in the sacrament of the altar. They met their fate bravely. "Gaily laughing, they walked into the flames, boasting that they would that very day take their meal with Christ in heaven."[1]

Žižka's commanding influence at Tabor restored order in the town, and he was soon free to continue the war against the adherents of the papal cause who still held isolated castles in many parts of Bohemia. In besieging one of these castles, Rábi, which belonged to the Romanist Lord of Riesenburg, Žižka was severely wounded in the eye by an arrow. His life was for some time in danger, and though the doctors of Prague, to which town he was immediately carried, succeeded in saving his life, he now became totally blind.

Local warfare between the Germans and Bohemians had, meanwhile, continued uninterruptedly both on the Saxon and on the Silesian frontiers, but a more serious danger now menaced Bohemia. As early as the month of April (1421) the German princes decided to undertake a new crusade against Bohemia, and Sigismund, though detained in Hungary by the hostile attitude of Turkey and Venice,

[1] Palacký. Some of these fanatics escaped from Tabor before Žižka had returned there from Časlav, and settled in an island in the little river Nežarka. Here they formed a separate community under the leadership of a peasant named Nicolas, whom they called Adam. According to the not very reliable report of Aenaeas Sylvius (*Historia Bohemica*, chap. xli), this leader "filium Dei se dixit et Adam vocari." Aenaeas further tells us "connubia eis promiscua fuere, nefas tamen injussu Adami mulierem cognoscere. Sed ut quis libidine incensus in aliquam exarsit eam manu prehendit et adiens principem 'in hanc' inquit, 'spiritus meus concaluit.' Cui princeps respondit, 'ite crescite et multiplicamini et replete terram.'" These fanatics were exterminated by Žižka after a few months (Oct. 1421). This quite isolated occurrence has from the first been greatly magnified and exaggerated by writers hostile to the Hussite movement.

approved of their plans, and promised his aid. To give Sigismund time to return to Bohemia, it was decided that the crusaders should assemble on the feast of St. Bartholomew (August 24).

Of the second crusade against Bohemia scanty and insufficient record has come down to us. Five of the German Electors took part in the campaign, and the whole invading force, according to the most trustworthy sources, numbered 200,000 men. Numerous volunteers from all parts of Germany flocked to the standard of the Cross, and were rewarded by the cardinal legate Branda with absolutions and indulgences. It had been decided that the Germans should enter Bohemia from the west, by Cheb[1] whilst Sigismund and his son-in-law Albert, Duke of Austria, would invade the country from the east. The town of Kutna Hora in Eastern Bohemia still numbered many adherents of the papal cause, who were, therefore, also friendly to the cause of Sigismund.

The Germans marched through Western Bohemia burning the villages and murdering the inhabitants "more cruelly than heathens would have done." They began the siege of the town of Žatec,[2] and on September 17, 1421, made an attempt to storm it, but they were beaten back by the bravery of the Bohemian garrison of only 6000 men. The news that the army of the Praguers[3] was approaching, and disgust at Sigismund's failure to fulfil his promise of creating a diversion in Eastern Bohemia, caused the Germans to retreat precipitately and ingloriously.

Fortune here again favoured the Bohemians. Sigismund had but just completed his armaments when the last German soldiers left the soil of Bohemia. His troops and those of his son-in-law entered Moravia early in October. The supreme command of the army, which consisted of about 23,000 men, was entrusted to the Italian condottiere Pipa of Ozora. Moravia was soon subdued, and the easy conquest of the sister-land was not without its effect on Bohemia. Many of the Bohemian lords, whom the excesses of fanatics, both at Prague and at Tabor, had alienated from

[1] In German, "Eger." [2] In German, "Saaz."

[3] It is uncertain whether Žižka and his Taborites took part in this expedition, though there is evidence that the men of Prague appealed to him for aid. Žižka himself can at that time hardly have recovered from his wound.

the national cause, resumed allegiance to King Sigismund. Among them was Čeněk of Wartenberg, whose political manœuvres we may consider typical of the vacillating policy of the great utraquist nobles of his time.

Soon after entering Bohemia, Sigismund obtained possession of the town of Kutna Hora, by the aid of a powerful party among the townsmen who upheld the papal cause, or at any rate were opposed to the hegemony which Prague at this period attempted to impose on the Bohemian towns. Žižka, who with his Taborites had now joined his forces with those of Prague, retreated before the invaders as far as Kolin, and Emperor Sigismund spent Christmas at Kutna Hora, feeling certain that he had now at last subdued the Bohemians.

Žižka had meanwhile received reinforcements from various parts of Bohemia, and his soldiers, exasperated by the atrocities which the Hungarian soldiers of Sigismund had committed, were even more anxious than usual to encounter the foe. On the other hand, Pipa strongly advised the king to retreat. When Žižka's army, on the "day of the three kings" (or Epiphany) (January 6, 1422), suddenly attacked the village of Nebovid—between Kolin and Kutna Hora—a panic seized the king's forces. An immediate retreat became necessary, and though Sigismund is said to have urged some of the Bohemian nobles who were now on his side to attempt to hold the town of Kutna Hora, they "refused to encounter certain death." The retreat soon became a rout, and nearly 12,000 of Sigismund's soldiers were killed, the king only escaping by his rapid flight. The town of Německý Brod,[1] where a last stand was made, was stormed by the Bohemians on January 10, 1422. Contrary to Žižka's orders[2] its defenders were put to the sword, while the town was pillaged and totally destroyed.

This great victory of the Bohemians for the time ensured to them safety from foreign enemies, and it also precipitated the result of the negotiations with Poland. King Vladislav had declined the Bohemian crown, but his brother Alexander Witold, Prince of Lithuania, was now ready to accept

[1] In German, Deutsch Brod.

[2] As a proof of this, Palacký quotes an autograph letter of Žižka preserved in the Bohemian Museum at Prague, in which he, later in the year, ordered his soldiers to assemble at Německý Brod, "that they might repent where they had sinned."

it, as it had been repeatedly offered to him by Bohemian deputations.

Witold assumed the title of "acknowledged" or "demanded"[1] King of Bohemia, and with his aid and consent his nephew Sigismund Korybut[2] equipped an armed force of about 5000 men to maintain Witold's claim to the Bohemian throne. This enterprise caused great excitement among the Slav populations of Eastern Europe. "The Poles at that time most sympathized with Bohemia, and desired a union between the two countries; still greater enthusiasm was shown by the Ruthenian population of the districts near Lemberg, who, belonging to the Greek Church were themselves utraquists."[3]

Korybut first marched into Moravia, from which country King Sigismund retired on the news of the arrival of the Polish prince. Korybut then entered Bohemia, and on his arrival at Časlav was enthusiastically received by many of the utraquist nobles. He soon afterwards (May 16, 1422) arrived at Prague and assumed the government of Bohemia, as far as the almost anarchical condition of the land rendered any government possible.

Ever since the battle of Nebovid and King Sigismund's retreat into Hungary (which had temporarily secured Bohemia from foreign invasion), the town of Prague had been convulsed by continuous struggles, nominally caused by differences of opinion among the priesthood with regard to questions, often very trifling ones, of doctrine or ritual. The passionate interest in these matters, and still more the thorough comprehension of them which the Bohemians of that age showed, can only be compared to the condition of the population of Constantinople during the continuance of the Eastern Empire. Still, these questions gradually tended to become only the pretence for struggles of which the inevitable opposition between aristocracy and democracy was the real cause. As was natural, the more aristocratic party at Prague relied on the support of the utraquist nobles,

[1] The German term is "Postulirter König von Böhmen"; according to the old Bohemian traditions it was only the coronation that fully conferred the title of King of Bohemia.

[2] This prince, to distinguish him from King Sigismund, is generally known by his father's name as Korybut, or as Korybutovič, *i. e.* son of Korybut. Following Palacký, I have adopted the former and shorter denomination.

[3] Palacký.

always the most moderate element in the reform party; the democrats of Prague, on the other hand, found their natural allies in the democratic community of Tabor.

Korybut, whose principal supporters were the utraquist nobles, used his influence in favour of the aristocratic party at Prague, which through him obtained the important municipal offices of the city. He endeavoured, and not without success, to avoid a rupture with Žižka[1] and the more moderate Taborites, whose leader (contrary to the popular opinion, which represents him as an extreme fanatic) Žižka was.

As soon as order had been re-established in Prague, Korybut set out to besiege the castle of Karlstein, which was still held by the forces of King Sigismund, and which through its vicinity to Prague was a permanent menace to that town. This siege was unsuccessful, and Korybut, being obliged to return to Prague because of renewed riots that had broken out there, concluded a truce with the defenders of Karlstein. The duration of this truce, which Korybut concluded in his own name and in those of the utraquist lords, was fixed at one year.

King Sigismund had meanwhile endeavoured to detach the Polish princes from the Bohemian cause. His efforts were successful, and in consequence of an agreement with Sigismund, Prince Witold recalled his nephew, who had been acting as his representative in Bohemia. Prince Korybut very reluctantly left Prague on December 24, 1422.

The temporary departure of Prince Korybut, whose influence on the affairs of Bohemia has been greatly under-rated,[2] was almost immediately followed by civil war. Probably from distrust of the utraquist lords, who still held most of

[1] In his curious letter to the Praguers, in which he informed them that he would not oppose Prince Korybut, Žižka says: "We—the Taborites—will willingly obey his Highness (Prince Korybut), and with the Lord's help aid him in all rightful things by deed and by advice, and we beg that you all of you, from this day forth, will verily drop all the discord, quarrels, and bitterness which you have had either during your whole life or during these last years, so that you may honestly say the Lord's Prayer, and pray: 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.'" Palacký very truly remarks that this letter gives us a clearer idea of the nature of the great Bohemian warrior than the most elaborate attempt to characterize him could do.

[2] This is probably caused by the fact that his conciliatory policy was equally distasteful to the papal and to the extreme Taborite partisans.

the State offices to which Korybut had appointed them, Žižka rejoined the more advanced Taborite party. It seems probable that the suspicion that these lords wished to reinstate Sigismund—whose complicity in the death of Hus Žižka never forgave—largely influenced the decision of the leader of the Taborites.

The first armed conflict between the Bohemian parties took place at Hořic (April 27, 1423), where Čeněk of Wartenberg was decisively defeated by Žižka. Almost at the same time the Praguers, and the utraquist lords then allied with them, began the siege of the castle of Křiženec, held at that time by the Taborites.

The fact that a new general armament against the Bohemian heretics was at that moment being prepared in Germany was probably one of the reasons why this siege did not last long. It was agreed to by both parties that a disputation between Calixtine and Taborite priests should take place at the neighbouring castle of Konopišt (1423). No decision was arrived at on the principal question whether the rites of the Church of Rome which the Calixtines had retained, and the use of vestments, were permissible or not. It was, however, decreed that these questions were only a matter of ecclesiastical regulation, and in no wise dependent on divine law. A subsequent disputation (June 24) between the priests remained without result, but the compromise—such as it was—for a time put a stop to the internal strife among the Bohemians.

As already mentioned, a new crusade against the Bohemians was decided on early in the year 1423; but this crusade was even more unsuccessful than its predecessors. The Slavs of Poland, who were to have taken part in it, were unwilling to go to war with Bohemia, in spite of the change of policy on the part of their king, Vladislav, and his brother Witold. The German princes, being engaged in constant disputes among themselves, only equipped a scanty force, which soon recrossed the Bohemian frontier, without having even met the Hussites in the open field. The King of Denmark, who had arrived in Germany with an army to wage war against the heretics, also returned to his own country.

If we can trust the contemporary records (which at this time are even more obscure than during the other years of the Hussite wars) the agreement of Konopišt was of exceed-

ingly short duration. Žižka appears from the first to have disapproved of it, and when the Praguers and their allies entered Moravia (end of July 1423) to aid the utraquists of that country against their old enemy John "the Iron," now bishop of Olomonc, the Taborites took no part in the expedition.

The Bohemian arms were on the whole victorious in Moravia, but troubles at home soon prevented the patriot army from pursuing its advantages. The town of Kralové Hradec had from the first warmly upheld the Calixtine cause. The governor of the castle, Bořek of Miletinck, who held supreme authority in the city, was leader of the Bohemian troops then engaged in warfare in Moravia.

During his absence a democratic movement broke out in the town of Kralové Hradec, and the citizens applied for aid to Žižka; they asserted that Bořek of Miletinck (who had been appointed governor by Prince Sigismund Korybut) no longer had any right to claim lordship over their city, since the prince who had appointed him had left Bohemia. Žižka received their request favourably, and consented to become their leader. This caused an internal conflict more serious than any that had as yet occurred during the Hussite wars.

Bořek of Miletinck, with his army of Praguers and utraquist lords, abandoned their conquests in Moravia, and speedily returned to Bohemia to oppose the Taborites. A sanguinary encounter took place near Kralové Hradec (not far from the more celebrated battle-field of 1866),[1] in which the Taborites decisively defeated the moderate or Calixtine party. The contemporary writers mention this battle with great sorrow, as here "ark was ranged against ark."[2] One of the prisoners—a priest who had carried the monstrance before the soldiers of Prague—was brought before Žižka, who exclaiming, "Thus will I consecrate these priests of the Praguers," struck him on the head with a club so fiercely that he died.[3]

[1] The battle of Kralové Hradec, or Königgrätz, is, I think, better known in England under the name of the battle of Sadova.

[2] The utraquist priests of all denominations were at that period in the habit of carrying the holy sacrament before the troops in the moment of battle, and it had become habitual to call the monstrance "the ark," in conformity with the great predilection for Old Testament expressions that was so general in Bohemia at that time.

[3] Bienenberg, *Geschichte der Stadt Königgrätz.*

It is probable that the battle of Hralové Hradec was followed by one of those temporary truces so frequent in the history of Bohemia at this time. At any rate we find Žižka almost immediately afterwards engaged in warfare in Moravia and in Hungary, by invading which country, the centre of Sigismund's power, it was perhaps hoped to induce him to come to terms. Žižka's Hungarian campaign was unsuccessful; but in it, and especially during his retreat, he displayed higher military ability than on almost any other occasion.

During Žižka's absence from Bohemia, the Praguers—still in alliance with the utraquist lords, who loyally but hopelessly attempted the impossible task of reconciling King Sigismund to their religious views—again entered into negotiations with the partisans of the king. At a Diet that met at Prague (October 16, 1423) it was resolved that representatives of the papal and of the utraquist clergy should meet at Brunn for the purpose of deciding all differences as to doctrine and ritual in a manner acceptable to all. This meeting never took place, and the negotiations with King Sigismund do not appear to have continued. The decision of Sigismund to award Moravia to his son-in-law Albert of Austria, whom he at the same time declared heir to the throne of Bohemia, was probably the cause.

On the other hand, these negotiations with the papal party exasperated Žižka, who, as Palacký says, now suspected the whole Calixtine party of insincerity, which he hated more than "open godlessness," as adherence to the Church of Rome appeared to him.

Civil war, therefore, broke out in Bohemia from the very beginning of the year 1424, which, as Palacký says, was Žižka's last and bloodiest year. Fighting between the Bohemian parties began early in January, as soon as Žižka had returned from Hungary; and several skirmishes, in which he was invariably victorious, took place. Later in the year he defeated the Praguers and utraquist lords in a very sanguinary and decisive battle at Malešov.

It is pleasing to think that the great Bohemian warrior at the moment of his death was again on terms of friendship with his countrymen. In spite of the strong sympathy for Bohemia that existed among the Poles, King Vladislav had definitely sided with the Pope; but Prince Korybut, contrary to the king's and Prince Witold's wishes, again bravely entered the turbulent arena of Bohemian political life. He

undoubtedly intended to obtain the Bohemian crown,[1] but the Bohemians only recognized him as provisional governor of their country.

It seems certain that it was through the mediation of Prince Korybut that peace between Žižka and the Praguers was agreed on. Žižka, who was by no means the unreasoning fanatic such as former history described him, realized more clearly than most of his contemporaries the hopelessness of the continued isolated struggle of his people. He also, and no doubt rightly, thought that it was only from other Slav countries that his country could hope for efficient aid. For this reason Žižka always showed himself friendly to the Polish prince, through whom aid from the people of Poland, if not from the king, could perhaps be obtained.

On September 14, 1422, a treaty of peace was signed between Prince Korybut and the Praguers on one side, Žižka and the Taborites on the other. This treaty was signed on a spot then known as the "Spitalske Pole" (hospital field), on the spot where Karlin, the suburb of Prague, now stands. It was largely due to the eloquence of the young priest John of Rokycan, who afterwards became very celebrated as utraquist Archbishop of Prague.

The exact terms of the treaty are not known to us, but the reconciliation was a complete one, for immediately afterwards the utraquist lords and Praguers under Korybut, and the Taborites under Žižka, marched together against Moravia, then in the power of Sigismund's son-in-law, Albert of Austria.

Before the allies had reached Moravia, Žižka died of the plague during the siege of the castle of Pribislav, not far from the Moravian frontier (October 11, 1424).

Many untruthful and invidious accounts of the death of the great Bohemian general were circulated by the enemies of his nation, and have been constantly repeated even by writers as recent as Carlyle. They may be traced to Aenaeas Sylvius, who states that Žižka died blaspheming, and ordered that his body should be flayed, his skin used as a drum, and his body thrown to the wild beasts. In contrast to these tales, so obviously in opposition to the nature of Žižka as recent research has revealed it to us, it may be well to quote

[1] Professor Tomek quotes Korybut's declaration of war against King Sigismund, in which he calls himself "desired and elected King of Bohemia.

the account of a contemporary writer, not improbably an eye-witness. He writes[1]: "Here at Přibislav brother Žižka was seized by a deadly attack of the plague. He gave his last charge to his faithful Bohemians [saying], that fearing their beloved God, they should firmly and faithfully defend God's law in view of His reward in eternity; and then brother Žižka commended his soul to God, and died on the Wednesday before the day of St. Gallus." Even had we no historical evidence to the point, this tranquil death would appear a fitting end for the great Bohemian patriot. He who had so often fought what he firmly considered God's battles, assuredly did not dread entering into God's peace.

The importance of Žižka's position in history can hardly be exaggerated. As has been already noticed, it was entirely due to him and to his exceptional military genius that the Hussite movement did not collapse as soon as large armed forces were moved against Bohemia. Had not the genius of Žižka contrived to render the Bohemian warriors for the time invincible, the name of the Hussites would be unknown to history, in which Hus would only appear as an isolated enthusiast like Savonarola.[2] The immediate consequences of the death of Žižka were of great importance to Bohemia. He was in command of a large army. Had he lived and freed Moravia, as Bohemia had been, from the power of Sigismund and Albert, a Diet of the two lands would have assembled and in all probability have definitely declared Prince Sigismund Korybut king.

The death of their great leader did not for the moment weaken the Bohemian armies, and able leaders formed in Žižka's school took the command of the utraquist forces.[3] "Žižka's blindness had that advantage, that his military

[1] *Staří Letopisove Česti* (ancient Bohemian Chronicles).

[2] Zacharias Theobaldus (*Hussitenkrieg*) records several epitaphs on Žižka, which are reprinted by Lenfant in his *Histoire de la Guerre des Hussites*. They are not older than the sixteenth century. The most characteristic of them is the following—

"Strennuus in bellis hoc dormit Žižka sepulchro
Žižka suae gentis gloria, Martis honos
Ille duces scelerum monachos, pestemque nefandam
Ad Stygias justo fulmine trusit aquas
Surget adhuc rursus, quadratae cornua cristae
Supplicii ut poenas, quas meruere luant."

The "quadratae cornua cristae" are, of course, the monks, against whom these lines breathe such bitter hatred.

[3] Tomek, *Jan Žižka*.

talents had been already largely transferred to his lieutenants and aides-de-camp. Obliged to see through their eyes, he taught them all the better to notice the advantages afforded either by the disposition of the ground, or by his own experience in the distribution of his forces."[1]

Divisions among Žižka's followers arose almost immediately after his death, the causes of which do not appear clearly from contemporary records. One of the parties retained the name of Taborites, while the other, consisting probably of Žižka's more immediate associates, assumed that of the Orphans, thus indicating that they had, in losing Žižka, lost their father. The two parties appear to have divided the captured towns and castles among themselves; Tabor remained the head-quarters of the Taborites, while Kralové Hradec became the principal stronghold of the Orphans. The first commander of the Orphans was Kuneš of Bělovic, and of the Taborites, Hvězda of Vicemilic. The two priests Prokop (who are better known to readers of history, and whom Aenaeas Sylvius[2] mentions as immediate successors of Žižka) only obtained command of the Hussite forces somewhat later.

The estrangement of the old followers of Žižka was merely temporary, but it none the less raised the hopes of the utraquist nobles and their allies of Prague. They believed that if they succeeded in suppressing the more advanced faction, it would become easier for them to make terms with their foreign enemies, and perhaps to secure the recognition of Prince Sigismund Korybut as king. Warfare between the national or utraquist parties—the Taborites and the Orphans forming one, the Praguers and the nobles allied with them the other side—broke out in various parts of Bohemia early in the year 1425. After the capture of the castle of Wožic by the Taborites, whose leader, Havězda, was mortally wounded during the siege, peace was concluded between the contending parties. This time also we are not informed as to the terms of the agreement. We are only told that it was decided that all the Bohemians should together undertake a campaign against Sigismund and his son-in-law, Albert of Austria. Probably in consequence of the agreement of Vožic, a Diet—presided over by Prince Korybut—assembled at Prague, at which not only members of all the national parties, but also some of the papal party were present.

[1] Palacký. *Historica Bohemica.*

Some members of the latter party about this date concluded a truce with the utraquists, as their expectations of help from King Sigismund gradually decreased.

King Sigismund had, however, by no means abandoned his hopes of regaining Bohemia. Before the treaty of Vožic had been concluded, the king had collected a large army in Moravia, intending to enter Bohemia. The various forces of the utraquists now united according to the agreement, marched against him, and forced him to evacuate Moravia; they then pursued him into Austria, where they besieged and captured the town of Retz. During the siege, Bohuslav of Schwamberg, who had succeeded Hvězda of Vicemilic as leader of the Taborites, was killed; and Prokop, surnamed the Great, a married Taborite priest who belonged to a family of Prague citizens, became their chief.

The German princes had meanwhile begun again to take up arms against the Bohemians, whom they hated as heretics and as belonging to a hostile race. An assembly of German princes, presided over by Duke Frederick of Saxony, took place at Nuremberg (end of May 1426), when it was decided again to invade Bohemia. The matter became more urgent when the news arrived that the Bohemians were besieging the town of Usti,[1] which, though situated in Bohemia, had been pledged by King Sigismund to the Dukes of Saxony. Even before the return of her husband, the Duchess Catherine equipped a large force, which was to march to the aid of Usti. She herself accompanied the soldiers as far as the Bohemian frontier, exhorting them not only to be brave but prudent. The German army was 70,000 men strong, while the Bohemians, led by Prince Korybut, Victorin of Poděbrad, Prokop the Great, and other commanders, only mustered 25,000 men. When the Germans arrived near Usti on Sunday morning (June 16, 1426), the Bohemians wrote to them begging them that, should God help them, they would receive them (the Bohemians) "in good grace" (as prisoners); they might then expect the same from them. But the Germans in their pride and haughtiness, relying on the strength of their army, answered defiantly "that they would let no heretic live." The Bohemians then swore to one another that

[1] Generally known as Usti nad Labem, to distinguish it from Usti and Orlici. The German name of the town is Aussig.

they also would have no mercy on any man.[1] The Bohemians were unwilling to fight on Sunday, but seeing that battle was inevitable, they all knelt down and prayed to God with great piety and humility. Korybut in a fervent speech entreated them to meet the enemy bravely and with a cheerful mind. On the advice of Prokop, who here adopted the defensive tactics of his master Žižka, the Bohemian army occupied a hill named Běhani, near the village of Predlitz, and at no great distance from the town of Usti, where the wagon-forts could be firmly established. The Germans attacked bravely, and arrived close to the enemies' lines, when the Bohemians, who had reserved their fire, discharged all their guns at close quarters. A panic among the German forces ensued. The slaughter of the Germans was terrific, and their flight continued till they reached the mountains that divide Bohemia from Saxony. The Bohemians, as had been agreed, took no prisoners, and twenty-four counts and lords who knelt down before the victors demanding grace were instantly killed. The Germans lost over 15,000 men during the battle and the rout that followed it. The Bohemian losses were very slight, though certainly considerably greater than the number of thirty men which some contemporary writers give. The camp and supplies of the Germans also fell into the hands of the Bohemians, who mockingly said that their enemies had incurred the papal ban, as they had so largely enriched the heretics. The town of Usti surrendered the day after the battle, and was burnt down by the Bohemians.

The news of this great victory over the Hussites caused a panic in the whole of Northern Germany, where an immediate invasion of the Bohemians was expected. Many towns were newly fortified, and in others the fortifications were repaired. These apprehensions proved unfounded, at least for the moment, as internal dissensions broke out among the Bohemians immediately after their great victory. This quarrel, in which we again find the Taborites and Orphans on one side, the Praguers and utraquist nobles on the other, was, however, of short duration; only in one district did actual war between the opposed parties take place. It is certain that before the end of the year 1426 the national parties in Bohemia were again on friendly

[1] Palacký, quoting contemporary records.

terms, for we read that early in the following year the Taborites and Orphans again entered Moravia and drove Sigismund's son-in-law, Duke Albert of Austria, out of that country. They then followed him into his own dominions, where they defeated him in a great battle at Zwettl (March 12, 1427), in which 9000 Austrians fell.

Almost immediately afterwards an event took place which not improbably was decisive in determining the future of the Hussite movement. Dissensions again broke out among the clergy of Prague; some priests had—to strengthen the alliance with the Taborites—permitted greater deviations from the ritual and dogma of the Roman Church than the Articles of Prague authorized. Among the prominent members of this party was John of Rokycan, whom Archbishop Conrad had consecrated as Vicar-General, and Peter Payne, an Englishman by birth who was generally known as "Magister Engliš." The teaching of these and some other priests caused a reaction among the more moderate Calixtines; their leader was Magister John Přibram, and this party enjoyed the favour of Prince Korybut. It seems certain that the prince had entered into negotiations with Pope Martin V. He probably hoped that by obtaining from the Pontiff some such concessions as were afterwards granted by the Compacts of Basel, he could pacify Bohemia, and then become its undisputed ruler. There was no time to mature these plans. On April 17, 1427, Korybut was suddenly seized in the castle of Waldstein; his adherents made an unsuccessful attempt to liberate him, but he was afterwards allowed to return to his own country. Magister Přibram and other ecclesiastics of the moderate party were also exiled from Prague.

There is no doubt that the retirement of Prince Korybut was a decisive blow to the party which hoped to establish an independent monarchy under a sovereign who accepted the Articles of Prague It also—monarchy being at that time the only possible form of government over an extended area of country—ultimately proved fatal to the hopes of those who wished to preserve the autonomy of Bohemia, as well as the religious ceremonies which had become so dear to its people.

A monarch of Slav nationality—belonging to the reigning family of Poland, in which country sympathy with the

Hussites was at that time very strong[1]—would perhaps have fully succeeded in a task in which George of Poděbrad was only partially and temporarily successful.

As soon as the internal dissensions had for a time ceased, the Bohemians again turned their attention to their foreign enemies. They now, for the first time, assumed the offensive. An army commanded by Prokop the Great, Prokop the Less, leader of the Orphans, and by other chiefs, entered Lusatia and Silesia, and after having ravaged the country in every direction returned to Bohemia laden with booty. This was the first of a series of warlike incursions of the Hussites into Germany, which it will be unnecessary to detail. The cruelty of the Hussites during the invasions of Germany long remained traditional in that country; impartial judges will, however, have to admit that the Hussites, on the whole, behaved with more humanity in Germany than did the crusading armies during their repeated invasions of Bohemia.

Another of these invasions was at that time being prepared. King Sigismund was engaged in warfare with the Turks during the whole of the years 1427 and 1428, but Pope Martin V induced several of the German princes to undertake a new crusade against the Hussites. As leader of the crusade the Pope chose Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, who was made a cardinal at the same time; this honour was also conferred on the old enemy of the Hussites, John "the Iron," now bishop of Olomonc. His relationship to the royal family of England[2] gave Cardinal Henry no small influence; this, as well as the cardinal's long experience of secular affairs, probably governed the Pope's choice. The cardinal, who was appointed apostolic legate for Bohemia, Hungary, and Germany, and received full powers from the Pope, himself accompanied the invading army, though the Margrave Frederick of Brandenburg assumed the military command. The Duke of Bavaria, the Archbishops of Maintz and Trier, the Bishops of Bamberg and Würzburg, were among the many temporal and ecclesiastical princes who in person took part in the crusade. The total force of the invading army consisted,

[1] Want of space renders it impossible to enter further into the little known subject of the extension of the Hussite movement to Hungary, Poland, and other parts of Eastern Europe.

[2] He was a legitimized son of John of Gaunt and Catharine Swynford.

according to the lowest estimates, of 80,000 horsemen and the same number of infantry; some contemporary writers, however, give much higher figures. Cardinal Henry himself was accompanied by a body-guard of 1000 English archers. It was decided this time to attack Bohemia from the west, in which part of the country—the district of Plzeň—the papal party had more adherents than in any other. The invading army first laid siege to the town of Stříbro, which was bravely defended by the Hussite leader Přibík of Klenau, though his garrison consisted of two hundred men only. The Bohemians, as usual, united in the moment of peril, immediately marched to his aid under the command of the two Prokops, but with a very small force,[1] "prepared" —to use Palacký's words—"to defend the chalice against the whole Christian world." When the Bohemian army arrived at a distance of three (German) miles from Stříbro on August 27th, 1247, a terrific panic seized the crusaders at the mere news of their approach. The whole army fled in a wild rout till they reached the town of Tachov. They were met by Cardinal Henry of Winchester, who entreated them, if they valued their future salvation, not to fly before heretic forces so far inferior to their own. He caused the papal standard to be displayed, and put himself at the head of those whom he had persuaded to attempt to rally. Through his efforts the crusaders, or more probably part of their army, remained at Tachov, prepared to face the Bohemians. When the latter, however, arrived two days later, their appearance had the same result as at Stříbro. The whole army fled in wild confusion in the direction of the Šumava, or Bohemian forest, which here constitutes the frontier between Bohemia and Germany. Thousands of Germans were killed by the Bohemians, who continued the pursuit as far as the passes of the Šumava. The princes of the empire, who seem to have undertaken the crusade in a very half-hearted spirit, were unable to control their men. All the prayers and entreaties of Cardinal Henry proved of no avail; it was in vain that he seized the standard of the empire, in a state of furious excitement tore it into shreds in the presence of the princes, and then with fearful im-

[1] Palacký himself considers the figures he gives—1500 horsemen and 16,000 infantry—too low; it will seem probable to many that the Bohemian chroniclers of the Hussite wars sometimes understated the forces of their countrymen and exaggerated those of the crusaders.

precations threw it at their feet. The English cardinal was at last obliged to join in the general stampede, and narrowly escaped becoming a prisoner of the heretics.[1]

This rout of the invaders was again followed by internal disturbances, especially in the township of Prague. A dispute arose between the community of the Staré Město (Old Town) and the Nové Město (New Town) with regard to the distribution of the confiscated ecclesiastical property. The inhabitants of the new town were aided by the Orphans, while the more conservative burghers of the old town attempted to re-establish their former alliance with the utraquist nobles, which had been interrupted by the deposition of Prince Korybut.

These disturbances do not for the moment appear to have been of great importance, as we read that in December of the same year (1427) Prokop the Great marched into Hungary at the head of a Hussite army. He ravaged a wide extent of country apparently without experiencing any resistance from the Hungarians. Prokop afterwards returned to Moravia, where he was joined by reinforcements. He then undertook a new invasion of Germany. Penetrating far into Silesia he burnt the suburbs of Breslau, and forced many of the Silesian princes to conclude treaties of peace and even of alliance with Bohemia. The Bishop of Breslau, who, aided by some Silesian princes and towns, attempted to oppose the invincible Bohemians, was defeated in a very sanguinary encounter at Neisse (March 18, 1428), in which the Germans are said to have lost 9000 men. During the same year other Hussite bands invaded and ravaged the districts of Austria and Bavaria which are nearest to the Bohemian frontier.

The complete failure of all efforts forcibly to subdue Bohemia made Sigismund, at least for a time, seriously meditate on the possibility of a peaceful settlement. On the other hand, the utraquist nobles, among whom Menhard, lord of Jindřichův Hradec, was now the most prominent, after the departure of Korybut, began to endeavour to reconcile King Sigismund with the Bohemian people. Menhard of Jindřichův Hradec wished to arrange a meeting between Sigismund and Prokop the Great, at that moment the most important representative of the utraquist or Hussite cause. It was suggested that Prokop should visit the nominal

[1] Palacký.

King of Bohemia, who was then residing at Presburg, not far from the Moravian frontier. Prokop did not refuse this proposal. As soon as a safe-conduct had been obtained, the Bohemian leader, accompanied by Menhard of Jindřichův Hradec, by Magister Payne, and a few other followers, and by an escort of only two hundred horsemen, started for Presburg, where they arrived on April 14, 1429. The deliberations that took place did not at first appear hopeless; both parties were indeed anxious to terminate the war. King Sigismund, who had assumed a conciliatory attitude in consequence of his many defeats, received the Hussite envoys graciously. He entreated them to return to the papal doctrine, or, were that impossible, at least to suspend all hostilities till after the opening of the great Council at Basel, which was to meet within two years; to this Council he wished them to refer all disputed points concerning doctrine or ritual.

The proposed truce was distinctly unfavourable to the Bohemians, who by accepting it would have lost the advantage of their recent military successes, while affording their enemies time to prepare new armaments. The Bohemian envoys consequently declined to give an answer to this proposal, stating that it was impossible for them to do so before the Estates of Bohemia had been consulted. On the other hand, they entreated King Sigismund to accept their articles of belief, assuring him that, should he do so, they would rather have him as their king than any one else. This proposal irritated Sigismund, who swore to God that he would rather die than err in his faith.

These negotiations thus ended in failure, which became still more evident when the Diet assembled at Prague (May 23, 1429). The ambassadors whom Sigismund had sent there questioned the Diet as to its willingness to be represented at the future Council and to conclude a truce; the Diet, however, made its consent dependent on conditions which Sigismund was certain not to accept. The Estates declared that they were prepared to recognize the future Council if the Greeks, the Armenians, and the Patriarch of Constantinople (all of whom partook of the communion in both kinds) were duly represented. A further condition was that the Council should be held according to the law of God and not according to that of the Pope; so that not only the Pope but the whole Christian world could freely express its

opinion. Should such a Council assemble, they were ready to send to it wise, prudent, and pious men, and to furnish them with full powers. As to the truce, the Estates were only prepared to grant it should Duke Albert of Austria evacuate Moravia, which country had been ceded to him by the Emperor and King Sigismund. They also made several other reservations, of which the most important were, that the truce should only be valid for Sigismund's own territories, but not for Bavaria and Saxony; also that all those who had formerly accepted the utraquist doctrine and then deserted it should be excluded from the truce.

King Sigismund, as was inevitable, considered these proposals to be inadmissible; he had, in fact, immediately after the rupture of the negotiations of Presburg, again begged the German princes to arm against the heretics. Pope Martin V, the most indefatigable enemy of Bohemia, also caused a new crusade to be preached against the land. Special reliance was placed on England. The cardinal-legate Henry of Winchester had equipped a force of 5000 men, with which he crossed the seas in July (1429). On his march through Belgium the cardinal was recalled, and ordered, instead of continuing his march to Bohemia, to proceed with his troops to France, where the victories of Joan of Arc at that time rendered his presence necessary. The cardinal obeyed reluctantly, but was forced to do so, as his troops declared that they would in any case, even against his wish, march into France, as their king had ordered them to do so.

The Germans seized on the abandonment of the English expedition as an excuse for giving up the intended crusade. They were comforted by the hope that, after defeating the English, Joan of Arc would appear in Bohemia and exterminate the heretics. A very menacing letter[1] which she

[1] This curious letter, printed in Pubitschka's Bohemian history, is unfortunately too long in its entirety. Joan of Arc begins by saying: "Jam dudum mihi Johanne puelle rumor ipse famaque pertulit quod ex veris Kristianis Heretici et Saracenis similes facti veram religionem atque cultum sustulistis assumpsistique superstitionem fedam ac nefariam quam dum tueri et augere studetis nulla est turpido neque condelitas quam non andeatis." Joan of Arc further tells the Bohemians that "nisi in bellis anglicis essem occupata jam-pridem visitatum vos venissem Verumtamen nisi emendatos vos intelligam dimittam forte anglicanos et adversus vos proficiscar ut . . . vosque vel heresi privem vel tiva." Should they, however, submit to the Roman creed, "Vestras

was supposed to have written to the Bohemians, and which for a time was widely circulated, confirmed them in their hopes.

The Germans, though they had so easily abandoned their intention of invading Bohemia, were not long destined to enjoy peace. In the same year (1429) the Bohemians again attacked them in their own country. During the summer small detachments of Bohemians had already pillaged the neighbouring districts of Lusatia, but in December Prokop the Great led into Germany an army greater than any the Bohemians had ever before assembled for warfare beyond their frontiers. This adventurous expedition, of which want of space makes it impossible to give a detailed account, first marched into Saxony, where the Duke of Saxony and other German princes had assembled an army of 10,000 men near Leipzig; this army, however, dispersed at the mere news that the dreaded Bohemians were approaching. The Bohemians then continued their march through Germany, burning down many towns, and ravaging the country in every direction. The general terror was so great that even towns distant from their line of march like Hamburg and Lüneberg prepared their defences. The Bohemians, however, marched southward, intending to attack the city of Nuremberg before returning to their country.

Frederick of Hohenzollern, Margrave of Brandenburg, and Burgrave of Nuremberg, who seems already to have been gifted with the political insight which has ever since been characteristic of his race, saved the town from the danger that menaced it. At a personal interview that took place between him and Prokop and other Bohemian generals at Kulmbach (Feb. 6, 1430), Frederick concluded a truce with the Bohemians in his own name as well as in that of the German princes and the towns that were then

ad me Ambassiatores mittatis; ipsis dicam quid illud sit quod facere vos opporteat." The letter ends with renewed threats should the Bohemians remain obstinate. This letter, the original spelling of which I have retained, is printed in Pubitschka's *Chronologische Geschichte v. Boheim* (pt. vi. vol. i). It is dated from "Suliaci (Sully) iii Marci 1429." Palacký also mentions it, and tells us, as a proof of the importance which was at the time attached to it, that he found a copy of it among the documents of the Imperial chancellory referring to Emperor Sigismund's reign. Mr. Anatole France, in his *Vie de Jeanne d'Arc*, has republished this letter in a somewhat different form.

allied with him. The Bohemians promised, on payment of a large sum of money, to return to their own country. It was also agreed—and this condition probably seemed the most onerous to the papal partisans—that a meeting should take place at Nuremberg between papal and utraquist ecclesiastics; and the validity of the Articles of Prague was to be there discussed. In consequence of opposition on the part of the Pope, this interview never took place. The Bohemians meanwhile returned to their land "after a more glorious campaign against the Germans than any (other) that is noted in the chronicles. Had they, like their ancestors, desired glory, they would have marched as far as the Rhine and have subdued many countries."[1]

All contemporary records note the great impression which the victorious march of the Bohemians through Germany produced all over Europe. The danger of the Hussite movement spreading to the neighbouring countries seemed an increasing one. The report of the constant victories of the Hussites reached France, and even distant Spain. Being considered as a proof that God was on the side of the Bohemians, it caused similar movements (which were, however, rapidly suppressed) to break out in those countries. The more far-seeing adherents of the papal cause now began seriously to reflect whether, the forcible suppression of the heretics appearing impossible, a peaceful agreement with them could be achieved. The German princes were also anxious for peace.

Where political parties are constituted and divided from one another solely by reference to social considerations, there is no little danger for the State. Such a condition of things did not exist in Bohemia at the moment, for a large part of the utraquist nobility were in alliance with the Praguers, and a few nobles and knights were even still found in the Taborite camp. But the Hussite movement constantly tended towards becoming more and more democratic.

The mere fact that Prokop the Great, a man of modest birth, had become the leader of vast armies and negotiated on terms of equality with dukes and princes could not fail to excite in Germany all those who were dissatisfied with the existent order of things. Sympathy with the followers of Hus had on isolated occasions manifested itself in Germany,

[1] Palacký, quoting from contemporary chroniclers.

and it did not seem impossible that, should the Hussites continue their invasions, even the old racial hatred between Slavs and Teutons might be insufficient to prevent the people from fraternizing with the invaders.

On the other hand, the Bohemians, and especially the utraquist nobles and the burghers of Prague, were also desirous of peace. A ten years' struggle against almost all Europe had not unnaturally exhausted the country. It was impossible, without incurring the risk of starvation, to keep the whole able-bodied male population constantly under arms. The Bohemian leaders had, therefore, been obliged to strengthen their armies by enlisting foreign mercenaries. The great booty the Bohemian armies obtained rendered this course easy. Large numbers of Poles and Ruthenians —attracted not only by the hope of plunder but also by affinity of race, and in the case of the Ruthenians also of religion—flocked to the Bohemian standards. Many Germans even, were now found in the Hussite armies. This change in the composition of the utraquist forces, who were no longer Žižka's "warriors of God," contributed to further the desire for peace among the more moderate Bohemians, particularly among the then very powerful utraquist priesthood.

As it was certain that unconditional subjection to the Pope's authority could be enforced on the Bohemians only at the point of the sword, it was consistent with the ideas of the age that a General Council of the Church was the only available expedient. The Hussites had all along considered the accusation of heresy as the greatest of insults; and they strenuously maintained that they formed a part of the universal Church, and therefore could not and did not directly dispute the authority of a General Council. They maintained, however, as has already been noted, that no Council could be considered as a general one in which the Eastern Church was unrepresented.[1] They also wished it to be stipulated that the decision on all disputed questions should lie with the Council and not the Pope.

[1] This point of view seems greatly to have irritated the adherents of the papal cause; in a letter of the year 1431, addressed to the King of Poland, King Sigismund says that "the Bohemians only recognize the Council under certain conditions, demanding that the Indians [*sic*], Greeks, Armenians, and schismatics, in fact, all who believe in Christ, should be present at the Council, as well as other things to write which would be more ridiculous than useful." (Letter, quoted by Palacký.)

In consequence of the general desire for peace, several German princes, as well as the University of Paris, earnestly petitioned Pope Martin V to comply with the universal wish, and assemble a General Council of the Church. The Pope was strongly opposed to this, as he still held the view that force of arms was the only means of ending the Hussite troubles. Martin was at that time negotiating with King Vladislav of Poland for the purpose of inducing him to attack the Bohemian heretics. These negotiations were unsuccessful. King Vladislav, over whom his nephew, Prince Korybut—an old friend of Bohemia—had at that moment great influence, assumed a less hostile attitude against the Hussites than he had shown for some time.

Though still hoping to organize another crusade, Pope Martin now gave a reluctant consent to the assembling of the Council. It was decided that it should meet at Basel on March 3, 1431, and the Pope directed Cardinal Julius Cesarini to preside over it as his representative. Cardinal Cesarini was at the same time appointed papal legate for Germany, and instructed above all things to urge the German princes to make one more effort to subdue Bohemia by force of arms. The cardinal therefore first proceeded to Nuremberg, where Sigismund, in the spring of the year 1431, had assembled a Diet of the Empire. The Diet almost unanimously decreed a general armament of all Germany against the heretics. Cardinal Cesarini sent a message to Basel, where the members of the Council were already beginning to arrive, informing them that their deliberations were to be deferred till after the end of the crusade, in which he himself intended to take part.

The Bohemians, as usual, united in view of the common peril, though we read of another serious dispute between the priests of Tabor and those of Prague about this time (April 1431). A general meeting of the Bohemian leaders took place at Kutna Hora, in which twelve regents were chosen for the provisional government of the land. The regents included members of all the various utraquist parties, the utraquist nobles not excepted. The assembly soon transferred the seat of its deliberations to Prague. Ambassadors of the Emperor Sigismund appeared before it, though Sigismund had undoubtedly already decided again to appeal to the fortune of war. It was here agreed between the regents and the envoys of Sigismund that the Bohemians

should send ambassadors to Cheb, where they were to meet Sigismund himself and several of the German princes.

The negotiations at Cheb—as all parties perhaps expected—met with no result. Differences of opinion as to the composition and the powers of the future Council were the principal obstacle.

The new crusade against Bohemia, destined to be the last one, thus became inevitable. The Bohemian ambassadors returned to Prague (May 31), informed the people that all hope of peace had vanished, and called the whole nation to arms against the expected invaders. Prokop the Great, for the moment, became actually, though not nominally, dictator of Bohemia. He assembled an army of 50,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry, to which all the utraquist parties contributed; but it was noticed that many lords of that faith, though they sent their contingents, did not themselves join Prokop's standards. Prince Korybut of Poland, however, rejoined the Bohemian forces in the hour of peril, though only as a volunteer. The army of the crusaders, commanded by Frederick, Margrave of Brandenburg, with whom was Cardinal Cesarini—King Sigismund having returned to Nuremberg—only crossed the Bohemian frontier on August 1. The crusaders, and particularly the papal legate, were full of hope that this expedition would at last succeed in extirpating the Bohemian heretics. The cardinal had just received a large sum of money from the new Pope, Eugenius IV,[1] to aid in the expenses of the campaign, and was so certain of victory that he had already written to Sigismund asking for a grant of land in Bohemia, as soon as the country should have been conquered.

The army of the crusaders, according to the lowest estimates, consisted of 90,000 infantry and 40,000 horsemen. Again attacking Bohemia from the west, they first laid siege to the town of Tachov, known already from one of the former crusades. Unable to capture the strongly-fortified city, they stormed the little town of Most, and here, as well as in the surrounding country, committed the most horrible atrocities[2] on a population a large part of which had never belonged to the utraquist faith. The crusaders, advancing in very slow marches, now penetrated

[1] Eugenius IV succeeded Martin V as Pope in the year 1431.

[2] This is admitted even by Aeneas Sylvius (*Historica Bohemica*), a writer who was, of course, hostile to the Hussite cause.

further into Bohemia, till they reached the neighbourhood of the town of Domažlice. On August 14 Prokop the Great and his troops also arrived in the neighbourhood of that town. "It was at three o'clock that the crusaders, who were encamped in the plain between Domažlice [1] and Horšův Týn, received the news that the Hussites were approaching and that the decisive battle was near. Though the Bohemians were still a (German) mile off, the rattle of their war-wagons and the song, "All ye warriors of God," which the whole army was intoning, could already be heard." The cardinal and the Duke of Saxony ascended a neighbouring hill, so as to be able to inspect the ground where the battle would take place. Suddenly they heard a great noise in the German camp, and noticed that the German horsemen were dispersing in every direction, and that the wagons were driving off to the rear. "What is this?" said the cardinal. "Why are these wagons throwing off their loads?" Directly afterwards a messenger, sent by the Margrave of Brandenburg, arrived, announcing that the army was in full flight: the cardinal should therefore think of his own safety, and fly to the forest before it was too late. The cardinal escaped with great difficulty, menaced not by the Bohemians, but by the crusaders, who threw all responsibility for the disaster on him. To save him, the Bishop of Würsburg induced him to assume the dress of his military retinue. He thus escaped disguised as a common soldier, riding away very mournfully, and remaining a whole day and night without partaking of food or drink.[2] The victory, though for the Bohemians an almost bloodless one, was the most decisive they ever gained. The Hussites this time, better provided with cavalry than usual, pursued the enemy far into the passes of the Böhmerwald, and inflicted immense losses. This victory for a time put a stop to all attempts to coerce Bohemia. Cardinal Cesarini now became at the Council the strongest advocate of a peaceful agreement with the utraquists. About the same time that the battle of Domažlice took place Bohemia was also invaded from the north by some of the Silesian princes, and from the east by Duke Albert of Austria. Both these attacks were successfully repulsed; the priest Prokop "the

[1] In German, "Tauss."

[2] Abridged from Palacký's account of the battle, which is founded on the narrative of John of Segovia, who, as a personal friend of Cesarini, probably had many details from the Cardinal himself.

Lesser" (Prokupek), leader of the Orphans, specially distinguishing himself by his defence of Moravia against the Austrians. With the exception of Plzeň and a few isolated castles, the regents now held undisputed dominion over the whole of Bohemia and Moravia, as well as over a large part of Silesia; in the latter country, however, their authority was always contested.

By their victory at Domažlice the Bohemians attained the summit of their military glory.[1] At no period was the fate of Europe so completely in their hands as at that moment. The idea of opposing them in the field, which even before this crowning victory was scouted by many, now became an absurdity. The Bohemians, on the other hand, still desired peace. It has, perhaps, not been sufficiently noted that they were entirely unaffected by the intoxication of victory. They made no attempt to assert their supremacy in Europe, which would not have been impossible for them at this moment, though the limited extent of the country and number of their population rendered the prolonged retention of power impossible.

When the Council of Basel, soon after the arrival of Cardinal Cesarini, sent a letter (October 15, 1431) to the Bohemians, inviting them to send deputies to the Council, the proposal was on the whole favourably received. The death of Archbishop Conrad (December 1431) contributed to render the moderate utraquists, and especially the nobles of that faith, desirous of an agreement with the Pope. The archbishop had hitherto consecrated their priests, and they were now dependent on Rome, as they wished to preserve the apostolic succession of their clergy.

Very lengthy negotiations between the Bohemians and the Council now began; and they at last resulted in a compromise that procured at least temporary tranquillity.

[1] The great rejoicing and pride of the Bohemians on the occasion of this brilliant triumph appear very clearly in the Latin song of Lawrence of Brežova. He thus describes the flight of the Romanists—

"Sic isti de Bohemia
Metu palentes fugiunt
Et ignorantes, quo eunt

. . . . .

Suntne ast isti milites
Papae, regis sathalites [*sic*]?
Non sunt viri sed feminae
Caprae fugaces misere
Imo paventes lepores
Aut exturbatae volucres."

Even a summary account of these negotiations, and of the numerous embassies sent by the Council to Prague, and by the Bohemians to Basel, would be beyond the purpose of this book. It will be sufficient to mention one or two of the most important deliberations and their final result.

It is very much to be regretted that we have but scanty information concerning the internal condition of Bohemia immediately after the great victory of Domažlice. Contemporary records contain little beyond accounts of renewed attacks on the neighbouring districts, for the commencement of the negotiations as yet involved no suspension of hostilities. Prokop the Great seems at that moment to have exercised an informal, but none the less real, dictatorship over Bohemia. All the utraquist party (more or less willingly) still recognized him as their leader. Prokop the Great is one of the most prominent characters in Bohemian history. This appears more clearly since the modern historians, beginning with Palacký, commenced to discuss the actions and characters of Žižka, Prokop, and the other leaders of the Bohemian movement as they would those of other statesmen or warriors of that age. The older writers, following the example of Aeneas Sylvius, generally regarded them as demons or magicians who, with the aid of witchcraft and of the infernal powers, obtained victories that could not otherwise be accounted for. Prokop the Great was distinguished from the other Taborite leaders by his culture and love of literature and learning. Equal to Žižka in his enthusiasm for his nation and his creed, in force of will and in courage, he was his superior in the science of politics. Moreover, he was less of a fanatic than his predecessor. Though differing from the Church of Rome more widely than Žižka, he was more inclined to compromise, and thus sometimes incurred the suspicions of his own partisans. The whole energy of the party of advanced views—both as to religious and social reforms—was personified in this one man, and it was inevitable that the Romish party, the Calixtines (or Praguers), and the utraquist nobility should at last have united to bring about his fall.

As already mentioned, the letter of the Council of Basel proposing terms of agreement was on the whole favourably received, though there was some opposition on the part of the Taborites, Prokop the Great at first appearing undecided. A Diet was convoked by the regents at Prague in

the month of February (1432). After a long and stormy debate it was decided that the Bohemians should send envoys to Cheb, where they were to meet the delegates of the Council. A further deliberation was then to take place. The date of the meeting was fixed for April 27, but it was only on May 7 that the Bohemian envoys arrived at Cheb; among them were Prokop the Great, John of Rokycan, afterwards utraquist Archbishop of Prague, Peter Payne, commonly called "Magister Engliš," and a few utraquist knights; among the delegates of the Council were several prominent ecclesiastics. Though preliminary matters only were discussed, the debates were very stormy. The Bohemians referred to the fate of Hus at a previous Council, and Prokop the Great openly questioned the security of the safe-conduct which was to be given to the Bohemian envoys who were to proceed to Basel. He remarked that it was an ancient papal doctrine that no faith need be kept with heretics. The Bohemians finally consented—subject to the approval of the Diet—to send representatives to Basel. An agreement was drawn up, the principal points of which were a full guarantee of the personal safety of the envoys, and of the right to express their opinions freely, to censure the abuses of the Church, and to defend the four Articles (of Prague). The envoys were further promised honourable seats at the assemblies of the Council. Finally, it was stipulated that the suspension of Church services in the towns through which the envoys were to pass (required by the rules of the Church, as Bohemia was under the interdict, but resented by the Bohemians as an insult) should not be enforced.

A new assembly of the Estates of Bohemia was held at Kutna Hora in August (1432). The representatives of Bohemia at the Council were then chosen, but the Diet did not accept the proposal of a truce with the neighbouring countries which was suggested in consequence of the deliberations at Cheb. The following months were spent in negotiations for securing the safety of the Bohemian ambassadors during their long journey.

The successful resistance offered by the Bohemians to the vast Romanist armies, had not only in Germany—where hatred of the Slav is traditional—but in all Western Europe engendered a ferocious hatred of the heretics.[1] It

[1] As a proof of the intense hatred of the Bohemians that then

was therefore only after two envoys whom the Bohemians had despatched to Basel had returned safely, and given the most reassuring information, that the great embassy at last started for Basel. Among its members were most of the former envoys at Cheb. We again read the names of Prokop the Great, John of Rokycan, and "Magister Engliš." Of the secular members of the Embassy, William Kostka of Postupitz, Lord of Pürglitz, held the highest rank. The embassy consisted of fifteen members, and was accompanied by an escort of three hundred horsemen. They assembled near the town of Domazlice, whence they proceeded to the Bohemian frontier. They were here met by the German troops, who, according to agreement, were to assure their safety during their journey to Basel.

It was on the evening of January 4, 1433, that the Bohemian embassy, which had travelled from Schafhausen by water, arrived at Basel. They purposely and prudently omitted to give notice of the exact time of their arrival, but as soon as the news of their arrival spread in the town, popular excitement was very great. An eye-witness[1] tells us that the whole population, even the women and children, crowded to the house-tops and windows to watch the strange visitors, wondering at their terrific countenances and wild eyes. The gaze of all was specially fixed on Prokop the Great. The people said he was the man who had often defeated great armies of the faithful, destroyed many cities, and caused the death of thousands. They said even his countrymen feared him, and that he was an energetic, unconquered, and brave leader who knew no fear. The Bohemians were hospitably received by the authorities of the town and the members of the Council. Reciprocal banquets took place, at which the discussion was generally, though not invariably, of an amicable nature. A slight

prevailed in France, Palacký notices that the name of "Bohemians" was about this time given to the gypsies, the most despised tribe known in Western Europe. M. Svatek has more recently attempted to explain the application of this singular denomination to the gypsies by the fact that many of them arrived in Western Europe with safe-conducts signed by King Sigismund. Sigismund always retained the title of King of Bohemia, even during the time he was excluded from the government of the country. The arguments of M. Svatek (*Cultur-Historische Bildur aus Böhmen*) do not seem to me to contradict Palacký's conjecture.

[1] Aenaeus Sylvius (*Historica Bohemica*).

difficulty arose only two days after the arrival of the Bohemians. As had been agreed at Cheb, the Bohemian priests, both the Calixtines and the Taborites, celebrated their religious services according to their own rites. Curiosity induced many citizens of Basel to attend these services. They found little in the Calixtine service to gratify their curiosity, as mass was said in the ordinary way, and the only novelty was that the faithful partook of the consecrated wine. They were more astonished when they witnessed the Taborite service conducted by Prokop the Great, for he used neither altar nor vestments, and all ceremonies were suppressed. The whole service consisted of short prayers, a sermon, and the communion in both kinds, of which the whole congregation partook. The ecclesiastical authorities brought their complaints before the Bohemian ambassadors; they considered the permission given to the citizens of Basel to be present at the Hussite worship as an attempt to spread the utraquist teaching in the town. The Bohemians answered saying that they had invited no one to be present at their religious functions, and that it was not their business, but that of the authorities of the town, to prevent the citizens from attending divine service according to the Bohemian rites; the matter was then allowed to drop.

On January 10 the negotiations between the Bohemians and the Council began. It had been agreed that each of the four Articles of Prague should be discussed by one of the ecclesiastics forming part of the Bohemian mission. John of Rokycan undertook the defence of the second "article," which treated of communion in "the two kinds," and "Magister Engliš" that of the third one, which referred to the worldly possessions of the clergy. These were obviously the two most important points. After the ending of the pleading of the four Bohemian priests, four priests chosen by the Council were to reply. The proceedings opened with a touching exhortation by Cardinal Cesarini, at which all present, including the Bohemians, were moved to tears. Rokycan replied, complaining bitterly of the wrong done to his country by the aspersion of heresy that had been put upon it; he further expressed sincere hope that the whole Christian world would return to the institutions of the primitive Church. On January 16 Rokycan began his argument for the communion in two

kinds, and his speech was only brought to a conclusion at the meeting of the Council on the 19th. After Rokycan the other Bohemian ambassadors delivered their orations; the last of them, Peter Payne, finished his speech on the 28th. Some of these speeches caused great irritation among the Romanist hearers. This specially applies to Magister Payne. He praised Wycliffe and his doctrines, and alluded to the persecution that he had endured at Oxford, stating that he had been obliged to seek refuge in Bohemia. Payne was violently interrupted by the English ecclesiastics who were present, and a stormy altercation between him and them took place.

When the Bohemian priests had finished their speeches, Cardinal Cesarini caused a paper to be read enumerating twenty-eight points, or "articles" as they were called, in which the Hussite belief differed from that of the Roman Church. The Bohemians were requested to define their views with regard to these articles. This clever move on the part of the cardinal placed them in a rather difficult position, as some of these articles referred to points with regard to which no complete agreement existed between the Calixtines and the Taborites. Both parties, however, agreed that only by remaining united could they expect to obtain concessions from the Council. They therefore gave no immediate answer. A month afterwards, John of Rokycan made a statement in the name of the whole Bohemian embassy. He declared that it had been agreed at Cheb that the four Articles of Prague should form the basis of the negotiations; the Bohemians could therefore discuss no other questions till an accord as to the four Articles had been obtained.

Before Rokycan had made this statement, the four priests on the papal side had delivered their orations in answer to those of the Bohemians. Rokycan now (March 2) began his second speech in defence of the communion in both kinds, refuting the arguments of his papal antagonist. After him the other Bohemian, and then the papal orators, again spoke in the same order; it was only on April 8 that the last of these speeches came to a conclusion.

Before that date it had become evident to all that an agreement was for the moment impossible. Duke William of Bavaria, who had in the absence of the Emperor Sigismund held the position of "protector" of the Council,

induced four of the prominent Bohemians to meet privately four of the leading members of the Council. Among the latter was Cardinal Cesarini, at whose residence the discussions took place. These informal interviews did more to further the cause of peace than the lengthy display of rhetoric at the general meetings of the Council. The Bohemians were beginning to see that a general reform of the Church and a return to the order of primitive Christianity were impossibilities. The members of the Council, on the other hand, at last realized that concessions as to the all-important question of communion in both kinds were inevitable. During the interviews at Cardinal Cesarini's residence it was settled that when the Bohemian envoys, as now seemed certain, returned to their country, they should be accompanied by representatives of the Council; it would thus be possible to continue the negotiations at Prague.

The Estates of Bohemia met at Prague in June (1433), and the representatives of the Council, at whose head was Philibert, Bishop of Coutances in Normandy, were present at the deliberations. The members of the embassy, which had returned from Basel, reported to the Diet on the result of their mission. As had probably been settled at Cardinal Cesarini's residence, they announced that the Council was prepared to grant to Bohemia the right of receiving the communion in both kinds, on condition of the Bohemians returning on the Universal Church and conforming to its regulations on all other points. This proposal was, on the whole, favourably received by the Diet. The Estates, however, demanded that the communion in both kinds should be obligatory in Bohemia and Moravia, and optional in Silesia as well as in Poland, where the Hussites then had many adherents. The deputies of the Council were not prepared, and indeed probably had no authority, to grant these terms. They therefore left Prague (July 14, 1433) accompanied by the Bohemian ambassadors, who were to continue the negotiations at Basel. On arriving there the Bohemians informed the Council of the conditions of peace which their countrymen were prepared to accept. They formulated these terms in four articles that constitute (in a subsequently slightly modified form) the famed "Compacts" which up to the year 1567 were considered one of the fundamental laws of the country. The Compacts, which are

founded on the Articles of Prague, run thus. 1. The Holy Sacrament is to be given freely in both kinds to all Christians in Bohemia and Moravia, and to those elsewhere who adhere to the faith of the two countries. 2. All mortal sins shall be punished and extirpated by those whose office it is so to do. 3. The word of God is to be freely and truthfully preached by the priests of the Lord, and by worthy deacons. 4. The priests "in the time of the law of grace"[1] shall claim ownership of no worldly possessions.

The Council refused to reply to the demands of the Bohemian envoys, stating that its decision could only be made known to a general assembly of the Estates of Bohemia. The Council, therefore, again sent delegates to Prague, who travelled there together with the returning Bohemian envoys.

New internal troubles in Bohemia now for a time turned away public interest from the negotiations with the Council. The Bohemian armies had not discontinued the warlike expeditions which the still valid prohibition against trade with Bohemia indeed rendered almost a necessity. We find one of the Bohemian armies fighting as allies of Poland against the Knights of the Teutonic Order, in the vicinity of the Baltic Sea. At this moment, however, the Hussites concentrated all their efforts on the capture of the town of Plzeň; they naturally attached great importance to the possession of this considerable Bohemian town, which was still in the hands of the papal party. The most important point in the negotiations with the Council was whether communion in both kinds should be optional or obligatory in Bohemia, and it was difficult to demand the latter alternative as long as the Catholic town of Plzeň remained unconquered. A large army under Prokop the Great therefore began to besiege the city about July (1433). It was noted that the utraquist nobles no longer joined Prokop's forces.

The envoys of the Council reached Prague in the autumn

[1] This may be shortly interpreted as signifying "henceforth." Before acceptation by the Roman Church this article was qualified by an explanatory note stating that priests and monks should not own hereditary estates, and that the priests as "administrators" of the property of the Church should manage it faithfully, according to the injunctions of the Holy Father.

(1433). They earnestly advised the Bohemians to accept the conditions which the Council had authorized them to offer. Though this had been kept secret from the Bohemian envoys, the delegates of the Council had been authorized by it to accept the communion in both kinds as permissible, and even to consent to the other Articles of Prague in a modified form. The influence of the delegates, particularly on the more aristocratic section of the utraquist party, was evidently very considerable; probably through the influence of the utraquist nobles a considerable number of the clergy were induced to accept the Compacts in the modified form suggested by the delegates of the Council. But the agreement, which seemed on the point of success, again failed. The Taborites from the first were opposed to the proposals of the Council, and the opinions of the Calixtine clergy were divided. One party, headed by Magister Přibram, was strongly in favour of peace, and of accepting the Compacts in a modified form. Přibram even declared that all further strife was a mortal sin. On the other hand, many Calixtine priests, under the leadership of John of Rokycan, strongly opposed the system of an optional communion in the two kinds. Rokycan declared that the system of administering communion in both kinds, and in one and the same place, and even in the same church, would prove a cause of constant discord. It was on this point that the negotiations finally failed, and the delegates of the Council left Prague (January 14, 1434). Before starting, they urgently exhorted some of the utraquist nobles with whom they had become intimate to take a more active part in the politics of their country, and to use their influence in favour of a future agreement with the Church of Rome.

The formerly powerful Bohemian nobility had indeed, since the departure of Prince Korybut, played a very insignificant part, the Hussite movement having acquired a more and more democratic character. This was felt by many nobles, and the desire among them became general—were they but assured of the freedom to retain the revered chalice—to act in union with the papal nobles and suppress the turbulent democracy of Tabor. Before the departure of the envoys of the Council, the Estates had decided on electing a regent, who was to rule the country with the aid of a council of twelve members.

Aleš of Riesenburg, a member of one of the oldest families of the nobility, was chosen to fill this difficult post. The occurrences in the camp before Plzeň a this moment contributed to bring matters to a crisis. The siege, which lasted several months, demoralized the Taborite soldiers, who ravaged the whole neighbouring country. Prokop the Great, who attempted to maintain order in his camp, was attacked by his own soldiers, and throwing up his command, he retired to Prague. Perhaps encouraged by this event, several nobles, with the approval of the regent, now formed a league "for the restoration of peace and order in the country." The league was joined by all the prominent utraquist lords, and somewhat later also by those of the papal party. The citizens of the old town (Staré Město) of Prague, who, as already noticed, constituted the conservative element in the town, also adhered to the league. The leaders of the league addressed an appeal to the Estates of Bohemia, calling on them to join the new coalition.

The first conflict took place at Prague. The citizens of the Staré Město, aided by the nobles, subdued the Nové Město, which had refused to join the league. Prokop unsuccessfully attempted to aid the citizens of the new town. Since he had been illtreated by his own soldiers he seemed, as Palacký writes, to have lost his self-confidence and the keenness of his intellect. The foreboding of his tragic fate and the helplessness of the cause which he defended no doubt overwhelmed him. He wrote, however, to the priest Prokůpek (Prokop the Less), who now commanded the troops before Plzeň, saying that "with the permission of God the false barons, aided by the burghers of the old town, had defeated the brethren of the new town." Prokop the Great therefore begged him to raise the siege of Plzeň and march with all his troops in the direction of Prague. Prokůpek acceded to his wishes, and the leader of the Orphans joined his forces to the troops of Prokop the Great and of the other leaders of Tabor. The combined forces then retired in a direction eastward of Prague.

Both the contending parties now gathered all their forces together, in view of what all foresaw would prove a decisive battle. The army of the nobles was now joined by almost the whole nobility of Bohemia, from the unflinching partisans of Rome to the most faithful Hussites, many of whom had

fought under Žižka. The towns of Prague, Plzeň, and Melnik were the only ones that cast in their lot with the nobles. On the other hand, the army of the towns, as it was called, besides the men of Tabor, Kralové Hradec, and the minor Taborite and Orphan communities, contained the levies of almost all the Bohemian cities, with the exception of those mentioned above. A few knights and nobles, of whom John Roháč, Lord of Duba, and John Kolda, Lord of Žampach, were the most important, also remained faithful to Tabor.

It was on the wide plain that extends between Kouřim and Český Brod, near the centre of which lies the village of Lipany, that the world-old struggle between aristocracy and democracy was now once again fought out.[1] The army of the towns was led by the two Prokops, Roháč of Duba, Kolda of Žampach and other chiefs of the Orphans and Taborites. The nobles were commanded by Bořek of Miletinek, an experienced general who had formerly served under Žižka's orders. With him were the Regent Aleš of Riesenburg; George of Poděbrad, the future king; Ulrich of Rosenberg, leader of the papal party, and almost the whole nobility of Bohemia. Their army was about 25,000 men strong, whilst the Taborites and townsmen, weakened by many defections, only numbered 18,000 men. Both armies formed behind the wagon-entrenchments, or "lagers," which were then so important a feature in Bohemian warfare.

The battle (May 30, 1434) was won by Miletinek by a stratagem. He ordered the van of his army, which was probably drawn up in front of the wagon-entrenchment, to simulate flight. The Taborites, perhaps rendered imprudent by their many victories, left their entrenchments, rushing out to pursue the flying foe. They were immediately attacked by the horsemen of Ulrich of Rosenberg and put to flight. While hastening back to their entrenchments they were attacked by the rest of the army of the nobles, who succeeded in penetrating into their "lager" at the same time as the fugitives. The battle now became a massacre, which continued through the whole night until the following

[1] Many detailed accounts of this great battle have reached us; they are, however, very contradictory. The picturesque account of Aenaeas Sylvius is too evidently an imitation of classical authors in the manner fashionable at the time of the Renaissance.

morning. It must be considered as the extermination rather than as the defeat of the Taborites; 13,000 of their men perished in the battle, and several hundred prisoners were cruelly burnt to death in the huts in which they had been temporarily shut up.[1] A small detachment only escaped. Prokop the Great, Prokop the Less (Prokůpek), and most of the other leaders fell in this battle. "Thus these Bohemians could only be conquered by other Bohemians; they who had proved themselves invincible to all Germans, and had spread the terror and the glory of their name through the whole world."[2] Though of course many Taborites still remained, yet Palacký is undoubtedly right in dating "the fall of Tabor" from the battle of Lipany, rather than from the capture of the town itself (which only took place in 1542).

The more warlike among the men of Tabor mostly left their country. They became mercenaries in the service of foreign countries, especially in Hungary, and the Ukraine and other border-lands between Russia and Poland; the Cossacks in these districts are said to have learnt and adopted the system of warfare of the Taborites. The more peaceful and pious Taborites, despairing altogether of a world in which their religious views no longer prevailed, retired to secluded spots, where they gave themselves up entirely to prayers and devotion. They not inconsiderably contributed to the foundation of the sect of the "Bohemian Brethren" (Moravians)[3] which arose about this time.

The complete defeat of the more advanced party in Bohemia was naturally followed by a reaction which ex-

[1] The people of Bohemia long refused to believe in the death of the Taborites, and maintained that they were in hiding in a cave in the mountain Blanik, whence they were expected some day to reappear to save Bohemia in her moment of greatest peril.

[2] Hienenberg, *Geschichte der Stadt Königgrätz.*

[3] The connection of the Taborites with the Bohemian Brethren was long a disputed point in Bohemian history; all recent Bohemian historians, however, maintain its existence. Professor Goll (*Quellen zur Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder*) tells us that the Brethren did not wish to be considered as continuators of the Taborites. They protested against this theory with a degree of energy which was not justified by the facts of the case. I have preferred to call the new sect "Bohemian Brethren" rather than "Moravians," as the former denomination is alone used by German and Bohemian writers; their doctrines were also not in all points identical with those of the sect now known as the Moravians.

tended both to political and to ecclesiastical affairs; and the reconciliation with the papal Church, together with the general acceptation of Emperor Sigismund as king, became certain from the moment of the battle of Lipany. A meeting of the Estates of Bohemia and Moravia took place only three weeks after the battle. A truce was concluded between the utraquists and the papal party, and it was decided to negotiate with Sigismund, with a view to his assumption of the government of the country. It was further decided to send a deputation to Regensburg, where the Emperor then resided, and where he had been joined by representatives of the Council.

Sigismund received the Bohemian ambassadors (August 1434) very graciously. He assured them that he was no stranger, and that he considered himself a Bohemian and a citizen of Prague. He recalled to them his descent in the female line from the man whom their ancestors had once called away from the plough to their throne,[1] and referred to the fact that his father's (the Emperor Charles's) name was still revered by high and low in their country. A complete agreement was not obtained at Regensburg, though the only disputed point now was the question to what extent communion in both kinds should in future be permissible in Bohemia and Moravia. The Bohemian representatives declared that they wished to be in full accord with their king before negotiating with the Council. For this purpose the Estates again met (October 1434) at Prague. The utraquists here made further concessions. It had become evident to them that communion in the two kinds could not be forced on the adherents of the papal party in Bohemia. The Estates therefore decided to ascertain in what form communion was at that moment administered in all the parochial and other churches of Bohemia, and to propose that this should be the rule for the future.

The Estates further demanded that the Archbishop of Prague and his suffragans should, according to the old institutions of the land, be elected by the Estates and the clergy, subject to the sanction of the king; they claimed, finally, that no Church livings in Bohemia or Moravia should be conferred on foreigners. These demands were transmitted to the Council, and it was settled that a new deputation of the Estates should meet the king and the

[1] Přemysl: see Chap. II.

representatives of the Council at Brno[1] for further negotiations. This meeting only took place in July 1435.

Fresh difficulties here arose, especially with regard to the nomination of a new Archbishop of Prague. The envoys of the Council even made preparations to return to Basel. They were at the last moment prevented from doing so by the efforts of Sigismund, who had already arrived at an agreement with his future subjects on almost all points. The Emperor even went so far as to sign a document by which he promised to lend the Bohemians his aid in maintaining the existing form of communion as proposed by the last Diet at Prague, and the right of electing the Archbishop of Prague and his suffragans. An immediate agreement with the representatives of the Council appearing impossible, further negotiations were deferred till a new meeting of the Diet took place at Prague (Sept. 1435). At this assembly the Estates unanimously elected John of Rokycan Archbishop of Prague. Sigismund was informed of this election, but an agreement still seemed far off. The Emperor had about this time given a verbal assurance to the envoys of the Council that he would not interfere in ecclesiastical matters; he thus practically cancelled the promises which he had made to the Bohemians. The latter, on the other hand, declined to accept the Compacts in the modified form suggested by the Council till Rokycan had been recognized as Archbishop of Prague both by the Emperor and by the Roman Church. Another meeting between the Bohemians and the Romanist envoys at Jihlava[2] in Moravia in June 1436. The representatives of the Council still refused to ratify the election of Rokycan. They suggested that Bishop Philibert of Coutances, who had formerly been sent by the Council as envoy to Bohemia, should act provisionally as Archbishop of Prague. This proposal greatly incensed the Bohemians. The promises of Sigismund and his son-in-law, Albert of Austria, that they would use all their influence to obtain the recognition of Rokycan by the Roman Church to a certain extent pacified the Bohemians, particularly as the feeling in favour of peace was constantly becoming stronger in Bohemia. On July 5, 1436, the Bohemian deputies at last solemnly accepted and subscribed the Compacts, with the not very important modifications on which the Council of Basel had insisted. The repre-

[1] In German "Brünn." [2] In German "Iglau."

sentatives then rescinded the decree of excommunication against the Bohemians, declared them to be faithful sons of the Church, and proclaimed peace between Bohemia and the other nations.

Immediately afterwards Sigismund issued a decree confirming all the ancient rights of Bohemia. The regent Aleš of Riesenburg resigned his office, and Sigismund was recognized as King of Bohemia by all the Estates of the country. Sigismund, now undisputed sovereign of the land, made his entry into Prague on August 23, 1436. He was enthusiastically received by the people, who now at last hoped for more peaceful times.

King Sigismund was already sixty-eight years old when he at last secured the possession of the kingdom. He was only to reign over Bohemia for a few months.

This period of comparative tranquillity, after so many eventful years, may be passed over with very slight notice. Sigismund's policy, though as reactionary as circumstances permitted, was rendered cautious by his experiences. When the necessary redistribution of the principal offices of State and court took place, Sigismund attempted to exclude all who were not either Romanists, or belonged to that part of the utraquist party which was nearest to Rome. His views with regard to heretics probably differed little from those he had expressed at Constance many years before, but he was thoroughly aware of the importance of avoiding a new outbreak of hostilities. The towns of Tabor and Kralové Hradec, still held by the advanced party, were pacified by treaties which guaranteed to them a certain amount of autonomy. Of the few opponents of the new king, John Roháč, Lord of Duba, was especially remarkable. Even after the submission of the town of Kralové Hradec he continued a guerilla warfare, the centre of which was the castle of "Sion"—a name which, like Tabor, Oreb, and so many others, shows how great was the effect of the recently acquired right of studying the Scriptures. After a lengthy siege, Roháč of Duba was obliged to capitulate unconditionally. He and his followers were afterwards publicly executed on the market-place of the old town (Staroměstské Náměsti) at Prague. This injudicious severity caused great indignation in Bohemia, and was probably the principal cause of the renewed troubles during the last months of Sigismund's life. Among others, John Kolda,

Lord of Žampach, one of the few nobles who still adhered to the party of Tabor, again took up arms and forcibly obtained possession of the town of Nachod.

More important than these local disturbances was the difficulty with regard to the appointment of an Archbishop of Prague. As already mentioned, John of Rokycan had been elected by the Estates, but neither the Pope nor the Council had confirmed his election. Philibert, Bishop of Coutances, also resided in Prague, in an undefined capacity, but with the secret approval of King Sigismund. The king's attitude in this matter was not free from the accusation of double-dealing. "Publicly Sigismund wrote to the Council recommending it to confirm Rokycan's nomination as archbishop; secretly, he advised the contrary."[1]

Though no settlement of this difficult question was arrived at, the long-expected sanction of the "Compacts" by the Council of Basel at last reached Prague (Feb. 1437). By order of Sigismund a decree was read out in the Bohemian, Latin, Hungarian, and German languages, in the "Corpus Christi" Chapel at Prague, declaring "that the Bohemians and Moravians who received the flesh and blood of God in both kinds were true Christians, and genuine sons of the Church." Two inscriptions on stone were placed in the chapel to commemorate this important event.[2]

Towards the end of the year (1437) Sigismund became seriously ill, and perhaps feeling that his end was near, decided to return to Hungary. He had already expressed the wish to be interred in that country, at Grosswardin, in a vault which had been specially prepared. His one remaining anxiety was to secure the succession to the Bohemian throne to his son-in-law Albert of Austria. The claim of Albert was founded on the treaty concluded by the Emperor Charles, according to which the houses of Luxemburg and Habsburg had reciprocally recognized each other as heirs, should one or the other line become extinct. Sigismund hoped to realize his object more surely if he could establish Albert as ruler of Bohemia during his lifetime. This appeared to him all the more necessary in consequence of the intrigues of his consort, the Empress Barbara. During

[1] Tomek.

[2] The Corpus Christi Chapel was demolished in 1798. The tablets containing the inscription mentioned above are preserved in the Bohemian Museum at Prague.

the Emperor's journey to Hungary his illness rapidly increased, and he died at Znoymo, December 9, 1437, before arriving in Hungary.

Contrary to the apprehensions of Sigismund in his last days, Albert, Duke of Austria, obtained the recognition of his right to the throne of Bohemia without much opposition. This is the more worthy of notice as Albert had never made a secret of his sympathy with the Germans. Even during the years when he governed Moravia in the name of his father-in-law, he had refused to learn the Bohemian language. He thus naturally gave offence to the people on a point where the national susceptibility is perhaps none the less keen because the range of the national language is somewhat limited. He therefore appeared to the Bohemians, to use the words of Palacký, "as the representative of that evil spirit which always claimed for the German a certain superiority over the Slav, and in fact despised everything that was Slavonic."

Albert was not able to proceed to Bohemia immediately after the death of Sigismund. He was detained by negotiations as to the succession to the crowns of Germany and Hungary, which had also become vacant by the death of his father-in-law. Having succeeded in obtaining his recognition as king by the Hungarians, and having also been chosen as king of the German Electors, Albert arrived in Bohemia in April (1438). Sigismund had during his short reign done everything to facilitate the succession of his son-in-law.

The most prominent offices in the State were held by Ulrich of Rosenberg, always an unswerving adherent of the Roman cause, and by Menhard of Jindřichův Hradec, who, though an utraquist, was entirely devoted to Sigismund and Albert. The more advanced Hussites—whose intellectual leader was Archbishop John of Rokycan—at first recognized Bořek of Miletinek, the victor of Lipany, as their chief. He had endeared himself to them by affording a refuge to the archbishop when he believed himself menaced by Sigismund. When Miletinek died in January 1438 Ptáček, Lord of Pirkstein, became the leader of the more advanced utraquists; this party, probably influenced as much by national as by religious motives, wished to confer the kingdom of Bohemia on a prince of Slav nationality. Their choice fell on Casimir, younger brother of Vladislav III, King of Poland.

Albert's partisans, who held the more important State offices, thought that delay would weaken the chances of their candidate. They therefore promptly assembled the Estates at Prague, and they elected Albert as king after he had promised to maintain the Compacts. Albert's coronation as King of Bohemia followed immediately afterwards (June 29, 1438). The party which acknowledged Ptáček as its leader disputed the validity of Albert's election, and still wished to secure the throne to Casimir of Poland. King Vladislav gave his sanction to the candidature of his brother, and sent a Polish army to Bohemia to assist his partisans. Albert, on the other hand, obtained aid from Hungary and Austria. Many German princes also assisted him. Albert had warned them that if they had not been able to conquer the Bohemians alone, during the late war, the danger for Germany would be yet far greater were the Bohemians united under a common dynasty with a cognate nation like that of the Poles.

The war that now broke out was of little importance and short duration. Eastern Europe was at that moment seriously menaced by the Turks. Pope Eugenius IV and the Council of Basel therefore earnestly entreated the Bohemians and Poles to abandon their internal dissensions, and to arm against the infidels. Albert, as King of Hungary, was more than any other European sovereign exposed to the danger of Turkish invasion. As a complete reconciliation between him and the King of Poland did not seem possible, a truce between the two sovereigns was agreed upon at Breslau (January 1439). Albert then repaired to Southern Hungary, which the Turks, who had already invaded Servia, were preparing to attack. The climate of those countries, to which he was not accustomed, seriously affected his health. Albert fell dangerously ill from dysentery, and decided to return to Vienna. During his journey through Hungary he died (October 27, 1439).

The unexpected death of Albert left Bohemia in a state of anarchy. There was for the moment no heir to the throne, though it was known that Queen Elizabeth, wife of Albert, would shortly give birth to a child. The nobility were divided into two parties. The one, the utraquist (or, as Palacký, in dealing with this period, calls it, the national party) recognized as its leaders Ptáček of Pirkstein and George of Poděbrad. Ulrich of Rosenberg was still the

leader of the Romanist, or Austrian party. The anarchical state of the country, harassed by innumerable local feuds, which it would be wearisome to enumerate, had one advantageous result. Both parties, when they met at a Diet at Prague, were in favour of a peaceful agreement. The terms of this agreement, which were formulated in a document known as the "Letter of Peace" ("List mirny"), included the acceptation of the Compacts, and the recognition of the validity of the election of Archbishop John of Rokycan. The Diet further pledged itself to secure by all means the recognition of Archbishop John by the Papal See. It was further decreed that all documents signed or donations made by King Albert which were injurious to the rights of the Bohemian crown, or of those nobles who had been opposed to Albert, should be invalid. The terms of the "Letter of Peace" were obviously very favourable to the national party, which probably was already by far the more powerful. The only advantage obtained by the Austrian party was that the question of the candidature of the Polish prince was not raised; the national party, for reasons that do not clearly appear, no longer regarded that candidature with as much favour as before.

On February 22, 1440, Queen Elizabeth gave birth to a son, who received the name of Ladislas, and who became the rightful ruler of the land according to the views of those who maintained the hereditary character of the Bohemian throne. Various intrigues and the animosity of the contending parties retarded the recognition of Ladislas. The Bohemian crown was even offered to Albert, Duke of Bavaria, but declined by him. Even after this refusal, and after the Bohemians had decided to accept Ladislas as their king, new difficulties arose. Frederick of Habsburg, Duke of Styria, who had been elected king by the Germans, claimed the guardianship of his nephew, and he even refused to allow the infant king to be conveyed to Bohemia.

After the death of Ptáček of Pirkstein, George of Poděbrad, son of Victorin of Poděbrad, who had commanded the Praguers during the former wars, was chosen as leader by the national party. From the moment that George of Poděbrad became the head of the national party, its policy assumed a more decided and energetic character. The struggle now became a contest for the supremacy in Bohemia between the two party-leaders, George of Podě-

brad and Ulrich of Rosenberg. In the year 1446 a great meeting of the Estates took place at Prague. It was one of those assemblies known in Bohemian history as a "General Diet" at which representatives not only of Bohemia but also of Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia (all which countries at that period formed part of what are technically known as the lands of the Bohemian crown) were present. This Diet is of importance in the constitutional history of Bohemia. We here, for the first time, find the Estates clearly divided into three chambers (known as "curiae,") namely, the lords, knights, and citizens. The "curiae" deliberated separately, and only met with a final decision. The resolutions of this Diet were similar to those of previous assemblies since the death of Albert. Complaints were again raised against the detention of Ladislas, who, it was said, was being brought up as a stranger to the country over which he was destined to rule. An attempt to establish a regency failed. The country indeed remained without any regular government, as the authority of Menhard of Jindřichův Hradec on whom Sigismund had conferred the dignity of supreme burgrave—the highest office in the country—was not universally recognized.

The Diet further complained of the refusal of the Papal See to recognize Archbishop John. It also accused the Romanists of secret agitations against the Compacts. It was also decided that a new embassy should be sent to Rome, a mission which resulted in a complete failure. The Papal See even withdrew from the attitude of toleration which it had formerly assumed with regard to the Compacts. The only promise which Pope Nicholas V (who had now succeeded Eugenius IV) made was that he would send Cardinal Carvajal as legate to Bohemia to inquire into the state of affairs of the country. The steps which the Diet took to secure the residence of Ladislas in Bohemia were also ineffectual. When the German King Frederick heard that the Bohemian Estates intended to send an embassy to Vienna for this purpose, he immediately wrote to them declaring that he entirely refused his sanction to the departure of Ladislas.

George of Poděbrad probably decided to appeal to armed force soon after the termination of the Diet of 1446. He believed this to be the only means of ending the anarchy from which Bohemia was suffering. His adherents began

to arm about this time. Poděbrad seems to have had evidence [1] that the efforts of the Bohemian negotiators both at Rome and at Vienna had been secretly opposed by the Austrian party, and especially by Ulrich of Rosenberg. The national party decided, however, to await the result of the mission of Cardinal Carvajal. The cardinal arrived at Prague (May 1, 1448), but his mission proved a complete failure; he made no secret of his conviction that the Pope would never give his sanction to the election of Archbishop John of Rokycan. The cardinal also openly expressed his disapproval of communion in the two kinds, a rite which almost all Bohemians still revered as the great privilege they had obtained at the cost of so much blood. Questioned as to the Compacts, he denied all knowledge of them. George of Poděbrad, who had in his custody the original of this precious document, therefore forwarded it to him. When, upon the failure of his mission, the cardinal left Prague shortly afterwards, his departure caused a great outcry among the townspeople. They accused him of having carried away the original of the famous Compacts and threatened him with the fate of Hus. The cardinal was stopped on his journey by horsemen, but was on his entreaty allowed to proceed as far as Benešov; he here returned the Compacts, which he had hidden among the luggage of his carriage.

Thus the sole result of the mission of Carvajal was to embitter yet more the contending parties in Bohemia. George of Poděbrad, secure of his allies, who had sworn to devote their lives and their fortunes to his cause, no longer hesitated to act. He assembled near Kutna Hora an army of 9000 men, which was afterwards reinforced by troops from his adherents in Northern Bohemia. With these forces Poděbrad marched on Prague, before which city he arrived (1448). He obtained possession of the town almost without resistance; the citizens indeed received him with enthusiasm. The supreme burgrave Menhard of Jindřichův Hradec, who appears to have been a mere puppet in the hands of Ulrich of Rosenberg, was imprisoned. New city magistrates were chosen by the people of Prague, and John of Rokycan, disregarding the authority of Rome, assumed the functions of archbishop.

[1] Palacký clearly proves this, quoting from the correspondence of Ulrich of Rosenberg.

This step on the part of Poděbrad led to civil war, for which he was no doubt prepared. Ulrich, son of Menhard of Jindřichův Hradec, demanded the liberation of his father, and both he and Ulrich of Rosenberg declined Poděbrad's proposal that a Diet at Prague should mediate between them. The lords belonging to the Austrian party even contracted an alliance with Kolda, Lord of Žampach, and the few other remaining Taborites, against the national party. Desultory warfare—twice for a short time interrupted by negotiations—broke out in various parts of Bohemia, and continued up to the year 1451. Rosenberg, Ulrich of Jindřichův Hradec, and other lords of the Austrian party formed a confederacy opposed to that of Poděbrad. This confederacy was, from the name of the town in which it was concluded, known as the league of Strakonic. The lords of the league denounced the national party as the cause of the new troubles, and called on the Bohemian towns to join their own confederacy.[1] The result of this local warfare—during which hardly any important engagements took place—was almost invariably favourable to the party of Poděbrad. Rosenberg gradually retired from the contest, and everything seemed to point to the regency of George of Poděbrad.

King Frederick, before starting for Rome to be crowned as Emperor, in his capacity as guardian of King Ladislas entrusted Poděbrad with the administration of Bohemia (October 1451). Frederick at the same time, by a singular agreement, made over the government of Hungary to Matthew Corvinus. He undoubtedly hoped thus to secure tranquillity in these two turbulent countries during his expedition to Italy. A Diet which assembled at Prague in the same year (1451) at last formally conferred on Poděbrad the regency which he had *de facto* exercised during the last four years.

The negotiations with the Papal See concerning the recognition of John of Rokycan as Archbishop of Prague

[1] See the letter (published by Bachmann, *Urkenden zur Geschichte Oesterreichs im Zeitalter Kaiser Friedrichs III und König Georg's von Böhmen*), addressed to the citizens of Cheb by the lords of Strakonitz, informing them that "unfortunately in our land lately great discord and ill-will have sprung up through some of the lords of Bohemia," and begging them, "as they at all times gladly served the crown of Bohemia," to send a contingent to join the troops of the confederacy.

and the sanction of the Compacts had continued meanwhile. Pope Nicholas now openly opposed them, and the conviction that an agreement with Rome was impossible gradually gained ground in Bohemia. This conviction led many Bohemians to contemplate a union with the Eastern Church. The details of this movement are unfortunately very obscure. It seems almost certain that Archbishop John, though he did not oppose it, was not its originator. There is great probability in favour of Palacký's suggestion that the monks of the Slav monastery founded by Charles IV, who, having immediately accepted communion in both kinds, remained unmolested during the Hussite wars, advised negotiations with Constantinople. The negotiator, Constantinus Angelicus, probably a Greek, is entirely unknown to us. The only reference to him is contained in the letter which the Church of Constantinople addressed (1452) "to the priests and princes of Bohemia," and Constantinus seems to have had no credentials from Prague. In this letter the Church of Constantinople expressed its pleasure at hearing that the Bohemians were treading the path of truth, and that they were opposed to the dangerous innovations of Rome. Hope was expressed that through the mediation of the Holy Gospel, the truest of all authorities, the Bohemians would unite with "the Church of Christ" (the Eastern Church). The letter further states that though they (the Church of Constantinople) had formerly believed that the Bohemians were opposed, not to the innovations of Rome, but to the old traditions of the Universal Church, they had now (through Constantinus Angelicus) found that the Bohemians had returned to the original Christian faith, and were anxiously seeking their true mother-Church. The utraquist Consistory of Prague answered (Sept. 29, 1452) by a letter which they addressed to the Emperor Constantine Palaeologus, the Patriarch, and to the whole Greek Church.[1] In this letter the Consistory expressed gratitude to God for having enlightened the minds of the Bohemians, and shown them the way to return to the primitive Church. In Bohemia — it continued — simony, pride, and avarice are unknown among the clergy, and all the arts of Antichrist are detested by the people. "Even when Antichrist, enraged against us, attacked us, burnt our

[1] Both these letters are printed in full in Palacký's *Geschichte von Böhmen.*

brethren, and sent out innumerable armies for our destruction, God Himself fought for us and drove the enemies from our frontier." The letter concluded with an expression of hope that the Eastern Church would continue to show favour and love to Bohemia. The fall of Constantinople in the following year (1453) put an end to these negotiations, which may well be thought to have attracted too little attention in our days.

The activity of theological speculation did not decrease in Bohemia with the end of the Hussite wars. With the possible exception of England at the time of the Commonwealth, there never was a country where theology possessed the all-absorbing interest that we notice in Bohemia at this period. Numerous small sects sprang up which had mostly only an ephemeral existence, and require no notice. The foundation of the Church of the Bohemian Brethren, or Moravians, which had already been alluded to, is an exception. This sect, which came into existence about this time, gradually increased in importance, and at a later period—the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century—played a not inconsiderable part in Bohemian history. The intellectual originator of the "Unity" of the Bohemian Brethren, though he founded no sect,[1] was a layman of the name of Peter Chelčicky, as to whom even the laborious researches of recent years have yielded us little information. The year of his birth was probably some time before the beginning of the fifteenth century.[2] As it is likely that his latest writings are not of earlier date than the year 1443, he must have lived through the whole stirring period of the Hussite wars. The horrors of that time may have confirmed him in his most original doctrine, the one most completely opposed to the spirit of his age—that is, his belief in the absolute and unconditional sinfulness of bloodshed.[3] He shared with most reformers of that period the desire to return to the primitive Church,

[1] Palacký (*Böhmische Geschichte*), Gindely (*Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder*), and more recently Dr. Jaroslav Goll (*Quellen zur Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder*), have examined the conflicting evidence as to the foundation of the "Unity." The last-named work is to a great extent founded on unprinted documents in the archives of Herrenhut, the present centre of the Moravian community.

[2] Dr. Goll.

[3] Dr. Goll quotes a passage from one of his works in which he calls Judas Macchabaeus "the Great Murderer."

and, as did the Waldenses,[1] dated the beginning of the ecclesiastical corruption from the—imaginary—donation of the Emperor Constantine to Pope Sylvester. His views with regard to the Sacrament of the Altar—the point on which all religious controversy in Bohemia in the fifteenth century turned—were opposed to those of the Taborites, with whom he sympathized on some points. Chelčicky denied that the tenets of the priests of Tabor on this subject coincided with those of Wycliffe. He seems to have considered that the English divine, rather than Hus, was his own teacher. Chelčicky believed himself in accord with Wycliffe in maintaining the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament.[2]

From the very scanty and contradictory notices of Chelčicky's life, we learn that he made the acquaintance of Rokycan, probably during the long period 1437–1448, beginning in the reign of King Sigismund, when the archbishop had absented himself from Prague. We are told that they once met and conversed "on the men who are called priests, and on the slight advantage they conferred on men."[3] The archbishop seems to have been impressed by the words of Chelčicky. After his return to Prague (1448), Rokycan's preaching assumed a more earnest and more impassioned tone. Grieved by the reaction against Hussitism, which he feared would be the consequence of the accession of King Ladislas, he returned to the views of the earliest Bohemian reformers. He proclaimed that true religion was extinct, and that the influence of Antichrist showed itself even in the administration of the Holy Sacrament. Among Rokycan's hearers was a young man known to us as Brother Gregory, who was a nephew of the archbishop. He was deeply impressed by his uncle's teaching, and appealed to him for spiritual advice. The archbishop—preparing the way for events

[1] The question whether the doctrines of Chelčicky and Brother Gregory were derived from the Waldenses, and whether Waldensian priests consecrated the first priest of the "Unity," is one of the most controverted points in Bohemian history. On the whole, evidence is rather against the influence of the Waldenses on the foundation of the "Unity," though there may have been a connection between the two sects later.

[2] Goll: "Peter Chelčicky und seine Lehre" (Pt. ii. of the *Quellen zur Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder*).

[3] Goll.

he afterwards regretted—lent him copies of several of Chelčicky's writings. Gregory's enthusiasm became even more inflamed, and he and his friends decided to entirely withdraw from the corrupt world, and to retire into solitude. Rokycan did not discourage this plan, though he refused to join the enthusiasts. The archbishop indeed, after the death of Ladislas (1457), became more moderate in his tone, and assumed a more conciliatory attitude towards the Roman Church. Rokycan, however, obtained a refuge for Brother Gregory in the remote village of Kunwald, near the small town of Žamberk.[1] Gregory was here joined by other pious men, among whom were Michael, curate of Žamberk, and the priest Matthew. An attempt to organize the new religious association was soon made. Michael, who on insufficient evidence is said to have been ordained by a Waldensian bishop, confirmed the priest Matthew as head of the brotherhood, probably after he had been chosen as such by the Brethren. The most noticeable characteristics of the Union are, according to Palacký, first, that they attached more importance to the practice of Christianity than to the Christian doctrine; secondly, that piety and common-sense, with them, always appeared as acting in accord,[2] and thirdly, that the idea of Church reform from the first occupied a prominent place in their teaching. About the end of the fifteenth century a division took place among the Brethren. Two parties, known as the "Great" and the "Small" party, were formed. As far as we can judge, the "Small" party, which soon became extinct, maintained in its entirety the teaching of Chelčicky, which included doctrines such as non-resistance to evil-doers and, probably, a community of goods founded on the example of the primitive Church. The "Great" party, on the other hand, accommodated its teaching to a certain extent to temporal ideas. Starting from a very humble origin, the "Unity" was gradually joined by men of all classes, even by members of the Bohemian nobility. The "Great" party reconciled itself with the world, and by partly abandoning its earliest principles secured the future existence of the "Unity."[3]

[1] In German, "Senftenberg."

[2] This, of course, refers to the superstitious practices then so prevalent in the Roman Church.

[3] Goll.

George of Poděbrad did not long remain uncontested Regent of Bohemia. Ulrich of Rosenberg and other lords of the Austrian party, as well as the towns of Tabor and Budějovice, had not been represented at the Diet which conferred that dignity on George. In July (1452) we find Poděbrad again at war with his old antagonists. The most interesting event in this petty campaign was the capture of the town of Tabor, which, curiously enough, was at last subdued by a utraquist, not by a Romanist, chief. Poděbrad treated the citizens graciously, but he forcibly established the moderate utraquist (or Calixtine) church-service in the town. The priest Venceslas Koranda, one of the chiefs of the Taborites, was by order of Poděbrad imprisoned in the castle of Litice. After the capture of Tabor, Poděbrad besieged Ulrich of Rosenberg in one of his castles, and forced that noble to capitulate. Ulrich and his partisans now recognized Poděbrad as regent.[1] In the following year a new Diet met at Prague (in October), when Ladislas was solemnly received as King of Bohemia. It was declared, however—though not without some opposition from the Austrian party—that Ladislas had been elected as king only on the condition of his recognizing the privileges of the country. Protracted negotiations to secure the arrival in Bohemia and the coronation of the new king now ensued. These negotiations at first took place at Vienna,[2] but were at last brought to a favourable issue by an interview between Poděbrad and the Austrian guardians of the young king which was held at Znoymo (1453). Ladislas solemnly recognized all the privileges of Bohemia, including the venerated Compacts. He also, being too young to govern, confirmed the powers the Diet had conferred on George of Poděbrad. The king at last arrived in Bohemia in October (1453), and on the 28th of that month was crowned at Prague as King of Bohemia.

Very little need be said of the few years during which Ladislas reigned over Bohemia. In consequence of the strong administration of Poděbrad, who at first was on

[1] I have omitted the intervention of Poděbrad in the internal struggles in Austria, as of little direct influence on the events in Bohemia.

[2] According to Palacký, the young king was at first strongly opposed to the religious views of the Bohemians; he even said, "If the Bohemians desire me for their king, let them be Christians and profess the same faith as I do."

terms of great friendship with his youthful sovereign, the country enjoyed comparative quiet. Poděbrad succeeded in inducing the young king to learn the Bohemian language, but he seems to have retained a dislike to the people, which was probably founded on the religious teaching which he had received from his earliest preceptors. In January (1456) Ladislas proceeded to Hungary. The danger menacing Eastern Europe from the Turks, who in 1453 had taken Constantinople, and the wish to assert his authority in a country which—though he was nominally king—was in fact subject to the absolute control of John Hunyady, were the probable motives of Ladislas. The king returned to Bohemia in September of the following year, and was enthusiastically received by the people. "Archbishop Rokycan, at the head of his clergy, also met the king, who received him with a stern countenance and only returned his salute on Poděbrad's admonition; this conduct enraged many, but they suppressed their indignation."

It had at this time been arranged to marry Ladislas to Magdalen, daughter of Charles VII, King of France, and a sumptuous Bohemian embassy set out for Paris to demand the hand of the princess for their sovereign.[1] Only a few weeks after their departure the king was attacked by a singular illness, similar to, if not identical with, the Asiatic plague, which in consequence of the war with Turkey had at that time spread through Hungary to Bohemia, and even further west. The king desired to see George of Poděbrad, of whom he took leave in touching words. He thanked him

[1] Barante (*Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne*, vol. v, pp. 92-95) gives a detailed and very curious account, founded on contemporary French records, of this embassy. Want of space unfortunately prevents me from quoting largely from it. This writer enlarges on the curiosity which the Bohemians aroused: "Ce qu'il y avait d'étrange dans leurs coutumes etait un grand sujet de curiosité. C'etait dans le fort de l'hiver, et ils allaient dans les rues en traineaux, ce qu'on n'avait jamais vu; ils avaient laissé dehors leurs chariots de bagage attachés par des grosses chaines fermant à cadenas et chaque nuit ils faisaient coucher dessus quelques-uns de leurs serviteurs malgré la rudesse du froid qui etait extrême. Cela sembla singulier aux Parisiens." Barante speaks of the quite unfounded accusation against Poděbrad mentioned above, which proves that it was soon and widely circulated. Ladislas, he tells us, died suddenly, "empoisonné, disait on, par un seigneur nommé Pozdziebracki, ou comme on disait en France Podiegrad qui fut élu roi après lui."

for having been his faithful servant, told him he felt certain that his own life was doomed, and begged Poděbrad to preserve peace and order among the people of Bohemia and the dependent countries, and finally urged him to be just to rich and poor alike.[1] The king died on the third day of his illness (Nov. 23, 1457), not yet eighteen years of age. The suddenness of the death of Ladislas gave rise to the totally unfounded rumour that he had been poisoned by emissaries of Poděbrad. The national hatred to the Slav race caused this accusation to be widely circulated in Germany, especially at Vienna and at Breslau.[2]

According to the treaty of succession concluded between Bohemia and Austria during the reign of the Emperor Charles IV, the Emperor Frederick, as head of the house of Habsburg, became the legitimate successor to the Bohemian throne on the death of Ladislas. Two other members of the same house, Albert, brother of Frederick—with whom he lived in a state of constant enmity—and Sigismund, Duke of Tyrol, also raised claims to the Bohemian crown; as likewise did William, Duke of Saxony, and Casimir, King of Poland, who had both married sisters of Ladislas. Another candidate who had no hereditary claims to rely on was Prince Charles, younger son of King Charles VII of France, who wished to secure the Bohemian crown for his son. The decision of the Estates—formulated at the time of the election of Ladislas—by which they had declared the Bohemian crown to be elective *de facto*, justified all candidates in advancing their claims. The Diet which was to elect the new king assembled at Prague on February 27, 1458, but unfortunately no detailed account of its proceedings has reached us. We only learn that the ambassadors sent by King Charles of France and Duke William of Saxony were received, but that their attempts to influence the election were fruitless. On March 2, George of Poděbrad was unanimously chosen as king by the Estates, even the adherents of the Austrian party recording their votes in his favour. The election was immediately announced to the

[1] From a contemporary letter printed from the Munich archives by Bachmann, *Urkunden*, etc.

[2] Palacký, in a paper published by the Bohemian Learned Society in 1856, and fortified by the statements of medical authorities, clearly proves the true nature of the illness of Ladislas, and consequently the falsehood of the accusations against Poděbrad.

people, by whom the news was enthusiastically received. Poděbrad appears to have been very certain of his election, which the strong popular feeling in his favour indeed rendered secure. It was generally felt that Bohemia must at any cost be freed from the predominance of the Germans. Rokycan, whose influence in the country was still great, warmly supported the claims of Poděbrad to the throne. We read that he declared from the pulpit that it would be better, "following the example of the judges of Israel, to transform Bohemia into a republic, if there was no native worthy of bearing the royal crown."

Moravia soon acknowledged King George, though there was some opposition on the part of the towns, especially those which, like Brno, contained a population largely German, and devoted to the cause of Rome. Silesia also submitted, though the opposition there was of a more serious nature, and was promoted by the rejected candidate, Duke William of Saxony. The town of Breslau, in particular (where a fanatically Catholic and democratic faction had obtained the government of the city), for some time resisted the authority of King George.

During the first and more successful part of the reign of King George, his foreign policy was entirely founded on the close alliance he had concluded with Matthew Corvinus, King of Hungary. Like George, Matthew had at the same time and in a similar manner become ruler of his country; for in Hungary, as in Bohemia, the legitimate claimant to the throne was the Emperor Frederick, as head of the house of Habsburg, to whom family treaties (already referred to) secured the succession in both countries. It was through the aid of his ally that King George overcame the difficulties with regard to his coronation which were caused by the anomalous ecclesiastical position in Bohemia. King Matthew, with the consent of Cardinal Carvajal, then papal legate in Hungary, sent the Bishop of Waitzen and Raab to Prague, by whom King George was crowned (May 7, 1458). Besides the usual coronation oath, the king had the day before the ceremony taken another oath, by which he pledged himself to obey the Church, to maintain its unity, and to extirpate all sects and heresies in Bohemia. The Compacts, and the right of using the chalice, were not mentioned in this oath, and the Romanists subsequently maintained that the king had thus renounced the special

privileges of the Church of Bohemia. The king and the utraquists naturally retorted that the Compacts which had been sanctioned by the Council of Basel could by no means be described as heresies, and that the coronation oath by which the king had sworn to maintain the liberties and privileges of Bohemia referred to the Compacts also. It is, however, possible that the omission of all mention of the Compacts was not an accidental one, but that it was a concession to the representatives of the Papal See. Only thus could King George hope to secure his coronation, a ceremony to which the people of Bohemia have always attached the greatest importance.

The comparatively conciliatory Pope, Calixtus III, died in the year of the accession of King George, and was succeeded by Cardinal Piccolomini, known in literature as Aenaeas Sylvius. The new Pope, who assumed the name of Pius II, had a thorough knowledge of Bohemia, having resided there while engaged on diplomatic missions, and he has, as is well known, left us a history of the country. The new Pope, however, became a bitter enemy to Bohemia and to its king, as soon as he realized the impossibility of carrying out his favourite plan, involving the suppression of the Bohemian Compacts.

Germany was at that time greatly troubled by the enmity which existed between the houses of Brandenburg and Bavaria, while the power of the Emperor Frederick had sunk so low that he was in constant dread of his immediate subjects, the Estates of Lower Austria. King George availed himself of this favourable political situation for the purpose of extending his influence in Germany, where the contending parties, and at times the Emperor also, sought his alliance. It would extend our inquiries too far to give an account of the means by which he strengthened his position in Germany—more often by mediation than by the force of arms—and of the treaties which he at this time concluded with numerous German princes. We must, however, briefly refer to what was for a time the dominant object of the king's policy, the acquisition of the German crown. This plan is not easy to trace, for after its failure all papers concerning it were destroyed. It was, in fact, soon abandoned by the king, though not before it had given rise to some of the disasters of the latter years of his reign. In devising this scheme he acted largely under the influence

of one of his councillors, Martin Mayer, who undoubtedly displayed diplomatic capacity of the highest order. As far as we can judge from the scanty evidence, Martin Mayer's intention, approved of by King George, was not to dethrone the Emperor Frederick III, but to place a "coadjutor" at his side; this "coadjutor" was to receive the title of King of the Romans (or German King), such as had often been conferred on the heirs of the Emperors. It seems that Mayer had formerly suggested a similar plan to Philip, Duke of Burgundy, who had declined the suggestion. Mayer's proposal, however, met with greater favour from King George of Bohemia. Serious negotiations ensued, which, for the reason mentioned above, are now difficult to trace. Mayer succeeded in obtaining the votes of the Elector Palatine and of the Archbishop of Maintz for his master. In February (1461) numerous German princes, on the invitation of King George, assembled at Cheb for the ostensible purpose of organizing a general armament against the Turks. Probably through the ability of Mayer, this object was made subservient to the purpose he had at heart. The election of George as leader of the German forces against the Turks, suggested by him, would almost necessarily have secured for the king the position of ruler of Germany. The king was also induced to favour this plan of a campaign against the Turks by the consideration that the energy of the fanatical Papists would thus be diverted from the heretical Bohemians to the infidel Turks.

The complete failure of this scheme, which the king abandoned almost as suddenly as he had entered on it, was probably due to ecclesiastical influences. Pope Pius strongly opposed it, and one of the adherents of King George, the Archbishop of Maintz, had declared that he would not vote for Podčbrad's election as King of the Romans before he had received the sacrament in the same manner as all other Christian kings. On the other hand, even the vague reports of these negotiations which spread in Bohemia caused great dissatisfaction. The people began to ask what had been the advantage of electing a Bohemian as king, when he himself was now anxious to become a German.

One of the consequences of the conciliatory attitude towards Rome which his attempt to obtain the government of Germany obliged King George to assume, was the

persecution of the Bohemian Brethren, of which we read at this period. The founder of the community of Kunwald, Brother Gregory, was imprisoned by order of the king, and even put to the rack (1461). These endeavours to conciliate the Papal See, by attempting to suppress all sects that went beyond the demarcations of the Compacts, were entirely fruitless. The Roman Church had already decided to revoke the concessions which Žižka's and Prokop's victories had once forced it to make.

The successful policy of Poděbrad—though his most ambitious plan failed—had secured Bohemia against all foreign enemies, and peace and order were also maintained. The prosperity of the country had greatly increased in consequence, and the people began to hope that the happy times of King Charles IV were returning. The University of Prague, which had suffered greatly during the troublous times, now again entered into full activity.

King George was not, however, destined long to secure quiet to his country. The ever-renewed religious struggle—an inevitable consequence of the antagonistic position of Bohemia with regard to the Western Church—now again broke out more strongly. The Pope demanded an immediate return to the exact ritual of the Western Church; he founded his demand on his interpretation of the king's oath before his coronation, to which allusion has already been made. Prolonged negotiations took place, in which King George, who had dismissed Mayer, was very badly served by his representatives. The king, seeing that a compromise between the Pope and the people of Bohemia was impossible, rallied firmly to the Compacts. In the month of August (1452) he specially assembled the Estates for the purpose of hearing the demands of the papal envoys, who had arrived at Prague, and the king's answer to them. The king made the memorable declaration that he would to his death remain true to the communion in both kinds, and that he was ready to risk his crown and his life for this object.[1]

This was a direct declaration of war against Rome; but

[1] Palacký. According to a not very reliable letter of an unknown diplomatic agent addressed to the German Electors (published by Bachmann, *Urkunden*, etc., from the Berlin archives), the king added that he considered communion in both kinds necessary for the salvation of the soul. The king afterwards denied having said this.

Pope Pius II, who was then attempting to form a confederacy against the Ottoman power, did not immediately take up the challenge. On his death (1464) his successor, Paul II, prudently awaited a favourable moment for securing his revenge on the King of Bohemia. He had not long to wait. Many of the great Bohemian nobles had from the first viewed with disatisfaction the elevation to the throne of Poděbrad, who was but their equal by birth. The king's attitude, not always conciliatory, rendered this feeling still stronger. Even the re-establishment of order and the administration of justice by regular tribunals were by many viewed with disfavour. The nobles of the Roman party were the principal, though not the only, opponents of the king; they declared themselves no longer bound by the oath of allegiance which they had sworn to King George.

The malcontent nobles met at Zelená Hora (November 28, 1465), and formed an alliance against the king, whom they accused of having violated the laws of the country, especially with regard to taxation. Though the religious question was not at first raised, the leaguers immediately sent an emissary to the Pope, with the view of obtaining his support. King George had, meanwhile, continued with Pope Paul II the negotiations which had been entirely broken off during the last years of Pius II. Though an agreement seemed to all an impossibility, the king made a last attempt towards that purpose. He addressed a letter to Paul II, in which he offered great concessions. He declared his readiness to accept a papist as Archbishop of Prague if he were a Bohemian by birth, and if he were prepared to ordain as priests those who communicated "sub utraque," as well as those who communicated "sub unâ." The king further suggested that all polemical preaching should be forbidden on both sides, and even proposed—a concession of no slight importance—to restore to the Church the estates that had formerly belonged to it. No ambassador, but a simple messenger carried the king's letter to Rome. His reception, when he stated that he had to deliver a letter sent by the King of Bohemia, quickly demonstrated the impossibility of an agreement. The Pope threw the letter on the floor, and addressed the messenger in the strongest language.[1]

[1] It is curious to note the forcible expressions used by the Pope, which it is perhaps better to leave in the original Latin: "Quomodo

The excommunication of King George, which had long become inevitable, now took place (December 23, 1466), with the usual formalities. Poděbrad was deposed from his rank as King of Bohemia; all Catholics were forbidden to obey him. The Pope declared that one of the leaders of the League of Zelená Hora was to act as provisional governor of Bohemia, till a new king could be chosen.

Hostilities between the king and the lords of the league had meanwhile already commenced. The king had also to defend himself against the attacks of the fanatical Catholics of Breslau, as well as against the German population of Lusatia. The German Emperor Frederick and King Matthew of Hungary, George's former ally, also now joined the king's enemies. The King of Hungary was, however, forced by the ever-increasing danger of a Turkish invasion to defer his projected attack on Bohemia. The desultory fighting so usual at that period continued for some time in Bohemian territory. Success on the whole favoured the arms of King George, who (1467) even obliged the lords of the league to conclude a truce, which, however, was of short duration.

The king availed himself of the temporary respite from domestic troubles for the purpose of carrying war into the lands of his assailants. He (December 1467) attacked the Emperor Frederick III in his hereditary territory, Lower Austria; but he thus caused, or rather precipitated, a more direct intervention of the King of Hungary into Bohemian affairs. Recklessly abandoning his eastern frontiers to the irreconcilable enemies of Christianity,[1] King Matthew decided that a campaign against the heretical Bohemians was as meritorious as warfare against the Turks,[2] He

es tu bestia audax in praesentia nostra nominare eum regem, quem scis damnatum haereticum ab ecclesia Romana. Vadas ad furcas cum haeretico ribaldo tuo."

[1] Palacký says that if King Matthew had directed on the Turks the whole efforts he fruitlessly made to extirpate the Bohemian utraquists, he would very probably have crushed the Turkish power in Europe, then still very feeble. The Turkish servitude which Hungary endured for two centuries was to a great extent a consequence of the mistaken policy of Matthew.

[2] In a letter addressed to the magistrates of Cheb—preserved in the archives of that town and printed by Bachmann, *Urkunden*, etc.—the King of Hungary declares "negotium arduum illud quidem" (the invasion of Bohemia) "sed summi plane etiam in celo meriti et gloriae super terram existimantes non minus pium hoc fore bellum quamquod

issued a manifesto in which he proclaimed his intention of defending the Catholic faith against the heretical Bohemians.

War broke out early in the year 1468, and King Matthew succeeded in obtaining possession of the greater part of Moravia. He occupied the castle of Spielberg, the citadel of the town of Brno, which he chose as his head-quarters. From this strong fortress he made repeated raids in Eastern Bohemia. On May 3, 1469, Matthew was proclaimed King of Bohemia by his adherents. He distributed the offices of State among his most powerful partisans the lords of the League of Zelená Hora. Though Matthew obtained many advantages in Moravia, which was the principal scene of the hostilities, he was not able to secure a hold on the entire country for any length of time; a renewed invasion of Bohemia (1470) also had little result.

The danger threatening Bohemia from King Matthew[1] destroyed the favourite plan of Poděbrad, which he had entertained during his whole life. He had always hoped to secure the Bohemian crown for his descendants, and thus to found a national dynasty. He was now forced to abandon his favourite plan for the purpose of securing the safety of his country. Attacked by numerous and powerful enemies, he decided to obtain at any price the alliance of the kindred Polish nation. He was successful in this attempt, though only by sacrificing what had been the great ambition of his life. He concluded a treaty with Poland, by which the succession to the Bohemian throne was—after his death—secured to Vladislav, son of Casimir, King of Poland. This decision was shortly afterwards ratified by the Estates of Bohemia, who recognized Prince Vladislav as heir to the throne.[2]

tanto jam tempore cum atrocissimis omnium fidelium hostibus Thurcis gerimus."

[1] The irritation of King George against the King of Hungary seems to have been very great, and he provoked Matthew to single combat. The curious correspondence between the two kings on this subject is printed in Palacký's *Böhmische Geschichte*.

[2] The sons of King George, after the death of their father, assumed the title of Dukes of Münsterberg, and shortly afterwards accepted the Roman Catholic creed. They seem, however, to have venerated the memory of their illustrious father, for we read that Duke Henry of Münsterberg sent a message to the abbot of the convent of the Virgin at Breslau, informing him that he would burn all his villages if he did not deliver his father from hell. This referred to the

In the latter part of the year 1470 the Bohemian arms were more successful. King George drove the Hungarians almost completely out of Moravia, though they continued to occupy a few towns. He also succeeded in subduing the lords of the Zelená Hora League, and matters seemed to be assuming a more favourable aspect when King George, who had long been suffering from dropsy, died (March 22, 1471). Just a month before (February 22) John of Rokycan, the first and last archbishop of the Utraquist Church, which he governed for nearly half-a-century, had also expired.

King George has always remained, next to Charles IV, the sovereign whose memory the Bohemians treasure most.[1] Even the misfortunes of the last years of his reign, and the failure of his principal plans—supremacy in Germany, and the foundation of a national dynasty—do not diminish this feeling. It is indeed possible that, had he succeeded in obtaining the prominent position in the Empire which his ambition marked out him, the affection of the Bohemians would have been alienated; for it was the knowledge that they were governed by a man of their own race that mainly induced the Bohemians to love Poděbrad and to retain their affection for him even when his fortunes were at the lowest. Though the Estates had already recognized Prince Vladislav of Poland as heir to the throne, his claim was immediately disputed by King Matthew of Hungary, whom his adherents had already proclaimed King of Bohemia. Matthew still held several towns in Moravia, while the whole of Lusatia and large districts of Silesia—specially the fanatical citizens of Breslau—acknowledged him as their sovereign. It is probable that the wish of the Estates to establish the purely elective character of the royalty of the country, caused them to ignore their former decision and determine to elect a

fact that the abbot had built a new chapel, for which he had caused a picture to be painted representing the Last Judgment. In this picture King George was represented as being carried to hell on a litter by two devils. The abbot immediately caused the picture of the king to be effaced, fearing that his villages might be burnt. (Eschenloer.)

[1] It has been impossible to give more than a mere outline of the eventful reign of King George. Palacký, with whom he is a great favourite, has given a long and perhaps slightly idealized portrait of the King.

new king. The diet assembled at Kutna Hora, where prolonged debates took place. Besides the Hungarian and Polish princes, Duke Albert of Saxony—who appears to have been supported by the sons of the late King George—also found adherents. It was, however, at last decided to elect as king Prince Vladislav of Poland (May 27, 1471). The new king immediately proceeded to Bohemia, and arrived at Prague (August 19), where he was received with rejoicings by the citizens. The doctors of the university, who welcomed him in the old town, "presented him with a neatly-printed and bound copy of the Bible, so that he might read it and direct himself and his subjects according to the will of God." The king's coronation took place three days later, but contemporary records do not report much concerning the ceremonies of the occasion.

King Matthew of Hungary recommenced hostilities against Bohemia as soon as his hopes of becoming the lawful sovereign of the land vanished. War between the two kings continued up to the year 1478. We read of no great battles, though constant local engagements occurred between the towns and the castles that acknowledged Vladislav and those which sided with Matthew. A treaty of peace was at last concluded at Olomonc in 1478. Matthew renounced all claims on Bohemia, but retained possession of Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia; these countries were, however, to return to the Bohemian crown on the death of King Matthew.

The internal religious struggle in Bohemia meanwhile continued. It is clear that the sympathies of King Vladislav II[1] were entirely with the papal party, and that policy alone prevented him from more openly manifesting them. Among other measures favourable to the Roman Catholics, Vladislav appointed as magistrates for Prague men of the party which, though still adhering to the use of the chalice, opposed all the other tenets of the old reform party, and generally showed sympathy with the papists. By order of these magistrates several priests and others were imprisoned for expressing opinions contrary to the doctrine of the Roman Church. This incident and other similar ones, which took place principally on the estates of the

[1] Vladislav was thus designated, as the Bohemian Prince Vladislav (1410–1473) had borne the title of king.

great nobles of the papal party, caused the utraquists to unite for self-defence. The utraquist nobles and knights formed a confederacy for mutual aid, of which the high burgrave, John Tovačovsky, Lord of Cimburg, became the leader. The arbitrary conduct of the magistrates of Prague soon caused troubles in that town. The people, incensed by the rumoured intention of the magistrates to imprison or execute the leaders of the utraquist party, stormed the three town halls and murdered several of the magistrates. Great disorder prevailed in the town, and a large number of Germans and Jews were massacred. The king was naturally greatly incensed, but he was unable to cope with a party to which the great majority of the people of Bohemia belonged; he was even unable to punish the persons guilty of these murders. In 1485 one of the many temporary compromises between the Roman and utraquist parties was concluded at Kutna Hora, and peace, or rather a truce, was thus obtained. Both parties undertook to respect the religious views of their opponents, by abstaining from all insults to their creed. The compacts were again confirmed, and it was decided that each creed should retain the use of the churches which it had possessed at the beginning of the reign of Vladislav II; a certain amount of religious liberty was also granted to the peasants whose faith differed from that of the lords on whose estates they lived.

A few years afterwards (in 1493) another attempt was made to reconcile the utraquists with the Roman Church, of which Alexander VI (Borgia) was then the head. An Italian noble, Nicholas Cola de Castro, who frequently journeyed to Prague, assumed spontaneously the office of mediator. He assured the citizens of Prague of the Pope's good-will, and obtained a letter from the magistrates of the town, in which in respectful language, but in a very indefinite manner, they asked the Pope for his favour. The Pope also answered in vague words. He expressed the hope "that the pious and sincere Catholic King Vladislav would lead them on the true path of faith and humility." The Pope said that he would "gladly receive every one whose thoughts were true and upright, and that he would be a father to all such." The Pope appears to have been entirely misled by Cola de Castro, for on appointing Bishop Urso Orsini papal legate for Bohemia, he informed him that the

obstinate heretics had at last seen their errors. When the Diet that met at Prague (December 20, 1494) declared that the Compacts were to form the basis for the future negotiations, the proposed reconciliation immediately fell to the ground. The papal envoy never even started for Bohemia.[1] At a later period of his pontificate Pope Alexander VI greatly irritated the utraquists by appointing a Dominican friar "censor" over all books printed and sold in Bohemia and Moravia. The friar had orders to burn all those containing heretical views of which he could obtain possession. The Dominican established himself at Olomonc —always a stronghold of the Catholic party—and published several polemical works in which he violently attacked the utraquist creed.

The most important feature of the reign of King Vladislav is the development of the constitution of Bohemia in an aristocratic, or rather oligarchic, direction. All the enactments of the Diets of this reign rendered the peasantry more completely dependent on their territorial lords, and encroached on the privileges of the towns. The power of the crown—very strong under King George—also decreased during the reigns of Vladislav II and Louis.

The oldest institutions of Bohemia—as far as we can judge from the scanty records—were of a democratic character, as indeed were those of most Slavonic countries. Slaves and serfs were unknown. Through the constant contact with Germany feudal institutions were slowly introduced into Bohemia, and the peasants gradually became more dependent on the nobles. Still, this was not so entirely the case as in Germany, and the armed peasants, at whose head Žižka and Prokop defeated the armies of half Europe, were still freemen.

The reaction against democracy in Europe at this time found expression in Bohemia also. The Diet of 1487 at last practically established bondage. It issued an enactment, according to which all were forbidden to give shelter to servants or peasants who might have left the estates on which they lived; they were, on the contrary, to be returned immediately—under penalty of a fine—to the owner of the estate from which they had fled.

This measure was destined to have the most fatal results for the independence of Bohemia. The stout Bohemian

[1] Palacký.

peasantry lost its former interest in its nation and gradually became indifferent to the independence of Bohemia.

The dissensions between the towns and the nobility, which were renewed at almost every Diet during the reign of King Vladislav, at first turned principally on a conflict of material interests. The towns had hitherto enjoyed almost a monopoly of the trade of brewing, at all times one of the most lucrative undertakings in Bohemia. Many of the great nobles at this period established breweries, and forbade the sale of other beer on their extensive estates, thus greatly injuring the towns.

During these struggles King Vladislav acted mainly under the influence of Duke Bartholemew of Münsterberg, a grandson of King George. Under this influence, the king —as far as it was in his power—sided with the townsmen, and endeavoured to resist the increasing preponderance of the nobles. The weak and vacillating nature of the king, however, rendered him unable to take a prominent part in a great constitutional struggle. During the whole reign of Vladislav, the nobles pursued their policy, which strove for the reduction of the rights of the townsmen. All the decisions of the Diet during this reign give proof of this tendency.

The Diet attempted to impose considerable limitations on the right of the towns (as the "third curia") to take part in its deliberations, and also to curtail the privileges of special jurisdiction which the towns had for many years enjoyed. All these innovations were formally promulgated by being included in the regulation of King Vladislav, a codification of the various enactments of the previous years. This code (published in 1500) enumerated all the privileges of the knights and nobles, while entirely ignoring those of the towns. Its fundamental principle was that only nobles and knights were freemen, and that the other classes of the population were destined to servitude. These therefore had no innate rights, but could only enjoy such as were granted to them by favour.[1] The towns appealed to King Vladislav, who was, however, unable to oppose the nobles. He therefore reluctantly decided in favour of the new regulations, and duly ratified them. After this several Diets composed only of the nobles and knights were held, and the disputes between the different orders continued to

[1] Palacký.

the end of the reign of Vladislav, for a time throwing even the religious dissensions into the shade.

Vladislav had shortly after the death of King Matthew (1490) been elected King of Hungary, and it was in that country that he spent the greater part of the later years of his reign. Constant absence from Bohemia greatly reduced the king's influence, and, as previously mentioned, he was quite unable to resist the encroachments of the nobles.

King Vladislav died at Ofen in Hungary on March 13, 1516. He was succeeded by Louis, his son by his marriage to Anna de Candale, a connection of the French royal family.[1] Louis, who had already been crowned as King of Bohemia at the age of three, was only ten years old at the death of his father. Shortly before his death, Vladislav had made an agreement with his brother, King Sigismund of Poland, and with the German Emperor Maximilian (who had succeeded his father, Frederick III), by which they were declared guardians of his son Louis, should he come to the throne before he was of age. At the same time marriages were arranged between King Louis and the Archduchess Mary, grand-daughter of the Emperor, and also between the Archduke Ferdinand, grandson of the Emperor, and Anna, daughter of King Vladislav. It was at the same time agreed that the Bohemian crown should pass to the descendants of Princess Anna, should King Louis die childless. This agreement was, however, not brought before the Estates of Bohemia, and their assent was not demanded. On the death of Vladislav the Diet recognized the German Emperor and the King of Poland as guardians of the young king, but it would not allow them any right of interference in the government of the land. The Bohemian nobles, who held the great offices of State, especially the supreme burgrave, Zdeněk Lev, Lord of Rožmittal, governed the country almost without control. At the beginning of the reign of the new king the disputes between the orders were for a time made up by an agreement, which is known as the Treaty of Venceslas (1517).[2] By this agreement the towns renounced their claim to an exclusive right of brewing, and

[1] She was the daughter of Gaston de Candale and Catharine, Countess de Foix. Her grandmother was a sister of King Louis XII of France, at whose court she had been brought up.

[2] Because the Diet which voted this agreement met on the day of St. Venceslas (September 28).

the nobility recognized their special privileges of jurisdiction. Before this time the representatives of the towns had already been again admitted to the sittings of the Diet (1508).

The extension of Luther's teaching in Bohemia, which began about this period, revived the religious strife, which had lately decreased. The new doctrine found adherents among the utraquists, many of whom considered that the compacts did not go far enough in the cause of Church reform. The Germans, who had hitherto been the most strenuous opponents of this reform, now accepted the teaching of Luther in great numbers. "The Bohemians were surprised to see the Germans now themselves receive communion in the two kinds, and renounce the authority of the Roman Church." [1]

In 1522 King Louis, who had up to that date resided in Hungary, where he had also been accepted as king, arrived in Bohemia. The tyranny and defraudations of Zdeněk Lev of Rožmital had caused great dissatisfaction in Bohemia, and joy was great when the king, shortly after his arrival in Bohemia, dismissed him from his office of supreme burgrave. The king thus attempted to reassert the royal prerogative which had recently fallen almost into oblivion. John of Wartenberg, a weak man, became burgrave, and the king appointed as regent Duke Charles of Münsterberg, a grandson of King George. Duke Charles, whom after the death of his cousin, Duke Bartholomew, King Vladislas had often consulted on the affairs of the State, was intellectually far inferior to his cousin, and quite unequal to his difficult task.[2] He and the burgrave and other officials of the new government appear to have favoured the more advanced utraquists, who were then meditating a union with the Lutherans of Germany. The new officials thus fell into disfavour with the king, who at that moment was parti-

[1] Public opinion at that period so completely identified the Bohemians with the idea of heresy, that Luther himself was "accused" of being a Bohemian. In a letter to Count Schlick, a Bohemian noble, Luther says: "Odium nominis vestri nullus vestrum tanto onere, quanto ego, unquam portauit, Quoties rogo Bohemus natus quoties fugam molitus ad Bohemos, adhuc hodie criminor?"

[2] The late Professor Rezek, in an interesting article published in the *Časopis Musea Království Českého* (Journal of the Museum of the Bohemian Kingdom), deals with the formerly little known relations of the dukes of Münsterberg to Kings Vladislav and Louis.

cularly anxious to ingratiate himself with the Papal See. He had just requested financial aid from Rome for the purpose of defending Hungary against the Turks. Lev of Rožmital was therefore reinstated as burgrave, but he did not forgive the king for his former dismissal. Shortly after he had resumed office, Rožmital became involved in a feud with the powerful Rosenberg family, as he claimed the inheritance of Lord Peter of Rosenberg. All the Bohemian nobles and towns took sides in this feud, and the whole country was divided into the Rosenberg and the Rožmital factions.

It was at this unpropitious moment that the unfortunate King Louis, then again residing in Hungary, sent an urgent demand for aid against the Turks. When the Diet, before which the matter was brought, met, no agreement could be arrived at. Rožmital in particular showed little zeal for the cause of the king. The heads of the Rosenberg party at last resolved, at their own expense, to equip a force in aid of King Louis. Rožmital thereupon also decided to send a small army to Hungary. The Bohemians had been so tardy in their preparations that only a few of their troops—those sent by the lords of the Rosenberg Confederacy—had arrived when the battle of Mohács took place (August 29, 1526). That fatal battle, in consequence of which the greater part of Hungary became a Turkish province for more than two centuries, belongs to Hungarian rather than to Bohemian history. It is sufficient to say that King Louis foolhardily attacked the Turkish army of 300,000 men with a force of only 25,000, and was totally defeated. When leaving the battle-field the king—who was then only twenty years of age—was drowned while trying to ford a marshy stream.

CHAPTER VII

THE KINGS OF THE HOUSE OF HABSBURG FROM THE BATTLE OF MOHÁČ TO THE BATTLE OF THE WHITE MOUNTAIN (1526–1620)

"AFTER the unfortunate battle and the death of King Louis at Mohács, the lands of the Bohemian crown became subject to an interregnum. This was the more unfortunate, as under the feeble rule of the two last kings anarchy and