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REGENCY OF ARCHDUKE FERDINAND, 1521-1531:
FIRST HABSBURG ATTEMPT AT CENTRALIZED CONTROL
OF GERMANY,

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THIS DISSERTATION HAS BEEN MICROFILMED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED
For those with professional interest in the Reforma-
tion era, Ferdinand of the House of Habsburg requires no
special introduction here. As the younger and sole brother
of Charles V, who was the Holy Roman Emperor of the German
Nation in the first-half of the sixteenth century, Ferdi-
nand's place among the list of secular notables of the pe-
riod is assured. Single out in 1521 by his imperial brother
to be the Archduke of Austria and to become his personal
representative in Germany, attaining the kingships of Bohe-
mia and Hungary in 1526 and 1527 respectively, and designated,
following his brother's abdication and retirement from pub-
ic life in 1556, to succeed him as emperor of Germany, Fer-
dinand could not help leaving behind him from such political
heights indelible footprints upon the course of history.

Yet, probably because of the fragmentation of Ferdi-
nand's energy into these many various channels of responsi-
bility and the presence of his illustrious brother, Charles
V, and his fanatical nephew, Philip II of Spain, who both
eclipsed his own place on the stage of history, Ferdinand's
historical significance has been largely overlooked by
posterity. Although his activities with respect to Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary have already been adequately scrutinized by the historians of these nations, a full length biographical treatment is still a desideratum. There are, in the main, two phases of Ferdinand's public career which need critical evaluation: the ten-year period between 1521 and 1531 when he served as Statthalter, or regent, of Germany; and the concluding six-year period of his life between 1558 and 1564 when he reigned as emperor of the Germans.

It is the purpose of this study to consider the first phase -- to recapitulate and analyze the salient features of Ferdinand's ten-year term in the German regency, with particular emphasis on the political and religious currents then in operation and a more than passing glance at his involvement in the affairs of Central Europe. In coping with this objective, an effort was made -- whenever possible -- to investigate primary sources, among which the most important are Ferdinand's correspondence with members of his family and the transactions of German imperial diets.

In undertaking this task within that epoch of history when religious fervor captivated minds and often prompted them to deeds that observers may well judge irrational by present-day standards and whose ultimate repercussions still echo within Christendom today, it has been my explicit aim to develop and maintain persistently a tone of impartiality.
Since a total divestment of personal bias is hardly accomplishable in its entirety by anybody, I can only hope that in different places I have either equally pleased or displeased all shades in the religious spectrum.

No preface is ever complete without recognizing those whose counsel, encouragement, and help have aided the author in the realization of his project -- a pleasure in itself and rendered even more pleasing by being able to acknowledge publicly such a debt to others. I wish to express my gratitude to the Fulbright Commission on Higher Education whose generosity, in the form of a Travel and Research Grant, made it possible for me to avail myself of the primary sources in Vienna, Austria, and set my eyes upon places Ferdinand once frequented. Moreover, I am rightfully indebted to the Austrian state authorities -- to the Federal Ministry of Education in particular -- whose friendliness and cooperative spirit I have constantly enjoyed while collecting material for this study.

Above all, for personal suggestions, competent guidance, and untiring assistance my obligations to Dr. Harold J. Grimm, Professor of History at The Ohio State University and my faculty advisor, are deep and long standing. Without his good judgment and fine discrimination in all that pertained to translating my thoughts into words, I would now be embarrassed in presenting this study to the public.
The final acknowledgment is to Mrs. June Bourgeois, who spent many weary hours typing and patiently checking the manuscript. None of the above should be blamed in any way for the final result. All evaluations and conclusions and what errors may still remain are my own.

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INTRODUCTION

THE EUROPEAN WORLD AT THE EVE OF FERDINAND'S ACCESSION

Perhaps as early as 1300 but certainly by the middle of the fifteenth century and onward into the first decades of the sixteenth century, western Europe was churning through a period of transition from medieval into modern times. Like all prior transitions, this one, too, entailed a radical reorganization of all the basic forms of life, altering all the economic, social, political, and spiritual values that the Middle Ages had for centuries provided. Although the contours of this metamorphosis were not sharply etched at first, they gained definiteness as the increasing momentum of change swept the second half of the fifteenth century so that by the early 1500's, it had become fairly evident that the legacy of the Middle Ages would no longer hold up in the court of facts.

One of the most salient features of medieval civilization was its attempt to force its citizens to live together as a single religious community, everyone adopting and adhering to a set of uniform beliefs as promulgated by the Roman Catholic Church. This colossal organization,
which asserted and exercised spiritual control over all its members of its monolithic body ever since the days of the declining Roman Empire, had been, like any other institution, subjected to mismanagement, corruption, and the maladies arising from other shortcomings. While this ecclesiastical aggregate had managed in the past, either voluntarily or under some outside pressure, to purge itself of much internal disease, it proved reluctant after 1300 to remedy the malignancy that was now menacing the soundness of its structure.

To make matters even worse, the Papacy itself, the apex of this mammoth body, chose to set a sorry example of disunity, worldliness, and divided purpose. Its Avignon sojourn (1309-78), the Great Schism (1378-1417), and its subsequent involvement in the factional politics of Italy brought it to what must have been its nadir in the eyes of its Founder. Criticism now rose to demand specific reforms and became crystallized in the conciliar movement whose aim was to cleanse the Augean stable in Rome in democratic fashion through decisions arrived at in general councils of the Church, representing, theoretically, all the faithful. Sensing correctly that the conciliarists were determined, in their reforming zeal, to curtail some of the papal prerogatives, the popes managed, by and large, to outmaneuver their antagonists and even succeeded in strengthening themonarchical principles of the Roman Curia within the Church.
But their papal maneuverings proved to be a Pyrrhic victory, for the resolute avoidance of self-reform rendered vulnerable the unity and discipline of Latin Christendom. In fact, the Church became a virtual tinderbox of early modern Europe, ready to explode at any moment if the right candle was held to it.

The other memorable characteristic of the medieval panorama was the all-pervasive feudal system which set its own stamp on all economic, social, and political institutions. The relative self-sufficiency marking the feudal system economically, with its manorial organization for agricultural production and its merchant-craftsman-guild network controlling the industrial output, was gradually replaced by new economic concepts and forms. Due to the increased use of money instead of barter, the western European peasantry, once bound to the soil of their landlords, now advanced to being free tenants, though they still faced a host of oppressive dues and services. Even more dramatic was the disintegration of the corporate guild system of the Middle Ages under the impact of new trading relationships, increased industrial production, and novel forms of business organization and techniques. All these factors combined to foster the emergence of an economic individualism vaguely resembling modern capitalism in its incipient shape. Gigantic banking firms and big business in general were just around the next bend in time.
These economic changes weighted onerously upon the structure of society and threatened with disruption its stratification. In the traditional three-class system of the medieval world -- nobility, clergy, and peasantry -- there was no space reserved for the bourgeoisie, or town-dwellers, who never really fitted into its tripartite social fabric. But this class-in-between, the middle class, was on the verge of its ascendancy. Though the new social element was hardly numerous, comprising perhaps not more than one-tenth of the population of western Europe, it possessed a dynamic not freighted with excessive moral compunction which permitted it to profit from the material distress of fellow Christians and singled it out to be the builder of modern Europe whose much-felt presence would be a great asset to those who then commanded the summits of political life.

Another distinctive trait of the age of transition was the emergence in the political sphere of the territorial state as the most serious alternative to feudalism. European monarchs were now, by extricating themselves from the cobweb of feudalism, hoping to achieve both wealth and power on a scale unknown to their forebears. The concept of national monarchy was emerging as the dominant form of political authority. By the commencement of the sixteenth century, the traditional concept of medieval kingship, the credo of primus inter pares idealism, was fast becoming a relic of the past. Towns, city-states, principalities, and
even kingdoms rushed to transfer their allegiance to the new territorial rulers.

There were, in particular, three nations in western Europe -- Spain, England, and France -- where the seeds of the new political orientation grew its deepest roots. In the quarter century that elapsed between the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile in 1469 and the conquest of Granada in 1492 of the last Moslem vestige on the Iberian peninsula, modern Spain came into existence as a nation, and its monarchs skillfully exploited its crusading tradition to unite her disparate peoples. Backed by the towns and by the élite of the new economy, both Ferdinand and Isabella clipped the wings of the unruly nobility and extended their royal power to an unprecedented zenith. The English, formerly divided by a civil war in which their nobility measured swords among themselves (War of the Roses, 1455-85) and which followed hard on their defeat in France (Hundred Years War, 1337-1453), found at last domestic peace and unity with the accession of the Tudor dynasty in 1485. England under the Tudors (1484-1603) witnessed the same process of consolidation of royal power which Spain underwent. Even in France, the largest political entity in western Europe and already under an effective royal government, the image of a new type of monarchy grew considerably in strength and acquired formidable stature. Engendered by a new awareness of nationality that fed upon the results of
a French victory in the Hundred Years War, a victory which permanently liberated Gallic soil from the English intruders, the Valois dynasty tightened its grasp over the nation by crushing in 1477 the Duke of Burgundy, the last major thorn in the French monarch's flesh.

Owing to special circumstances embedded in their medieval history, Italy and Germany, the other two significant political entities in western Europe, remained aloof from the impact of the new political evolution as no territorial consolidation took place there on a national scale. Italy, once combined with Germany to constitute together the Holy Roman Empire, was for centuries virtually immune from any significant German influence and consisted of a patchwork of independent but mutually-bickering political units of confusing variety and so remained the sort of bait that invites outside interests. Germany itself fared hardly any better; it lingered as a hodge-podge of more than three hundred virtually unfettered, autonomously political monads ruled by an emperor who was enfeebled and paralyzed by constitutional limitations construed to sap his élan while still enshrouding him in a chimerical veil of universal sovereignty. His presence was tolerated by the great feudal nobles and prelates who were the real political masters of the land. Although populated with industrious and exuberant people, adorned with opulent towns, and enjoying spells of soaring economic prosperity, Germany woefully lacked both
energy and effective leadership to achieve a long-overdue political centralization and national unity.

This was then the general European milieu and the particular German sphere into which the two Habsburg brothers, Charles and Ferdinand, stepped as the sixteenth century opened. The older one, Charles, first became king of Spain and later the emperor, while the younger one, Ferdinand, was assigned by the former to reign over the hereditary lands of their dynasty in Austria and simultaneously to function as his right arm in Germany. Their joint arrival on the German scene at the end of the second decade of the sixteenth century resuscitated in the hearts of many German subjects a hope for a national federation under the aegis of the Habsburg eagle. These two brothers, whether still partisans of the vague tenets of a universal monarchy serving all Christendom or already protagonists of the far more appropriate political canons of the new monarchy, stood on a threshold where they saw that whatever their ultimate ambition might be, one of the first steps to be taken lay in the direction of transforming the archaic political mold of Germany into a national kingship for their dynasty — a clear realization that the path hitherto trodden there by their forefathers must be abandoned.

The study which follows these introductory pages is an account of the first ten-year course (from 1521 to 1531) of the new Habsburg regime in Germany. Since the emperor will
virtually isolate himself from the German scene during this entire span of time, the history of this period must be sought in the history of Ferdinand's regency there. Therefore, the spotlight of attention will focus on him. His activities constitute the essential fiber of this study though the emperor -- as the senior scion of the dynasty and ultimate fountainhead of all major policy-making -- will emerge from time to time. As for its fundamental theme, the study will introduce and buttress the thesis that the inability of the Habsburgs during their first ten-year period of German rule to streamline the outdated political framework of the empire by establishing their hereditary ascendancy in the form of a national kingship rests clearly with the emperor and creates grave and lasting historical consequences for posterity. This failure will be a tragedy confined not only to the fortunes of a dynasty; it will be a tragedy also for Germany and the European community at large.
CHAPTER I

YEARS OF MATURATION: 1503-1522

Ferdinand of the houses of Habsburg and Aragon-Castile had an impressive heredity. His paternal grandparents were Emperor Maximilian I and Mary of Burgundy, who was the daughter of Charles the Bold. His maternal grandparents were the much celebrated Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, the forgers of modern Spain and possessors of the august title, los reyes católicos -- "the Catholic Sovereigns" -- a title conferred on them by Pope Alexander VI. His father was Philip the Handsome of Flanders, King of Castile at twenty-six, dead at twenty-eight; his mother was that ill-fated Joanna -- or Juana la Loca, "Joanna the Mad." This title was conferred on her by her subjects because she went insane when Ferdinand was three and lived with this affliction until he was fifty-two.

The inhabitants of the small Castilian town of Alcalá de Henares were to long remember and cherish March 10, 1503, for their town was honored on this date by being the place where the royal infante came into the world. Because this blessed event occurred within its walls, Cardinal
Ximenes, Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain, made a request and Queen Isabella fulfilled it by granting the citizens of Alcalá a permanent exemption from taxation. The people of Alacalá reportedly still preserve the cradle of the royal infante, in token of their gratitude.¹

The new prince received the baptismal name of Ferdinand to honor his maternal grandfather. His early years witnessed the unfolding of a dreary family tragedy: the sudden death of his father on September 25, 1506, and the progressively degenerate mental state of his mother, which was not improved with another pregnancy and delivery as court physicians had hoped it would be. Nor were further pregnancies helpful. It was, indeed, Ferdinand's good fortune that amidst these disasters involving his parents, he could draw upon the strong and abiding affection of his maternal grandfather.

Ferdinand's early education took place entirely in Spain, under the benevolent eyes of his grandfather. One of his first teachers, Alvario Osario, Bishop of Astorga, commented favorably on his intellectual precocity, sense of generosity, and streak of democratic attitude which his pupil demonstrated by his unwillingness to tolerate the custom of other children deferring to him because of his position.²

January 23, 1516, undoubtedly constituted a crucial date in Ferdinand's life, for it marked the death of his grandfather, Ferdinand of Castile, his sole benefactor.
The demise of the aged monarch not only affected deeply the young prince who reportedly fell sick the moment the news of his grandfather's passing was brought to him, but also seriously shook the political stability that Spain had acquired during his long reign.³

It became quite clear that with Ferdinand of Castile's death, the throne of Spain would now be occupied by Charles of Ghent, the eldest son among Philip's and Joanna's six children. In spite of the fact that Charles was half Spanish, he was, nevertheless, brought up in Flanders, and, therefore, considered a complete alien by the majority of his Spanish subjects. The newly-forged monarchy of Spain, encompassing many diverse ethnic elements and a perennial hotbed of narrow-minded parochialism, had already tasted the seeds of anarchy in connection with young Ferdinand's father, Philip the Handsome of Flanders. This charming Habsburg prince, because of his philandering habits, was held responsible by many Spaniards for his wife's mental disorders. Then his rapacity and arrogance, coupled with his preference for Flemish advisors about his person, significantly undermined his popularity in Spain to such an extent that on July 12, 1502, the Cortes of Valladolid indignantly asserted that Joanna -- his wife who survived till 1555 with only a few lucid mental periods before her death -- was really "Queen-proprietor of Castile" and Philip merely her consort.⁴ The actual showdown between Philip and
the forces of Spanish xenophobia was averted only by Philip's sudden death.

Therefore, with this background, it is easy to perceive why there arose in Spain, following the death of grandfather Ferdinand of Aragon in 1516, a forceful movement whose members aimed to place on the throne, instead of Charles, a youthful Ferdinand whose Spanish birth and upbringing were his major qualifications. This dangerous situation, which might have led to a civil war, was averted, however, by Cardinal Ximenes, who had been named by the late monarch the executor of his will and entrusted with the duties of the government during the period of transition.

Ferdinand of Aragon, it seems, had made at least two wills. By one executed at Burgos in 1512, he had committed the government of Spain to the young Ferdinand during the absence of his older brother, Charles. But his counselors advised against this disposition of the regency, for it would have mobilized, they felt, native factionalism and set the stage for a prospective rivalry between his grandchildren.

His last will, dated July, 1515, at Malaga, settled the succession in Spain and Naples on his daughter Joanna and her first son -- his grandson Charles. The administration of the realm and the execution of his will was entrusted to Cardinal Ximenes, until Charles should arrive from Flanders. In addition, his will also contained a bountiful provision for
the young Ferdinand, showing that he had not abandoned the idea of compensating in some way his favorite grandson. Young Ferdinand was granted an annual stipend of 50,000 ducats chargeable on the public revenues to be derived from the Kingdom of Naples.6

Cardinal Ximenes, this singularly gifted and erudite Spanish prelate, though then over eighty years of age, proved himself, again as always in his long life, one of the foremost statesmen his country has ever produced. He was strong enough to get Charles proclaimed king throughout the realm, though the legality of this proceeding was doubtful in view of the fact that Joanna, his mother, was legally still queen. Having overawed nobles with a show of force and decisively frustrated plots in favor of the young Ferdinand, the octogenarian Ximenes delivered the realm from a blow that might have shipwrecked the life-long efforts of Ferdinand and Isabella.7

Charles of Ghent, soon to be known as King Charles I of Spain and eventually Emperor Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire, at once indicated his clear-cut determination to ascend the throne of Spain and be regarded head of his family. In one of the earliest letters which heralded the beginning of an extensive correspondence between the two brothers, Charles, writing from Brussels, offered Ferdinand his condolences on the death of their maternal grandfather and urged his younger brother to regard him his guardian.
Charles also ordered Ferdinand to leave Spain at once without his Spanish advisors and to transfer his household to the Low Countries. The two royal princes met each other for the first time in their lives in the city of Majados in 1517, as Ferdinand was in the act of withdrawing from and Charles was entering onto Spanish soil.

Ferdinand was destined to spend a relatively brief span of time in his life — approximately three years — in the Low Countries. This was a tranquil but productive interlude in his career. The Low Countries, densely populated but economically highly advanced, and therefore fabulously opulent, had been under the control of the House of Habsburg since 1477, when Maximilian I of Habsburg married Mary of Burgundy, the sole heiress to the inheritance of Charles the Bold. In 1517, when Ferdinand arrived in Brussels, the administration of the Low Countries was entrusted to Margaret of Austria, aunt of the two royal princes. Under her capable regency, which was characterized by a policy of wisdom and moderation, this area became the center of contemporary intellectual currents — in short, northern Humanism. It is therefore not surprising that the young Ferdinand came into frequent contact there with the foremost minds of his age. He was particularly touched by the immense learning of that most brilliant scion of late-medieval scholarship and the Prince of Christian Humanism, Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, who since 1516 had provided an additional
intellectual luster to the court of Margaret by his appointment and acceptance of the honorary court position of privy councilor.⁹

Though no scholar by nature and conviction, Ferdinand took a great interest in the enormous literary output of Erasmus. He was especially impressed by the Dutch savant's *Institutio principis Christiani*, an epoch-making work rich in pre-Machiavellian wisdom on the proper royal conduct and behavior for young princes to follow within the framework of Christian principles. Although it was dedicated to Charles, Ferdinand was much taken by it; it remained his favorite reading and he reportedly knew most of it by memory.

This intellectual preference for, if not outright identification with, the Erasmian viewpoint on the part of Ferdinand was indeed destined to have meaningful consequences. Throughout his prolonged public career, which was to be constantly overshadowed by religious dissensions following the Reformation, Ferdinand would steadfastly adhere -- in matters pertaining to religion -- to those tenets propounded by Erasmus, his spiritual *alter ego*. There would be condemnation of that widespread ignorance, superstition, and corruption prevalent among the rank and file of the clergy. There would be disapproval of those inordinate excesses of popular piety which plagued the laity; but there would also be an explicit condemnation of all separatist efforts whose aim was to shatter the religious unity of Christendom.
In Brussels, at the court of his aunt Margaret and in that balmy climate and intellectually-conducive atmosphere of the Low Countries, Ferdinand put the finishing touches to his formal education. A mastery of foreign tongues seems to have comprised the better part of his training there, for he devoted considerable time and effort to the study of languages. By 1520, in addition to Spanish and Latin, he was already fluent in Flemish and French; he understood Italian and made a beginning in German, although a full comprehension of the latter was to come to him only much later.

The early months of 1519 were undoubtedly again crucial and of great consequence for Ferdinand. On January 12 of that year, his paternal grandfather and Holy Roman Emperor, Maximilian I, passed from the scene. His death upset the delicate political balance both internationally and domestically in Europe. It gave rise to a keen rivalry among the emerging territorial states of the continent, for men could see the light of a possible formation of a world-wide Habsburg power conglomeration, and this awareness brought forth a temporary competition between his two grandsons. That intense rivalry for the title of Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire between Francis I of France and Charles, who was already in control of the vast Spanish possessions since 1516, was resolved by Charles's unanimous elevation to this august imperial position by the seven German electors who voted it
to him on June 28, 1519. That those votes were only secured through lavish bribes to these electors which were advanced by the Fuggers are facts well known in history and should be no direct concern of this study. What should instead be accentuated is that short-lived uneasiness, brought forth by the death of Maximilian I, which strained temporarily the hitherto harmonious relationship between Charles and Ferdinand.

There arose no serious opposition to Charles's imperial succession over that of Ferdinand to this august title, either within the Habsburg family itself or among the subjects directly under their political sway. The late emperor, Maximilian I, to be sure, did choose Charles his successor and even the Habsburg Hausgesetze, a series of agreements and protocols governing the relationship among the members of this dynasty, had already manifestly established the principle of primogeniture. Only one major voice, dis-favoring Charles's candidacy, was echoed privately and surprisingly by Erasmus on grounds hardly conclusive. In one of his numerous letters, the eminent Dutch humanist disclosed his personal preference for Ferdinand because he seemed to favor the cause of learning, whereas Charles, under the influence of his former tutor and present advisor, Bishop Adrian of Utrecht (destined to become Pope Adrian VI and the last non-Italian to fulfill that office), had shown little interest in it.
Instead, it was the question of territorial apportionment, the question of Ferdinand's lawful share from his grandfather's legacy, that arose between the brothers. While Charles's biographers seem to be divided over his sincerity and willingness to compensate territorially his younger brother, it can be safely asserted that their aunt Margaret's intervention in behalf of Ferdinand proved to be instrumental in helping Charles to reach his eventual decision. In replying to his aunt in a letter dated March, 1519, Charles assured Margaret that he would duly remunerate his brother, provided the young prince remained loyal to him during the forthcoming imperial elections.\textsuperscript{13}

Two meetings between the representatives of Charles and Ferdinand, which took place in 1521 and 1522 respectively, settled conclusively the question of territorial apportionment and firmly established that path Ferdinand was to follow in his protracted political career. The first of these meetings was held early in 1521 at Cologne, the result of which was incorporated into an agreement on April 21, 1521, in Worms by both brothers. In accordance with this so-called Worms agreement, five hereditary duchies of traditional Frankish Ostmark -- Carniola, Styria, Carinthia, and what would constitute modern Upper and Lower Austria -- were assigned to Ferdinand, together with the title of Archduke of Austria. His sizeable personal income, derived annually from the revenues of the Kingdom of Naples as part of the
bequest of his maternal grandfather, Ferdinand of Aragon, was also to be recognized. Finally, Ferdinand was named President of the *Reichsregiment*, the Imperial Regency Council, which called upon him to head a committee of distinguished dignitaries entrusted with the duties of Charles's imperial government those times when the emperor was absent.

This agreement of Worms was neither a satisfactory nor a lasting one. Although there exists no documentary evidence indicative of Ferdinand's objection to a treaty he had already agreed to accept, difficulties soon emerged from an entirely unexpected source. The aforesaid Worms agreement, to be sure, while assigning Ferdinand the five hereditary duchies of Austria, failed to allot him these additional territories: the Duchy of Tyrol, the territory then known as *Vorderösterreich*, and that area to the south which Maximilian I had conquered from Venice. Ever since the days of Charlemagne, the Duchy of Tyrol and parts of *Vorderösterreich* were integral components of Austria, and Charles woefully ignored this time-honored historical tradition by retaining them for himself. The provincial estates, particularly those of Carinthia and Carniola, resisted this territorial clause of the Worms agreement and went so far as to refuse the providing of any military assistance to Charles until all Austrian lands were restored to Ferdinand's personal jurisdiction.

Therefore, a second and final settlement took place in
Brussels at the initiative of Ferdinand. Signed on February 7 and 8 respectively by both Charles and Ferdinand personally, the so-called Brussels agreement assigned the Duchy of Tyrol, parts of Vorderösterreich and the protectorates in Swabia to Ferdinand, along with those territories already included in the Worms agreement. As a generous measure and unmistakable token of his approval of the settlement, Ferdinand accepted the joint financial responsibility for the colossal Habsburg debt in Germany, the sum of which approximated 800,000 Rhenish gulden and represented not only the war debt incurred by Maximilian I but also included the staggering cost of Charles's imperial election.  

During Ferdinand's nearly twenty-year-long period of maturation, another highly significant matter was also successfully settled — namely that of his marriage — largely through a joint Habsburg effort. Ever since the days of Emperor Frederick III -- whose clever foresight had brought in 1477 through the marriage of his son Maximilian to Mary of Burgundy, heiress of the Low Countries, the Low Countries into the Habsburg domain -- the policy of contracting diplomatic matrimones remained the cornerstone of the Habsburg dynastic strategy. After many disappointments in his foreign wars, Maximilian I, too, turned to a conscientious following of this family policy. In fact, he was so particularly successful in his nuptial diplomacy -- through the betrothal of his son Philip to Joanna whose dowry added to
the Habsburg lands the vast Spanish possessions on two continents -- that posterity rightfully gave him the cognomen of "royal matchmaker," and that historians accredited him with having coined the much-celebrated motto: Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria nube. It is, therefore, not surprising that Maximilian I's dynastic ambitions had also been extended to include, on account of the premature death of his son Philip, his grandchildren with a top priority reserved for his two grandsons -- Charles and Ferdinand.

For the Habsburg territorial ambitions in early sixteenth-century Europe, the kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia offered the most advantageous possibilities. In both these countries the line of native rulers recently had become extinct and these nations were now ruled, in form of a personal union, under the auspices of the House of Jagiello. King Vladislav, the first scion of this Polish-Lithuanian dynasty to ascend the thrones of Hungary and Bohemia, was an incapable ruler. Plagued by constant illness and a weak and vacillating character, he was a mere puppet in the hands of the magnates who had secured his election. To please these political supporters, he greatly reduced the taxes and dissolved the standing army, a dangerous act in light of an ever impending threat of renewed Turkish invasion. These acts made him unpopular amongst a wide segment of his subjects, especially among the lesser nobility and townspeople. Assessing correctly Vladislav's
negative character and the eventual factionalism that would rend the political spectrum of Hungary and Bohemia, Maximilian I was determined to forge a Habsburg-Jagiellonian union.

Maximilian's sporadic negotiations were already started as early as 1505 and continued for the next ten years with negligible results. Although Vladislav welcomed the emperor's matrimonial designs, they were, nevertheless, shipwrecked by the egoistic ambitions of the Hungarian and Bohemian diets. Triggered, in all likelihood, by the further Turkish advances in southeastern Central Europe, the Habsburg-Jagiellonian family pact materialized by 1516. A conference held in the Austrian capital in that year, known as the Congress of Vienna of 1515, established the basis of a far more binding matrimonial alliance between the Habsburgs and the Jagiellons than was originally envisaged by Maximilian. According to this pact, Maximilian's granddaughter Mary, born in 1505, was designated as the future bride of Prince Louis, the sole but already sickly son of Vladislav, and either Charles or Ferdinand with the rank of a king was to marry Princess Anne, the daughter of Vladislav. The death of Vladislav a few months after the Vienna Congress and that of Maximilian three years later in 1519, removed from the scene both protagonists of the family pact and halted temporarily further proceedings in this matter.

Although the ten-year-old King Louis, ruling jointly Hungary and Bohemia following the death of his father in
1516, wished to carry out the provisions agreed upon in Vienna, the uncertain future that befell both Charles and Ferdinand after the death of their grandfather caused a forestalling. The election of Charles to emperorship in 1519 undoubtedly made him the most eligible suitor for Princess Anne, but he, in his elevated position, no longer considered this match personally desirable. In a letter to Louis, dated November 20, 1520, Charles explicitly stated that he did not wish to become Anne's husband, while his unreadiness, if not outright unwillingness, to assign imperial territories to his brother Ferdinand and to determine his rank in the empire, made the latter an unacceptable candidate for the Jagiello princess.

Ferdinand's acceptability for the Habsburg-Jagiellonian match by Louis as well as the Hungarian and Bohemian diets appears to have come immediately after the Worms agreement of April, 1521. The younger brother, now provided with hereditary Habsburg lands in Austria and with the title of archduke and made the emperor's representative in the empire, was placed in a suitable position of power so that there was nothing left to hinder the fulfillment of this long-planned family pact. On May 26, 1521, a mere month after the Worms agreement, a dual wedding between Ferdinand and Anne and between Louis and Mary was celebrated amidst much pomp and grandeur in Vienna's St. Stephen's Cathedral, the ecclesiastical landmark of the Austrian capital.
Apart from the advantageous political consequences of this match between Ferdinand and Anne which eventually elevated him to the kingship of both Hungary and Bohemia, their marriage was singularly blessed. For twenty-six years they lived together, setting an example of a perfect marriage graced with fifteen children. Unlike his royal contemporaries who excelled at extramarital relations, Ferdinand never had an affair with another woman either before or after his queen's death.

By 1522 Ferdinand had completely matured. By the standards of his age, he was adequately educated and prepared for the demands of statesmanship. Through the 1522 Brussels agreement with his brother, he had secured lands, rank, and title for himself in the empire, and his marriage contained the seeds of the Habsburgs' centuries-long involvement with the eastern-half of Central Europe. So in 1522, when both fate and historical circumstances compelled him to step out of the protection of an undisturbed adolescence, he was ready and satisfactorily well groomed for that public career he would be called upon to assume. But the good fortune that repeatedly blessed those formative years before his maturity would no longer be a part of the years ahead. Problems of immense scope and complexity -- internationally, the drawn-out Valois intrigue and the Turkish menace; domestically, the factionalizing threat of the Reformation and paralyzing effect of political particularism
in the empire -- had already cast their lengthening shadows on the Habsburg domain. The weight of these shadows on Ferdinand's public career would make it an arduous one, freighted with frequent disappointments, and scant in accomplishment.
CHAPTER II

TRYING YEARS: 1522-1524

Ferdinand was officially set on the course of his public career in accordance with the terms of the 1521 Worms agreement which confirmed upon him the archducal title of Austria and that of the viceroyship of the Holy Roman Empire. The duties and obligations that these two titles presented to him and the authority accrued to him from each of these positions differed vastly. Therefore, throughout his entire public career, Ferdinand was compelled to divide his attention, responsibilities, and efforts between the two parts of his Habsburg patrimony -- Austria and Germany. His scrutiny had to be always equally apportioned between Austria in the East and Germany in the West -- like that double-headed eagle of the Habsburg family crest whose vigilant eyes guard watchfully in both directions. Since these two areas of professional responsibility presented him with differing problems which demanded contrasting solutions in many instances, the treatment of these problems will be kept separate throughout this entire study for the sake of easier comprehension and only Germany will receive critical
attention.

To the most unperceptive political observer of the early 1520's, the venerable political institution of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation must have appeared a peculiar scramble of contradictions. Though theoretically ruled by an emperor, the empire was in reality an atomized grouping of political entities. Most of them pursued foreign and domestic policies quite independent of any single supreme authority. The mere fact that the emperor's title was elective made his authority distinctly weaker than that of any hereditary monarch then reigning in contemporary Europe.

The actual power resided in the hands of several thousand local and regional authorities whose representatives constituted the Reichstag, or Imperial Diet, which was the chief political machinery of the realm. This august body still retained, as late as the sixteenth century, all of its medieval feudal characteristics. It was still divided into three colleges. In the first sat the seven electors whose majority vote elected the emperor; in the second, the princes of the empire; and in the third, the representatives of the free imperial cities.

Internal rivalries and jealousies among these delegates led to a marked degree of political particularism within the empire and hampered its head from establishing an efficacious centralized government. The effective exercise of the
emperor's executive power was largely handicapped by the fact that he could only levy a limited amount of taxes -- relatively small sums, hardly sufficient to cover the cost of imperial government.¹ Thus, the political contrast was indeed staggering between the early sixteenth-century Holy Roman Empire -- just Germany as Italy was virtually no integral part of it from the mid-thirteenth century onwards -- and the rising nation-states of contemporary western Europe such as France, England, and Spain. In the latter, national sentiment had already successfully overcome the medieval Christian spirit of political universality and laid a foundation for national unity. In Germany, nationalistic tendencies were still incapable of triumphing over the forces of political separatism.

The prestigious but politically impotent title of emperor was shared from 1273 on between the Habsburg and other princely families of Germany. With the election of Albert II in 1438, the imperial crown permanently rested with the senior member of the House of Habsburg. In view of the administrative chaos prevailing internally in the empire and the reality of its political weakness sensed by its head, it is not surprising that the early Habsburg rulers after 1438 -- particularly the long-reigning Frederick III (1440-93) -- hardly concerned themselves with the empire's political affairs and concentrated instead their efforts upon their hereditary Austrian holdings. Toward the end of the
fifteenth century, however, as a result of the breath of nationalism which had begun to blow over Europe, a growing nationalist sentiment swept through Germany. It was sufficiently potent to create a party of constitutional reformers within the Reichstag and forceful enough to nurture an aspiration in behalf of the revival of imperial power itself.

Emperor Maximilian I, the next ruler in line after Frederick III and paternal grandfather of Charles and Ferdinand, began his reign in 1493 amidst this nationalist upsurge which promised him every omen of eventual success in strengthening imperial power. Constantly dominated by medieval dreams of chivalry and driven by unrealistic dynastic ambitions, Maximilian nevertheless turned out to be a person too visionary and fanciful whose political programs and maneuverings steered him along a quixotic and trivial course with results hardly beneficial to his own personal interest.

True, a few reform measures were adopted through his initiative by the imperial diets of Worms (1495), Augsburg (1500), and Cologne (1512) which gave the empire a superficial appearance of internal cohesion. These Maximilian reforms, however, were not designed to strengthen and centralize the hitherto impotent imperial power, but rather to unify Germany for military purposes and to arrest her eventual territorial disintegration. Maximilian's aspirations to reform the outdated political structure of the Holy Roman
Empire by transforming it into a hereditary Habsburg kingdom of Germany met with repeated rebuffs and eventual failure. The blame certainly rests with the upper echelon of the imperial diet whose members aimed at federation rather than at national unity, and at weakening and controlling the imperial power rather than at strengthening it.\(^2\)

The Germany of the early sixteenth century, then, upon whose throne Charles ascended in 1519 and whose personal representative Ferdinand was designated eventually to be, hardly offered any significant compensation, apart from a certain amount of prestige, in terms of power and wealth to offset enormous expense, hardship, and toil the Habsburgs had to incur in acquiring and maintaining Germany's emperorship.

In addition to the chaotic political milieu prevailing in Germany, the nation was simultaneously threatened by a religious schism. Started in 1517 by Dr. Martin Luther as a result of his strong doubts about the efficacy of indulgences, this sub-prior of the Augustinian order and professor of Biblical exegesis at the University of Wittenberg hoped to air his criticism through the traditional channels of the academic world. What seemed then, in 1517, as harmless questioning of a particular doctrine of the Church, a questioning which was to be confined to scholarly debates and writings within German university communities, soon grew into a mass movement of nationwide scope. Subsequent
criticisms which widened to embrace further doctrinal issues and ecclesiastical practices and his defiance of the organized authority of the Church led finally, by 1520, to the condemnation and excommunication of this Wittenberg reformer by forces of religious opposition that were centered at the summit level of Catholic bureaucracy.

Political antagonism against the Lutheran movement was shaped and made real by the young Habsburg emperor, Charles V, whose first imperial diet held at Worms in 1521 passed a sentence of outlawry on Martin Luther as he refused to recant his teachings. There was no desire on the part of the Roman Curia to enact a compromise with Luther in order to avert an outright schism. The tactlessness of Charles in ignoring the overwhelmingly moderate viewpoint of the majority of the representatives at the diet, whose chief aim was to ward off an official condemnation, put an end to the chances of an early solution to the confessional controversy that was still in its embryonic stage in Germany. As a result of this ecclesiastical obstinacy and political pas de faux of the highest secular authority, the Wittenberg reformer was able to gather a substantial following for himself among the masses and likewise among the princes, thereby becoming a national hero. By 1522, then, as Ferdinand came to fulfill the duties of his position within the empire, the Lutheran revolt was already a success.

While Germany was seething with these internal troubles,
international affairs in contemporary Europe were worsening. The year 1521 marks the beginning of one of the most intense and devastating power struggles early modern Europe was ever to witness. It involved the Habsburgs and the Valois, the ruling dynasty of France since the fourteenth century. This drawn-out rivalry — which was to take the form of four wars and persist through the entire reigns of Charles V and his French antagonist, Francis I — did not come to a definite end until the Peace of Cateau-Cambrèsis in 1559, nearly forty years after the struggle had commenced.

Although the roots of this dynastic rivalry may be traced to French expansionist ambitions of 1494 when Charles VIII invaded a politically disunited Renaissance Italy on questionable genealogical claims, new fuel was added to the fire in 1519 by events occurring in Germany. The election of the Habsburg Charles to the headship of Germany in that year led the French to believe in the idea of a menacing Habsburg encirclement, the possibility of the development of a perfect vise, and they naturally had no desire to accept such a containment readily.4

The details of the four armed contests that grew from this dynastic rivalry need no discussion here. Sufficient to say that after the first decades of a profitless, if not an almost suicidal, campaign in Italy for the French, the rivalry eventually resolved itself more into a national duel between Spain and France for the domination of western Europe
and finally turned itself away from sheer dynastic consider-
ations to the more genuinely French concern about securing
the Rhine frontier. Furthermore, and what is far more sig-
nificant, these four contests, besides taxing all the finan-
cial and manpower resources of the Habsburgs, kept the em-
peror for long intervals out of Germany. His frequent and
prolonged absences prevented Charles from devoting adequate
personal attention to the domestic ills of the empire and
hindered him from carrying out there most of his political
objectives.

This was then the Germany which in 1522 became the po-
itical inheritance of Ferdinand: a highly decentralized,
 quasi-feudal nation with nominal power reserved for its
central authority, torn apart by the confessional crisis and
made into an unwilling participant of the Habsburg-Valois
conflict. It is not surprising, therefore, that the first
two-year period of Ferdinand's regency in Germany from 1522
to 1524 (this segment of his life the present chapter intends
to treat) constituted one of the most trying phases of his
public career. For, in addition to the inherent limitations
on his position coupled with the already burdensome problems
of the empire, he was further encumbered throughout this
initial two-year period by his brother's continued absence
which left this young and relatively inexperienced Habsburg
statesman at the mercy of his own adroitness and resources.

Although the Worms agreement of April, 1521 already
established Ferdinand's future position in the empire, he did not begin his duties officially until the early months of 1522. One can only speculate on the reasons for this delay. Ferdinand's appointment still needed, theoretically, the consent of the imperial estates, and their confirmation was not secured until the conclusion of the Worms Diet (May, 1521). His subsequent marriage following shortly thereafter took him to Vienna, and certain Austrian domestic problems kept him continuously there throughout the remaining part of 1521. Finally, personal negotiations with his brother materializing in the Brussels agreement brought Ferdinand to the Low Countries in the winter months of 1522.

News of a forthcoming imperial diet, following the historically significant one of 1521 and the first to require Ferdinand's participation, found the young Habsburg prince totally unprepared to attend. This diet, as well as the next two to follow, was to be held at Nuernberg, the permanent seat of imperial government since 1521. Ferdinand's brother, the emperor, certainly had no intentions of appearing at Nuernberg. Charles was already in the process of embarking for Spain and had planned en route a brief state visit to England. Ferdinand, still involved in ironing out the details of the Brussels agreement, could not depart from the Low Countries. Due to his temporary engagement there, Ferdinand deputized Sigismund von Herberstein, an Austrian nobleman and astute diplomat in service of the Habsburgs.
since the days of Maximilian I,\textsuperscript{5} as his personal representa-
tive to the first Nuernberg Diet, which was convoked to con-
sider measures to be taken against a new external enemy that
threatened to engulf not only Central Europe but Christendom
as a whole — the Sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, and his
Ottoman horde.

One of the most spectacular historical phenomena of the
sixteenth century was, undubitably, the meteoric expansion
of the Turkish state. Of Mongolian origin, these Turkish
tribesmen of Central Asia infiltrated Asia Minor in the
thirteenth century, converted to the Moslem faith, and under
their energetic chieftain Osman forged a political state on
the ruins of the old medieval Seljuk state and at the ex-
pense of the gradually-disintegrating Byzantine Empire. In
1352 the Osmanli Turks crossed the Straits, by-passed Con-
stantinople, and entrenched themselves in the southeastern
portion of the Balkan Peninsula by ending the independent
political existence of the Serbs on the field of Kossovo in
1389. In 1453 they conquered Constantinople and became heir
to the Byzantine Empire and a formidable adversary of Chris-
tendom. Only the clash of territorial interest with Timur-
lane's Mongol Empire and the triumphant military opposition
of the Hungarian state under its Corvinus dynasty in the
fifteenth century averted for a while the Turkish threat
from Central Europe.

The early sixteenth century, however, witnessed further
Turkish advances. At first, there was a massive expansion into the Middle East, Egypt, and along the North African littoral; then, by 1520, under the leadership of their most capable ruler, Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-66), they renewed their territorial ambitions in Central Europe. With the demise of the energetic Corvinus line in Hungary and the fainthearted guidance of the Jagiellonian dynasty that followed it, the Central European power vacuum was no effective match for the Turkish steamroller.

It was the Turkish seizure in August of 1521 of Belgrade, territorially still a part of Hungary and its most vital citadel of defense in the South, that prompted the convocation of imperial estates at Nuernberg in February, 1522. Attending this diet was a group of Hungarians whose aim was to secure German military assistance against the common enemy. But their spokesman, the cardinal archbishop of Gran, advanced no strategic blueprint of essential defense measures. He was, instead, in favor of a summit conference which was to be held in the same year in Vienna and attended by all the rulers of the nations immediately menaced by the Asiatic invaders: King Louis II of Hungary and Bohemia; Sigismund I, King of Poland and the brother of Louis; and Ferdinand in his capacity as imperial regent of Germany and archduke of Austria.6

Von Herberstein, Ferdinand's representative and spokesman at the diet, submitted to the estates well-calculated
plans that spelled out exactly the kind and amount of German military contingent needed in the joint defense. This far-sighted Austrian envisioned the necessity of deploying German military units along with those of Austria at the Croatian passes in order to stem potential Turkish inroads into eastern Austria. The ultimate decision reached by the imperial assembly was a disappointing one for Ferdinand and for the Habsburg hegemony in Central Europe as well. It rejected, almost unanimously, von Herberstein's energetic proposal but promised to dispatch a group of observers to the forthcoming Vienna summit. ⁷

The first Nuernberg Diet hardly reached its conclusion when a further domestic calamity shattered the already faltering structure of the empire. This particular incident, known as the von Sickingen Feud or the Knights' War of 1522-23 in German history, represented an inter-class rivalry and took the form of an armed revolt against the political and economical status quo. In the final half-century before the Reformation in Germany, generally speaking, all social classes prospered except the imperial knights, or Reichsritter, the lower strata of nobility. Formerly rulers of the countryside as vassals of feudal seigneurs, the knights were now losing their military, political, and economic preponderance with the decline of feudalism and the rise of territorial states. Consequently, their status had been reduced, at its best, to the captaincy of mercenary soldiers
while the majority resorted to outright highway robbery on a large or small scale or waged endlessly petty and private wars against the establishment.

Anxious to regain their former political, economic, and social preeminence in the empire by strengthening the emperor's authority at the expense of both the secular and ecclesiastical princes and the urban merchant elements, the knightly class readily endorsed the rising Lutheran movement and hoped to exploit it to serve its own ambitions. Its energetic leadership, especially in military matters, rested with Franz von Sickingen, a restless "robber baron" and long a nuisance to Germany, and Ulrich von Hutten, formerly a humanist scholar of no small repute, a crowned poet laureate of Germany, and spokesman of an ardent nationalism who gave valuable assistance to the movement by his tireless pamphleteering and diplomatic services.\(^8\)

It is virtually impossible to estimate with any certainty how far the professed Lutheranism of von Sickingen and his followers was sincere. Von Hutten, for example, was an acknowledged and respected champion of the new religious creed. It was, undoubtedly, Luther's vehement attacks on ecclesiastical wealth that prompted von Sickingen on August 13, 1522, to attempt to occupy the lands and usurp the rights of the Archbishop Elector of Trier which then precipitated the struggle and roused the entire knightly class of Germany into staging a last desperate uprising.
This action of the imperial knights against the forces of established order failed to rally a national anti-clerical sentiment for its cause and was, therefore, soon to be doomed. Ferdinand's Reichsregiment, on account of its chronic lack of funds, was not only incapable of arresting the revolutionary action of the knights but also found itself barely efficient enough to maintain order against the Franconian knights at the seat of imperial government in Nuernberg. Forces of the Archbishop of Trier under attack, however, withstood the siege of von Sickingen and were soon joined by a powerful coalition composed of the Elector of the Palantine, the Landgrave of Hesse, and the Swabian League. These combined military units were equipped with ample firearms and artillery, and the knights still depended on their castles and outdated cavalry charges for their defense. The outcome of such a militarily disproportionate clash was a foregone conclusion and by May, 1532, the Knights' War was over. The knights capitulated, disbanded their retainers, and became subject to harsh retaliatory action by the establishment.

Imperial authority gained nothing by the destruction of the knightly class. On the contrary, this episode of knightly rebellion and its aftermath merely underscored the impotency of imperial government in either stemming such a revolt or in preventing the victors from carrying out drastic punitive measures against the vanquished. "We lost
the support of an important element on which we always could have counted to assist our government," lamented Ferdinand in his letter on this incident to his brother, "without gaining in return the prestige we should have for exterminating this national nuisance."^

The second imperial Diet of Nuernberg met and remained in session from November, 1522, to March, 1523. It was convoked by Ferdinand whose hope and intention were now to solve the two most pressing problems of the empire; the ineffectiveness of central government and the confessional schism.

The machinery of imperial government, now headed by Ferdinand, was virtually powerless. In addition to certain constitutional restraints, its chronic lack of funds choked its operation as there existed no national system of taxation in Germany. Measures leading to an overhaul of imperial finances were, therefore, very much in order. This problem already received some perfunctory discussion at the historic Diet of Worms in 1521, but the decision reached there merely provided for a later consideration by subsequent diets.

The fiscal plan which was finally adopted by the second Nuernberg Diet furnished the imperial government with an adequate and regular income but placed the burden of taxation on the commercial classes in the main. It passed a law which imposed a custom duty of four per cent on all
exports and imports, with the major necessities of life exempted, and decreed that these sums were to be raised by imperial customs officials along the entire frontier of Germany. Furthermore, it enacted a legislative measure against monopolies, limiting the amount of capital to 50,000 crowns which might be held by a trading firm, and prohibiting all commercial enterprises with capital in excess of that amount. These steps taken by the two foremost elements of the estates -- the electors and the princes of the empire -- were not only designed to shift the burden of taxation to the middle class but were meant to undermine its economic prosperity as well.

This short-sighted financial scheme, endorsed by the upper crust of the imperial estates, was destined to scuttle the hope of any national taxation system at all. Fearing that their constitutional liberties were at stake, the free imperial cities of Germany, among whose citizenry the commercial element constituted the upper social stratum, sent a delegation in 1523 to the emperor directly and persuaded him to abolish not only the anti-monopoly measures but also the discriminatory taxation scheme passed by the diet. Thus Ferdinand's expectation of strengthening the imperial authority through the raising of regular and adequate taxes necessary to finance its operations was completely shipwrecked by the self-seeking motives of the electors and princes of the empire. Deprived of the sole method of
financing its executive functions and paralyzed by its inability to exert any meaningful authority, the Reichsregiment by 1523 had become an ineffective, superfluous, and moribund constitutional agency.

By 1523 the papacy itself showed a more thorough-going determination to put an end to the German religious crisis. With the death of Pope Leo X on December 1, 1521, the atmosphere of careless gaiety that enshrouded his pontificate had markedly changed. Bishop Adrian of Utrecht, Charles's former tutor and sometime political deputy, was elected to succeed to the papal throne. The new pope was, no doubt, motivated by sincere desires to establish peace and order in Christendom which, he felt, could be brought about by enacting certain reform measures in the Roman Curia and by eliminating the Wittenberg reformer completely. With these designs in mind, he sent a letter to Ferdinand and the estates of the 1522-23 Nuernberg Diet instructing all representatives to enforce the Edict of Worms in their respective territories, demanding the immediate arrest of Luther, and reprimanding the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, for his protection of the "arch-enemy of Christendom." In addition to this strategem, Adrian's letter also contained a candid admission of ecclesiastical faults:

We know well that for many years things deserving abhorrence have gathered round the Holy Sea. Sacred things have been misused, ordinances transgressed, so that in everything there has been a change for the worse. Thus it is not surprising that the malady has
crept down from the head to the members ... .

... Therefore ... we shall use all diligence to reform before all else the Roman Curia, whence perhaps all these evils have had their origin. ... The whole world is longing for such reform. 12

Having observed the papal Curia's firm hand in dealing with Luther and anticipating the enactment of some long-overdue reform measures, Ferdinand wholeheartedly endorsed Adrian's program and threw his full support behind it. Members of the second Nuernberg Diet, however, expressed their intention of not complying with the provisions of the Edict of Worms in moderate but unmistakable terms. They asked why Luther should be arrested for pointing out clerical abuses now so authoritatively confirmed by the pontiff himself. Finding Adrian's confession of ecclesiastical faults insufficiently detailed, the assembly sent its own list of one hundred Gravamina, or grievances of Germany against the Church, in which it pointed out that without the correction of these glaring abuses, chances of a peace between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities would be slim indeed. Plans for a forthcoming general church council, to be held on German soil under the presidency of the emperor, were also drawn up by this imperial assembly as a constructive solution toward church unity.

Ferdinand's inclination to proceed against Luther under the auspices of the imperial council was likewise rebuffed by the assembly. In its reply to Ferdinand, it warned him that "the arrest of Luther and subsequent suppression of
evangelical truth by means of tyranny would provoke a mass revolt against the secular and ecclesiastical authorities and provide for further perpetration of unchristian abuses."\(^{13}\)

The third diet of Nuernberg, which convened in January, 1524, and remained in session till April of that year, was called to order by Ferdinand and punctuated by repeated papal -- and for the first time imperial -- demands for a religious settlement in Germany. Cardinals Chieregati and Compeggio were dispatched to Nuernberg, in the capacity of papal nuncios, with a renewed pontifical request for the enforcement of the Edict of Worms and for Luther's arrest. By this time, there was a new pope, Clement VII, who quickly forsook his predecessor's show of conciliation and returned to the old policy of suppressive action. This change in papal tactics was likewise to be reflected in the decrees passed by this diet.

Once more the estates, and now for the first time the Reichsregiment, too, expressed the feeling of all Germany by taking their stand on the Gravamina and refused to move against Luther until that list of ecclesiastical grievances was properly redressed. Though the assembly, by using the vague and ambiguous term "as far as possible," promised to comply with the Edict of Worms, the actual extent of its complying was only to prohibit the printing of libels and lampoons against the papacy. Recognizing the futility of
its previous request for a general church council, the assembly now proposed to call, instead, a national synod of the German Church at Speyer before the end of that year to carry out necessary ecclesiastical reforms.\textsuperscript{14}

Jean Hannart, the emperor's personal representative at this diet, accomplished nothing as far as the issue of religious settlement was concerned. On account of seasonal flooding in Germany, he arrived belatedly at Nuernberg and found the diet already had been in session for some time. His instructions called for the identical measures already requested by the papal nuncios and, therefore, he met an equally adamant opposition by the assembly. Nor did Hannart think he received the sufficient support and assistance from Ferdinand he needed to prevent the diet's postponement of a religious settlement in Germany. Engendered by certain factors of political interest which will be explained later, Ferdinand was indeed anxious, at this particular diet, to dampen, as much as possible, the religious issue and was willing to side-step the passing of any measure that might have alienated the Protestant members of the assembly.

One of the cardinal problems, in addition to the confessional issue, which faced Ferdinand at the third Nuernberg Diet was the strikingly strong dissatisfaction the imperial government aroused among the estates. Few were inclined to finance so weak an organization; even fewer deemed it necessary to increase its powers. Ferdinand
himself was in no position to undertake the support of its administration since he met with great difficulties in securing revenues from his Austrian lands to subsidize imperial functions. Most princes regarded the Reichsregiment as an outdated vehicle for the preservation of their own interests, though they could not agree on what to put in its place. The three ecclesiastical electors (the archbishops of Mainz, Trier, and Cologne), for example, demanded its complete abolition, while some of the free imperial cities wished to see the Count Palatine elected as Imperial Vicar.  

In such a situation which Ferdinand regarded as menacing the position of both himself and his brother, he resorted to a strategy which he had already applied in Austria and was to employ many times in the future -- a combination of postponing important decisions, making temporary concessions, and utilizing his opponents' disunity. Ferdinand's treatment of the German cities in his effort to avert serious damage to the government during the third Diet of Nuernberg graphically illustrates his diplomatic tactics.  

These cities of Germany, though generally opposed to the imperial government as it stood, were far from unified among themselves in matters relating to its financing. Comprehending the advantage offered by this disagreement among the cities, Ferdinand set about splitting them even further. Throughout the entire negotiations, the archduke agreed to meet with representatives of only two or three cities at one
time, in order to prevent a temporary union among them at the scene of the diet.

He won the support of Frankfurt for the imperial government by convincing its delegates of the honor and favor which their city enjoyed at the hands of his administration. Shortly after, the hitherto recalcitrant Ulm and Augsburg were also drawn to the imperial side, and these cities, along with Frankfurt, agreed without reservation to pay toward the continuation of the Reichsregiment. 16

There were a number of towns -- especially those of the erstwhile commercially-successful Hanseatic League (e.g., Hamburg, Bremen, and Luebeck) -- which steadfastly remained opposed to the present structure of the imperial administration but were not influential enough to alter the situation. These municipalities, through the skillful maneuvering of Ferdinand, consented to pay the sum which they had been previously assessed provided that some of their objections to the imperial government were taken into account. Finally, there were cities of the empire, like Constance and Regensburg, just to name a few, whose representatives had been worn out by Ferdinand's protracted negotiations and had withdrawn from the diet before its conclusion, but who would acquiesce, in any case, to furnishing an allotted sum for the maintenance of imperial government. 17

By a series of concessions and postponements, therefore, Ferdinand managed to preserve the Reichsregiment from
complete destruction, as he succeeded in securing adequate revenues from the German cities for the maintenance of his government for the next two years. His deft diplomacy, to be sure, merely relieved him temporarily from the financial burden necessitated by the upkeep of the imperial government in Germany, but he had done virtually nothing to strengthen it. In fact, so defenseless appeared the Reichsregiment by the conclusion of the third Nuernberg Diet in the late spring months of 1524 that its administrative seat was transferred from Nuernberg to Esslingen by Ferdinand so that it might be nearer to his Austrian possessions.

At all points during this third Diet of Nuernberg, Ferdinand saw constantly his and his brother's prestige and position at stake as well as the dignity of the House of Habsburg with whose fortunes his own fate was inextricably woven. He tried to do everything possible to prevent a decline in his family's status in Germany. When he observed such a threat to Habsburg prestige materializing at this diet, Ferdinand acted in a decisive fashion.

The German estates, for example, weary of the Habsburg-Valois wars which were partially conducted with their aid but without producing any tangible material benefit for their nation, resolved during this diet to send an embassy to treat with the emperor and Francis I on a possible peace between the two dynasties. Suspecting that their negotiations with the king of France might lead, in all likelihood,
to a Franco-German *rapprochement* contradictory to Habsburg interest, Ferdinand warned the estates against carrying out the mission and set about preventing it with unreserved determination.

He personally convoked a meeting of the most prominent German princes and informed them that he would not tolerate any diplomatic venture which could injure the honor of both himself and the emperor. If the estates persisted to carry out this legation, cautioned Ferdinand, "he would be forced to do something which he did not want to do." The veiled threat had the desired effect, for the estates relinquished their plan, though not without considerable grumbling.

Before this chapter -- designed to treat the first two years of Ferdinand's role as his brother's regent and representative in Germany between 1522 and 1524 -- is brought to a conclusion, attention ought to be given to those impressions he made on the German estates as well as on his brother. In the same manner, a brief presentation of Ferdinand's evaluation of his own position, ambitions, and remedies that he believed essential for the resuscitation of Habsburg hegemony is not out of place here.

Whatever aspirations and plans Ferdinand might have entertained for the successful governing of the empire, they were rudely shaken when he took up his position in 1522. The inherent weakness of his authority must have become apparent to him immediately at the second Diet of Nuernberg
of 1522-23, when he made his début and mingled, for the first time, with the estates of Germany as regent. Aside from certain constitutional shackles which rendered his office ineffective and deprived him of proper respect for imperial authority, Ferdinand was also alienated from the German estates by his Spanish background, his overwhelmingly Iberian personal traits, and his inability to speak their language. His chronic financial distress further hindered him in his attempts to win the respect and obedience of the German diets and to secure their approval of his legislative measures.

The constitutionally-rooted weakness of Habsburg regency of Germany was additionally accentuated by the emperor's continuous absence and the want of personal contact with him. It is not surprising that the German estates seem to have treated Ferdinand as a primus inter pares. This constitutional prostration of his office was dramatically underscored upon his first encounter with the German estates at the second Diet of Nuernberg when he and the papal nuncio Chieregati pressed toward the enforcement of the Edict of Worms. In a heated debate, the young Habsburg prince attempted in vain to impress the assembly that "he was here in place of the emperor." Planitz, an astute Saxon delegate, while admitting that Ferdinand represented the emperor among the estates, retorted acidly by reminding him that he was there "as only a co-equal with the government and according
to the regulations of the empire."19

In language, outlook, and personal habits Ferdinand must have been noticeably different from the Germans. Members of the imperial diets were, as a whole, unusually antagonistic toward the young archduke, whose "Spanishness" seemingly aroused a surge of chauvinistic emotions running from suspicion to outright dislike. It is also true at the second Diet of Nuernberg that the participating estates expressed the following sentiment: "Although Ferdinand is a worthy prince, his ignorance of the German tongue is an insuperable hardship in many dealings with him." Their government, they asserted, was a German government, and no language other than German could be used in it. Since only a minority of delegates understood Latin, discussions at the diets were unreasonably prolonged, the estates complained, and close personal contact with Ferdinand was very difficult.20

Nor did Ferdinand fare any better in connection with his personal finances as the chronic Habsburg lack of family funds plagued him as much as his predecessors. In 1522, he was already forced to beg the diet for a moratorium on the sums which he owed to the imperial treasury and court -- 900 gulden from his Austrian lands and 600 from Württemberg.21

Ferdinand's initial difficulties in Germany were keenly perceived even by the absentee emperor. Since Ferdinand was much occupied in his Austrian holdings between 1522 and 1524
and not yet in command of the German language, Charles in 1522 decided to mitigate partially his brother's onerous lot in the empire by appointing the Count Palatine Frederick as Ferdinand's representative to the Reichsregiment. Nor was Charles entirely immune from questioning the nature of his brother's personal endowments and political acumen. While he probably employed a score of (and to posterity anonymous) informers to keep him au courrant with Ferdinand's activities in Germany, no one rendered him a more thorough scrutiny of Ferdinand's personality and conduct than Jean Hannart, Charles's trusted diplomat and ambassador to the third Nuernberg Diet.

This objective Flemish nobleman and political realist forwarded a sweeping analysis on Ferdinand to the emperor, which he reportedly based on what he had heard at the diet and on his encounters with the archduke. According to Hannart, the majority of the German estates considered Ferdinand to be too young for the position he was appointed to fulfill, generally unfamiliar with the issues at stake, and seriously limited by his ignorance of the German tongue from taking an active part in the imperial administration. The Germans, Hannart stated, were also resentful of Ferdinand's frequent high-handed personal methods at the diets, which methods they conveniently labeled as the "Spanish fashion." But in spite of Hannart's negative report on Ferdinand and the latter's unimpressive performance at the imperial
diets, there is no documentary evidence suggesting that Charles considered for a minute the possibility of relieving Ferdinand from his duties or bringing about a constitutional arrangement which would abolish permanently the office of regency in Germany. The emperor, however, was as inconsistent in his treatment of Ferdimand as in his counselling on imperial problems.

Admitting that German affairs were not proceeding as profitably as they might, Charles, in a large number of letters to Ferdinand between 1522 and 1524, tried to heighten his brother's devotion to his position. He repeatedly appealed to that dynastic ambition and sense of duty to the House of Habsburg they mutually shared. Realizing Ferdinand's weak position in dealing with the German estates, Charles gave some indication of personally favoring the increase of his brother's power there, but he remained vague and outright noncommittal in this matter. He seemed generally optimistic and was of the opinion that German affairs would soon be in order.

While, as a rule, being sympathetic to Ferdinand's burdensome duties and tolerant of his shortcomings, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that Charles erroneously evaluated the amount of power at Ferdinand's command and the German scene in general. In one of his letters dated April 15, 1524, and before the conclusion of the third Diet of Nuernberg, the emperor urged Ferdinand to raise an imperial
army in Germany and to come to his assistance in the Habsburg-Valois conflict by invading the Duchy of Burgundy. Hardly any other scheme could have been more unrealistic.

But despite his insecure position, or perhaps because of it, Ferdinand professed to be aware of the deep-seated problems of the empire, proposed many remedies, and showed no hesitation to bring them to his brother's attention. Just as with his difficulties in his Austrian hereditary lands, he believed that almost all German ills -- whether political, religious, or social -- stood a good chance of resolution by a strengthening of high central authority. Ferdinand's cure for the ailing domestic milieu of Germany was two-fold: the immediate return, continued presence, and full participation of the emperor in the affairs of the nation; Ferdinand's own elevation to a more lofty and powerful position in the empire.

So seriously had Ferdinand regarded the political quarrelling and separatist tendencies which he found in the empire upon his arrival in 1522 that he suggested to Charles that his brother should dispense with the imperial coronation by the papacy. To speed Charles's return to Germany, Charles was advised to be satisfied with being declared emperor by a papal bull as had been their paternal grandfather, Maximilian I. Then, in full possession of the spiritual confirmation of his imperial title, the emperor would make a lasting stay in Germany which, Ferdinand argued, must bring
to an end the numerous rifts within the empire.  

In addition to his brother's return, in Ferdinand's estimation his own elevation to the title of King of the Romans would also confer sufficient power and authority on him to conduct, if need be, the German affairs himself. He also regarded this title as an obvious addition to the grandeur of the House of Habsburg and as a means of assuring Christendom that the German nation would return to the fold of religious unity. In short, the archduke estimated that the easiest way to govern Germany in the absence of the emperor was to have himself elected king of that nation. He assured Charles that the anticipated objections of the electors to his elevation to German kingship in the lifetime of the reigning emperor had no sound basis in constitutional tradition. Since the brothers' paternal grandfather, Maximilian I, had been named King of the Romans during the lifetime and reign of his own father, Emperor Frederick III, there could be no statutory barrier to deny Ferdinand this identical privilege.  

But Charles bent only a polite ear to this request. Considering his epistolary plea ineffective, Ferdinand even dispatched an agent to the emperor's court at Madrid in 1523 in order to further this cause, but Charles remained non-committal on the matter. By 1524 Ferdinand was disappointed to such a degree in his brother's unwillingness to sanction his elevation that the argument which he now put forth in
its favor appears to be spurious. He actually claimed that there was a plot brewing in Germany among the Lutherans to have a king elected from their own ranks, a "diabolic conspiracy" which could only be averted by his own elevation to that position. 28

With regard to this whole issue of Ferdinand's German kingship, the emperor is the one who should be credited with the most political far-sightedness. In all likelihood, Charles, at least in the beginning, had not taken too seriously his brother's proposal. Later, by mid-1524, and certainly with the receipt of Hannart's realistic evaluation of both Ferdinand and the German political climate, he must have had the savoir-faire to sense the turmoil his brother's appointment to that nation's kingship might have provoked.

Another recommendation of Ferdinand, which his correspondence with Charles reveals by mid-1524, rested on far more feasible grounds and equally steered for the solidification of the Habsburg hegemony in the empire. During the exasperating days of the third Nuernberg Diet, Ferdinand propounded to his brother that two of their sisters, Catherine and Eleanor, be married to German electors, who, he pointed out, were not only regarded as kings in their respective territorial states but also had weighty influence in foreign affairs as well. The archduke was admittedly dismayed by the rumor he had heard hinting at Charles's intention to marry their sisters to the dukes of Milan and
Bourbon, an act which he considered a capital mistake since neither prince enjoyed an immaculate record in his private life nor offered the position and stability which their sisters deserved. Representatives of "Gallica perfidia" and "Italia duplicata" were not worth considering for the hands of their sisters, appealed Ferdinand emotionally to his brother, when there was a chance for a Habsburg-German union. This matrimonial alliance, in the archduke's opinion, would be of considerable benefit to their dynasty -- a dynasty toward which so few German princes bore any good will.29

Finally, brief attention should be devoted to Ferdinand's own religious orientation, his analysis of the confessional crisis in Germany, and his personal viewpoint on its solution. He was, to be sure, a devout Catholic, but not a fanatical one. It was certainly impossible for him, as for many of his contemporaries, to conceive of governing a people who owed allegiance to its ruler but differed from him in religion. Although it is difficult to establish through documentary evidence lines of direct connection, it is unquestionable that the basis of Ferdinand's attitude toward the Reformation was a reflection of the views held by his councilor and private confessor and Archbishop of Vienna, Johann Heigerlin, or, as he is better known by his Latin appellation, Faber.

A disciple of Erasmus, Faber's opinions on Luther and his work were consequently derived from those professed by
this brilliant Christian humanist. He thoroughly abhorred
the mercenary aspect of the papacy; on the other hand, he
viewed Luther as the instigator of all confessional disobedi-
ence and disunity, the organizer of the entire "Christian
tragedy" -- a favored and much-used expression of his for
the Reformation. While not defending the abuses so preva-
lent within the Church, Faber continued to support the
primacy of the pope and the essential rightness of the
Church's temporal power.30

Thus Ferdinand shared Faber's personal disposition and
his intellectual orientation along with all those adhering
to an essentially conservative Catholic outlook. However,
his political attitude toward the Lutherans, especially by
mid-1524, mirrors his realization of the necessity for
expediency and duplicity. With a strong belief in the
hierarchical structure of secular and spiritual organi-
zations, he could hardly support politically a movement in
which the German estates took it upon themselves to sit in
judgment over the Roman pontiff and his councils. Yet, his
desire to be elected German king, which aspiration obviously
needed the support of the Lutheran princes of the empire,
persuaded Ferdinand to steer a political course which would
not alienate irrevocably the Protestant camp. Therefore, he
deliberately ignored the renewed papal demands -- and also
those now urged by the emperor -- for an immediate religious
settlement in Germany at the third Diet of Nuernberg, and
did his utmost to succor the Lutherans in their endeavor to postpone and then to air the religious issue at a forthcoming meeting of a National Synod of the German Church.\(^{31}\) This scheme, needless to say, could obviously not have corresponded to his own personal wishes which really included the desire to repress drastically the new teachings emanating from Wittenberg.

While Ferdinand was anxious to appear, by mid-1524, to the German Protestants as an impartial champion of confessional unity and an ardent promoter of a religious settlement which would be to the mutual satisfaction of both Catholics and Lutherans, one of his letters, written at this time to the emperor, dramatically unMASKS his hypocrisy. A substantial quote from it is essential.

I write to tell you how this matter of Luther and his cursed sect is growing so much in our land that, if God in His mercy does not make some move against it in a short time, in most of Germany the people will not want to know anything about God, the saints, or the Holy Church.

... As much as I have done, which has been as much as humanly possible, to weaken and destroy this sect, it has still not been possible for me to achieve success to that very end ...

... May God give me sufficient strength as well as His holy mercy, both which I am in dire need of, to exterminate this cursed sect. ...\(^{32}\)

This survey on the first two-year period of Ferdinand's public career in the empire graphically illustrates that general weakening of Habsburg influence and the low esteem in which his dynasty had fallen. Charles's unyielding determination to preserve, at all cost, every territorial
foot of soil in his inheritance made him, from the outset of his reign, forsake virtually all interest in German affairs. He apparently lost the sense of urgency to deal with the two most cogent problems of the empire -- the perennial waning of central authority and the religious polarization of his subjects. In fact, one can hardly speak of any clear-cut goal in imperial policy during the two-year period between 1522 and 1524, for Charles's cardinal objective barely embraced more than simply drawing out troops and revenue from Germany for the staunch defense of his dynastic patrimony. This gross negligence of German affairs on the part of Charles -- a grave error for which Ferdinand cannot take the blame -- predestined his brother to embark on that thorny course which became his share of the Habsburg agony.

Aside from the waning Habsburg prestige in Germany and the want of imperial guidance, Ferdinand was also beset with a number of personal liabilities: his Spanish birth and upbringing and consequent unfamiliarity with major German issues; his incomprehension of the German tongue; his relative inexperience in dealing with matters which reached summit level; and, finally, his archducal obligations to Austria that sliced at the attention he could devote to the empire.

Once Ferdinand stepped into the affairs of the empire, he became inevitably associated with the imperial government which itself came under attack by the princes and towns alike
because of its fundamental ineffectiveness. In spite of his intention of recasting its structure so that some of its former authority would be restored, he fell far short of accomplishing it. But he should, in all fairness, be credited with prolonging the life-expectancy of imperial government in Germany at that crucial point when its opponents were ready to vote it out of existence.

Ferdinand's personal disposition toward the confessional divergence in Germany and his political ambitions were diametrically contradictory to each other and placed him in an uncomfortable position. His close association with the ultra-conservative strata of the Roman Catholic Church and his initially enthusiastic support for a unilateral solution to the religious crisis laid him open to criticism from the Protestant segment of Germany; his reluctance to maintain his hitherto steadfast stand against the Lutherans because of his own political ambitions, however, aroused Catholic suspicions of the sincerity of his intentions.

Finally, Ferdinand's remedies for the manifold ills of the empire and for the resuscitation of Habsburg hegemony there can only credit him with a modest degree of political acumen and dexterity. His proposal for Charles's more frequent presence in Germany, with his brother personally taking charge of all her affairs, would indeed have been of immense curative value for Germany's multi-faceted maladies, but reflects, on the other hand, a certain amount of
political naivety in light of the ever-swelling military repugnancy in Europe to a Habsburg world-empire. The weakening Habsburg prestige in Germany and its gradual enfeeblement in grappling successfully with that nation's affairs would have been, understandably, substantially arrested by marrying off two Habsburg princesses to German electors. This was Ferdinand's most sagacious and practical insight. The overtures he made for his elevation as an heir apparent of the empire would have been tantamount to dynastic suicide if seriously put to a test before Germany's highest legislative forum. Here was Ferdinand's most unrealistic and impractical venture.
CHAPTER III
YEARS OF ASCENDANCY: 1524-1526

During the weeks which followed the termination of the third Nuernberg diet, Ferdinand was, in all probability, engaged in a series of negotiations seeking support for his German kingship from pro-Lutheran dignitaries of the empire: Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony; Philip the Magnanimous, Landgrave of Hesse; and other princes of the lesser territorial states. Though nominally still adhering to the tenets of the old faith, they had already demonstrated by mid-1524 their unmistakable sympathy and solid support for Luther's movement. Since these proceedings never reached the ear of and had not received the approval of Ferdinand's imperial brother, they must have been carried out under the veil of secrecy, and the location of these meetings, their exact times, and persons directly involved with them will remain, perhaps forever, anonymous in the annals of history.

As to what Ferdinand may have offered in exchange for their political support of his German kingship, one is not compelled to resort to sheer conjecture. He, or his spokesmen, must have emphasized his continuing advocacy, in spite
of explicit papal and imperial demands to the contrary, of the postponement of the religious settlement which was agreed to at the last Nuernberg diet. Furthermore, he was determined to bring about an arrangement solving the confessional crisis in Germany which would be pleasing to all sides. Ferdinand's correspondence with his brother at this time is clearly indicative of this latter objective.

In his letter to Charles, dated July, 1524, Ferdinand earnestly justified his unexpected support of the postponement of the religious settlement achieved at the third Nuernberg diet, hoping to explain his conduct to the emperor before Hannart's report would reach him. He and his government, voiced Regent Ferdinand, could not possibly comply with Charles's demands for the enforcement of the Edict of Worms, for it would provoke full scale armed uprising against the central authority in Germany. A conciliatory compromise, on the other hand, might induce a reformation of clerical abuses without seriously undermining the papal authority. Moreover, argued Ferdinand, at a new meeting of German ecclesiastical and secular representatives he hoped to make an appeal for a substantial financial donation to be used against the Turks. This was to be raised through the taxing of clerical income, an issue of pressing importance which had received scant treatment at the Nuernberg gatherings. He mentions plans for a German National Synod to be held at Speyer in November of 1524 which already has secured the
overwhelming endorsement of the last diet. He points out that this is indeed the logical step toward the restoration of confessional unity. The scheme is ready; it only needs imperial approval.¹

His letter also mirrors a realistic assessment of the German religious crisis. This appraisal is relatively free from his customarily uncritical indictment of all those professing Lutheran sentiments. To Ferdinand, Germany's religious divisibility is no longer an issue geographically confined to the nation per se but is fast becoming an onerous problem of supra-national gravity. For Ferdinand distinctively foresees, as early as mid-1524, a rapid sectarian fragmentation of Lutheranism which will eventually result in the emergence of mutually competing new creeds within the many nations, a total shattering of the centuries-old religious unity of Europe.² Ferdinand's attempt to universalize the significance and intensity of the German religious question, and his strikingly subservient tone of appeal for his brother to sanction the Speyer council, convey the impression of an unaffected desire for a multilateral solution of the religious crisis, a desire which could not have been solely engendered by his own obsession for political advancement.

Despite his younger brother's ardent plea, Charles would not endorse his conciliatory plans. Claiming that a German national council would threaten the historical
precedent that only the emperor in conjunction with the Pope could call a religious synod of national scope, the emperor bluntly prohibited his brother from summoning such a meeting. Only resolutions passed by a general council of the Church could heal lastingly the wounds left behind by the German confessional crisis, argued Charles, though he made no indication as to when the convocation of such an ecclesiastical summit was to take place.\(^3\)

The emperor's outright refusal to permit the anticipated Speyer council placed Ferdinand in an embarrassing position. On the one hand, his negotiations on behalf of his German kingship with the pro-Lutheran princely segment of the empire were abruptly emasculated since he had nothing to proffer in return for their political support. On the other hand, his imperial government in Esslingen, which almost exclusively consisted of conservative Catholic princes who were also in favor of the Speyer council, became apprehensive that a complete political collapse of the empire over the confessional question was imminent, and these dignitaries, too, were perplexed and dismayed by the emperor's action. Thus Charles's rushed and certainly uncritical decision to block, at all cost, the convocation of a German national council -- which sprang from a sheer question of personal prestige -- made, unintentionally, of course, Ferdinand's political isolation in the empire even more pronounced.
Undaunted by his brother's adamant stand and keenly aware of the seriousness of the confessional crisis needing immediate attention, Ferdinand resolved, some time during the early summer months of 1524, to make the best of an untenable situation and resorted to his own course of action by throwing in his lot with the conservative Catholic princes of the empire. Ferdinand's alliance with the religiously orthodox princes, like his brother's unyielding opposition to the Speyer council, is seen in retrospect as a regrettable political faux pas because it immensely hastened the division hitherto largely confined to confessional matters, into a political fragmentation of the empire -- into mutually incriminating Protestant and Catholic camps, each selfishly seeking its own religious and political gains at the expense of religious and political unity.

Ferdinand certainly cannot take sole credit for the idea of a German Catholic alliance. Cardinal Campeggio, one of the papal nuncios dispatched to the third Diet of Nuernberg, had already reported to Clement VII that a sizeable number of German Catholic dignitaries at that diet favored certain religious reforms which they would undertake themselves. In April, 1524, Clement VII replied that these politically-important German Catholics should be brought, if possible, into a league not only to agree upon a course of clerical reforms but also to provide the papacy with the necessary political base in the empire in its effort to
enforce the Edict of Worms and check any further growth of Lutheranism. 4

These explicit papal instructions for a German Catholic union to Cardinal Campeggio, coupled with Ferdinand's deliberate support of it, resulted by July of 1524 in a meeting of the more dedicated Catholic leaders of southern Germany, both secular and ecclesiastical, in the imperial city of Ratisbon (Regensburg). The league which grew from this meeting is known in German history as the Ratisbon Union or Convenant. Under the general chairmanship of Ferdinand, the archbishop of Salzburg and twelve bishops of southern Germany made up the list of the attending ecclesiastical dignitaries. Two dukes of Bavaria, as well as a bevy of municipal delegates from Strassburg, Augsburg, Constance, Basel, Bamberg, Passau, and Speyer, completed the list of secular participants.

The resolutions agreed upon by the conservative Catholic forces of southern Germany at Ratisbon were soon promulgated by the papal nuncio Campeggio under the name of The Thirty-Six Articles of Reform. According to this singularly-important document, its signers pledged themselves to recognize the primacy of the Pope with respect to doctrinal matters; vowed to observe and enforce the emperor's edict against Luther and his followers in their respective territories; agreed not to change in any way the sacraments or any established customs and rituals of the Church;
consented to apprehend and punish with customary strictness married priests, monks, and all other transgressors of the Ten Commandments; conceded the necessity of enforcing rigid censorship on all materials to be printed in their territories; and to outlaw the distribution of Luther's works. Finally, its signers agreed to the immediate recall of their students currently attending the University of Wittenberg.\textsuperscript{5}

These tenets formulated at Ratisbon distinctively reflected an essentially conservative Catholic viewpoint and firmly embraced the principle of a unilateral solution for the religious crisis. By the same standards, they placed far more emphasis on the suppression of unorthodox doctrinal issues, deviating ritualistic practices, and undisciplined clergymen than on the restoration of German confessional unity. With this direction taken by the doctrine of the Ratisbon Union, it would provide the intrinsic framework and become the actual precursor of what was later to be called the Catholic Reformation.

Since the Wittelsbach princes of Bavaria and a large number of German bishops at Ratisbon rejected any interference with the course of free discussion over the making of general policy, mutual agreement as to the contents of The Thirty-Six Articles was not attained with ease. Nor was Ferdinand completely satisfied with the results of the Ratisbon conference. His scheme for securing financial grants through the taxation of clerical income for purposes of
defense against the Turks, though introduced and supported by Cardinal Campeggio himself, met with nothing but resistance. Nevertheless, his contentment with the Ratisbon articles seems to indicate that they had, in all probability, approximated the extent of his views on the German religious question. Ferdinand wrote to Clement VII shortly after this meeting. He praised The Thirty-Six Articles as a first milestone in the long course leading to the religious pacification of Germany and overemphasized his personal role in its achievement.

It is doubtful that he likewise emphasized to his brother his own importance in bringing about this meeting. In fact, as there are no letters about the Ratisbon discussions, it may be assumed that Ferdinand kept the emperor completely in the dark about them and only ventured to tell him of their concrete results when it would be too late for the emperor to veto this as he had cancelled the Speyer synod. This careful maneuvering left Charles only with the possibility of giving de facto approval, which he later supplied.

Analyzing from a distant historical perspective both the immediate and eventual long-standing effects of the Ratisbon Union, one is overwhelmed by the enormity of its impact and its far-reaching results. It drastically choked the spirit of religious dissent still in an embryonic form in southern Germany, stamped out effectively a multitude of
clerical faults and abuses there, and, in the final analysis, was instrumental in preserving the loyalty of the inhabitants of these territories to the orthodox religious viewpoints of Rome. Its pronounced non-conciliatory tone in seeking to redress the confessional question by unilateral means was equally of weighty consequence. It drove the Lutherans to the forging of a protective league endorsing similarly narrow-sighted purposes, put an end to all hope for German religious unity, and irrevocably set the stage for an armed showdown which would prove vastly detrimental to the adherents of both confessional camps.

As far as the domestic scene of Germany was concerned, the second half of the year 1524 was characterized by relative tranquility. True, there were already some disturbing signs pointing to prospective internal turmoil. Some sporadic uprisings on the part of the German peasantry, restricted then to the southern section of the nation, had already occurred and by the end of that year, nearly 30,000 peasants were in arms, refusing to pay state taxes, church tithes, and feudal dues. The same period also witnessed an intensive spreading of Lutheranism in Germany -- especially among the larger imperial cities such as Strassburg, Ulm, and Nuernberg -- where the confessional transformation frequently culminated in violent encounters between those segments of the urban population who took their religion seriously. But these alarming omens were, by and large,
ignored by the majority of Germans whose eyes had been fixed upon and whose attention had been captured by the explosive events concurrently unfolding in Italy.

The Habsburg-Valois dynastic rivalry, decades-long in the brewing and which erupted into open warfare by 1521, was at first geographically limited to the Franco-Spanish border. Noting that Charles V had on his hands a political revolution in Spain (known as the revolt of the comuneros in Spanish history) and a religious mutiny in Germany, Francis I struck the initial blow by dispatching an army to the Pyrenees for the purpose of recapturing Navarre, that nucleus of the ancient Basque kingdom upon whose return to his vassal, Henri d'Albret, the French monarch was now insisting. After a series of French military fiascos in Navarre (in which the wounding of Ignatius Loyola comprised the most significant incident), the area of hostility shifted to Lombardy, the largest and most economically advanced geographical section of northern Italy, where the Duchy of Milan -- held by the French since 1500 on questionable genealogical claims and simultaneously coveted as a former imperial fief by the Habsburgs -- supplied all too readily the new casus belli.

Repeated French attempts to defend Milan, however, proved to be unsuccessful. A contingent sent to relieve the siege of that city was routed on its way at La Bicocca by the imperial arms (April 27, 1522), and Milan itself was captured in 1522; shortly thereafter, the French were driven
out of Parma, Paicenza, and even compelled to evacuate Genoa, their crucially-important sea base. To cap these French mishaps in northern Italy, the Duke of Bourbon, called the Constable of France, the last among the great feudal dignitaries and the largest landowner of France whose descendants were destined to rule that country from 1589 to 1848, defected in 1523, for reasons arising from a personal dispute with Francis I, to the Habsburg cause and was immediately rewarded with the generalship of the imperial forces in Italy. A French punitive expedition against this Bourbon renegade was checked by the imperialists on the fields of Romagnano (April 30, 1524).

In view of incessant disaster suffered by the French armies in Italy and the desire of the French crown to forestall the development of a politically portentous situation that the Duke of Bourbon's defection to the enemy might evoke on the domestic scene in France, Francis I decided, by the summer of 1524, to take matters into his own hands and lead personally his troops into northern Italy. This renewed French invasion of Lombardy occurred in September, 1524, with its immediate goal the capture of the Duchy of Milan. But instead of laying siege at once to the city of Milan itself, Francis's strategy called first for the occupation of Pavia and then the gradual encirclement of Milan from the south. The defense of Pavia, however, soon proved to be superior to the offense. In fact, for the next six-month
period the invaders were here successfully held at bay while this unexpected French blunder provided the imperialists with a rare opportunity for the reinforcement of their ranks. By early 1525, the stage for a decisive duel between the Habsburgs and the Valois for the mastery of Italy was irrevocably set, but its ultimate outcome was still largely uncertain. One fact was overwhelmingly evident -- the conclusive clash between the two belligerents was imminent.

For Ferdinand as well as for his politically eminent German contemporaries, the conclusion to this first round in the Habsburg-Valois rivalry represented an event in foreign affairs so meritorious that it absorbed all their attention, even if this meant that certain social and religious issues were to receive temporarily an en passant treatment. The inherent weakness of his position as regent of Germany and the hopelessness of attaining his much-coveted German kingship could only drive Ferdinand himself to look away from Germany and to a direct involvement in the 1524-25 Italian campaign of his dynasty.

During the months of the protracted French siege of Pavia, the German regent's correspondence with the emperor begins, for the first time, to echo a manifest interest in acquiring some undefined position or territorial compensation in Italy. In October, 1524, Ferdinand points out to his brother that he would make the ideal and natural defender of Milan since that North Italian duchy is in the vicinity of
his Austrian hereditary lands. On the basis of this physi­
cal accessibility to Milan, Ferdinand then hints at the
annexation of that duchy to the empire as his permanent
solution to the much-disputed question of who owned its
soil.

The emperor was evidently not pleased with his younger
brother's Milanese scheme, for Ferdinand's proposals merited
not even a polite refusal from Charles. Undaunted by his
imperial brother's apparent apathy, the German regent de­
cided upon a more direct course of action. In November,
1524, he notified Charles that he had already ordered his
Austrian government at Innsbruck to levy a contingent of
10,000 landsknechte, or mercenary infantry, which would be
his contribution to the success of the Habsburg campaign in
Italy. Moreover, he promised to depart at once for the
Tyrolean capital in order to supervise there personally
their recruitment. He would gladly assume the command of
his troops, Ferdinand informed Charles, but, in light of his
harrowing financial situation, he felt unable to be more
personally involved in the Milanese struggle. That tradi­
tionally benevolent fate which always seemed to be with the
Habsburgs in hours of crisis certainly did not desert Ferdi­
nand in these crucial days. By December, 1524, the muster­
ing of his Austrian troops had been completed and the fol­
lowing month, January, 1525, the Duke of Bourbon himself
came to Innsbruck in order to lead them across the Alps to
the vast plain of the Po River.\textsuperscript{10}

The conclusive phase of the first round in the Habsburg-Valois animosity, which had started with the 1524 French invasion of Italy by Francis I, was brought to an unexpected end during a two-hour military engagement on a winter morning in 1525. On February 24 (which was also, incidentally, the birthday of the emperor), the imperial arms scored a resounding victory over the French as a new army of 27,000 men made its sudden appearance at Pavia to relieve the city of a six-month long French siege. Finding themselves assaulted from the rear by this unexpected multitude and from the front by a sortie from Pavia, the French efforts were destined to falter. The outcome for them was fatal -- a disorderly retreat of the infantry and a gallant but utterly suicidal charge of the French cavalry. Inflicted with serious wounds, Francis I himself was captured and at once confined to the fortress of Pizzighettone near Cremona, soon to be transferred as a prisoner of war to Madrid where he would be forced to sign a humiliating treaty with the emperor.

Ferdinand's contribution of Austrian troops to the imperial armies at Pavia was undoubtedly a decisive factor in the stunning Habsburg victory over the French. Charles showered his brother with thanks. With an unerring recognition of the value of diplomatic flattery, the emperor asserted that Ferdinand's aid was the sole reason for the
ultimate imperial triumph in Italy. Furthermore, he encour-
egaged his brother to feel absolutely free about advising him
in the future, whether it be on personal matters or on mat-
ters within the sphere of imperial jurisdiction.11

Although bound to the dual duties of his position both
in Austria and Germany during the better part of 1525 and
1526, Ferdinand still maintained his firm interest in Ital-
ian affairs, always with an eye to attaining there some
compensation for himself. For awhile, at least through the
year 1525, he flirted with the idea of gaining a position of
power in Italy; later, by early 1526, he proposed his ap-
pointment as duke over the Duchy of Milan with hereditary
rights reserved for his male line on the ducal throne. The
final solution to the Italian question, Ferdinand contended,
lay with his dukedom of Milan in the north and Charles's
kingship of Naples in the south. If this political division
of Italy between the two Habsburg princes were to material-
ize, he asserted, a period of uninterrupted prosperity,
political stability, and civic order would be the share of
every one of their Italian subjects.12

It is impossible to assess Charles's reaction to these
repeated overtures of the German regent as his correspon-
dence is utterly void of any direct reference to them. The
reasons for this imperial non-committal stance to Ferdi-
nand's several Italian schemes can only be conjectured. It
is not unlikely that Charles still considered his younger
brother, especially in the light of his unimpressive record as regent of Germany, to be insufficiently qualified for the filling of a highly responsible political post in Italy, a country whose political and cultural milieu was just as foreign to Ferdinand as Germany's had already proved to be. It is even more plausible to assume that Charles, who was at once more familiar with the shades of the Italian political spectrum than Ferdinand, was aware that his victorious campaign of 1525 had not bought a lasting Habsburg hegemony to Italy but would merely trigger further anti-imperialist coalitions into being which would again necessitate renewed military efforts. Therefore, any plans to alter the political status quo of Lombardy, even as late as a year after his victory, would be premature and impractical.

The emperor's resolution to exclude his younger brother from the sphere of Italian politics, however, reflected no ingratitude on his part. On the contrary, he must have been totally aware of the extent of those personal and financial sacrifices Ferdinand incurred in connection with the raising of that Austrian contingent joined to his imperial forces and was therefore candidly interested in compensating somehow his younger brother. The emperor's obligation called though for something else than to supply a position in a politically fluid Italy. Writing from Madrid in March, 1525, Charles, for the first time, sanctioned Ferdinand's quest for the German kingship and promised his full support.
He cautioned his younger brother about the necessity for complete discretion in this matter to which he would personally give full attention immediately following his imperial coronation.

Ferdinand was overjoyed to see that at long last his desire for a German crown was to receive imperial support. In his reply to the emperor, dated May, 1525, Ferdinand showed he was fully aware of the fact that Charles held the decisive power needed to achieve his election, so he assured his brother he would not take any initiative in this affair. The regent reminded the emperor that his election to the kingship of Germany necessitated the approval of the electors whose consent might require "lavish gifts" in the form of large sums of money. This was, of course, an obvious reference to the dire necessity of bribing the electors, a practice that could hardly have been unfamiliar to Charles.

By June, 1525, Charles had reversed himself. One wonders if Ferdinand could have been much surprised at this, having seen the imperial see-saw in action before. Not all the gold in Spain, Charles maintained, could conquer the aversion of the electors towards the Habsburgs. Aside from this lack of electoral sympathy, the whole concept of Ferdinand's kingship also rested on uncertain constitutional grounds, the emperor opined, as he already fulfilled this position himself. Yet he did not let this rebuff go without tempering it with the promise that he would do what he could
on this matter when and if circumstances permitted.\textsuperscript{15}

Despite this mercurial change, Charles's good opinion of his brother continued to grow. In fact, one can safely make the assertion that after the battle of Pavia there is a much closer and more intimate understanding and a greater dependency on one another than what had marked their previous relationship. The increased number of letters between the two brothers as well as their more amicable contents attest to this hypothesis.

For example, in Ferdinand's letters of 1525 and 1526, one finds that the regent no longer restricted his correspondence to the airing of certain problems arising from his dual positions in both Austria and Germany with a request to Charles for advice. Instead, he freely mingled such difficulties with problems falling exclusively within Charles's sphere of interest and, without any hesitation, he passed on his opinions. Finally, his correspondence, for the first time, fathoms and even comments upon certain strands in Charles's private life.

Since each and every letter conceived in this spirit cannot be presented within the limited scope of this study, two are selected because of their characteristic nature. Barely a month after the battle of Pavia, Ferdinand forwarded to the emperor his own blueprint on the forthcoming peace treaty with the French. While the regent's schemes on the prospective Habsburg-Valois truce hardly transcend what
would be expected from a member of his dynasty and need no further elaboration here, it is of some interest to observe that he would have compelled the French royal government to defray some of his own numerous and extensive debts and that he would have brought pressure on Francis I to contribute military assistance to the defense of Central Europe against the Turkish hordes of Suleiman the Magnificent.\textsuperscript{16}

In the same characteristic vein of new brotherly closeness, Ferdinand actually chided the emperor for having hitherto completely neglected the idea of getting married. The young regent observed that Charles, at twenty-five years of age in 1525, was still celibate -- a grievous oversight since they were the only two male representatives of their dynasty. A quick marriage, with as many offspring as possible, was mandatory for the Habsburg interest.\textsuperscript{17}

The emperor's reply to these two particular letters of Ferdinand convincingly illustrates that he had not considered these proposals and suggestions of his younger brother in any way obtrusive. He assured Ferdinand that he would follow his recommendation with regard to the prospective peace treaty with France and frankly admitted his pending matrimonial plans with Princess Isabella, the Infanta of Portugal, asking Ferdinand's opinion about it.\textsuperscript{18}

After having considered Ferdinand's involvement in the first phase of the Habsburg-Valois struggle in Italy and briefly analyzed his subsequent personal interest in the
political recasting of Lombardy, this study must now revert chronologically to the initial months of 1525. By the outset of that year and certainly by the time of the battle of Pavia, a series of internal disorders in Germany, which had been fermenting since mid-1524, had reached a level paralyzing national life so that the establishment could no longer afford to ignore them. They are subsumed in German history under the general heading of the Peasants' War of 1524-25.

This analysis has already inspected that sterile and declining class -- the knights. The other body of men who likewise in early sixteenth-century Germany felt the economic pinch of the times were the peasants. German peasantry, like its counterpart anywhere in the West, was, till the end of the fifteenth century, both socially and economically in a favorable position. Only a few of them were bondsmen and rarely totally unfree; a sizeable minority were small proprietors and protected by law, and the majority were tenant farmers renting lands from the feudal nobility in exchange for produce, services, or money.

The political and economic situation which had generally favored the German agrarian element throughout the fifteenth century began to work against it in the sixteenth. A new economy with new forms of production and distribution, with its corollary of price-inflation, ultimately impelled the landed classes, hard hit by these economic changes, to increase their property income at the expense of the tenant
It was therefore in the interest of the landed classes to alter the basis of their traditional relationship with their tenant peasantry, under the precepts of Roman law, by enlarging their seigneurial rights, re-imposing hitherto unused and long-forgotten labor services, and enforcing a series of new claims. Such activities ignited and spurred into open revolt the German agrarian element.

Sporadic peasant uprisings, initially restricted to the southern part of the nation, had by early 1525 spread throughout the bulk of the German-speaking areas, including both Switzerland and Austria. While these peasant insurrections were geographically confined to the Holy Roman Empire and former component parts of it, they should not be regarded as an isolated German phenomenon but the culmination, within the context of an all-European agrarian movement, of a long series of identical outbreaks dating back to much earlier periods: the Bruges incident of 1323; the French Jacquerie of 1356, and the 1381 English episode under Wat Tyler and Jack Cade.

Though Lutheranism per se cannot be held directly responsible for the German Peasants' Revolt, the Wittenberg reformer's successful defiance of both secular and ecclesiastical authorities broke the dams of civil discipline and awe, and removed, to a certain extent, the main barriers to a major social upheaval.
In the Germany of that age, the Church -- especially through its ecclesiastical lords and numerous religious orders which jointly controlled as much as a fifth of all available land -- played so large a role in the economic life of the nation that it could not avoid becoming a target of attack. Furthermore, circulation of Luther's New Testament, now conveniently in German and in printed form, was an additional blow to political and religious orthodoxy; it revealed the economic communism of the Apostles and Christ's overwhelming sympathy for the poor and oppressed to communities which were already heavily imbued with Waldensian, Beghard, and Brethren of the Common Life traditions, and which could readily unearth Biblical justification for any radical socio-economic program. Now at hand was a divine warrant for the establishment of a utopian society.

During the initial period of the uprising, in the second half of 1524, the loosely formulated demands of the peasantry had merely called for the partial restoration of their ancient tenurial rights; later, by March, 1525, their demands were incorporated into a widely-accepted program known as the Twelve Articles. These included the restitution of appropriated common lands, the abolition of excessive rents and services, and other perfectly reasonable items, and they were slightly colored by the early thoughts of the Wittenberg reformer inasmuch as one of the articles sought to attain the right for each community to choose its
own pastor. Within the peasant movement, however, there was a more extreme faction, guided by the religious anti-intellectualism of a Carlstadt and the Anabaptist revolutionary socialism of a Müntzer. New Peasant leaders demanded the "law of God" in which truly radical and revolutionary tenets, often reminiscent of the millenarian and anarchic outbursts of the Middle Ages, threatened all authority in the name of economic, social, and political equality.

When the program put forward by the peasantry was not properly heeded by the establishment, German agrarian discontent resolved to settle the issue by the sword and instituted a regimen characterized by widespread violence, conflagration, and all too frequent murder. These outbursts by the peasantry were indeed tactless and lamentable and never had a remote chance for achieving success. The peasant ranks were uncoordinated, poorly armed, and entrusted to incompetent leadership. The undisciplined phalanxes soon dissolved in a wild scramble for safety, leaving masses behind to be butchered by the thousands as the arms of the establishment reached out.

Like most German political dignitaries, Ferdinand, too, by 1525, realized the gravity of Germany's domestic turmoil and rapidly took up measures of counteraction. In March, 1525, he informed the Duke of Bourbon, then in command of the imperial forces in Italy, that in the light of recent German events, the immediate release of his Austrian
contingent was mandatory. These veteran troops of the Italian campaign, making allowances for battle-incurred casualties and losses through perennial desertion, were still an incisive force which Ferdinand now placed at the disposal of the Swabian League, a protective association of various German political interests determined to enforce law and order and already successful in stamping out the Knights' Revolt of 1522-23.

Almost simultaneously, another coalition was formed against the forces of domestic anarchy by Duke John of Saxony, successor to the electorship left vacant by the death in 1525 of the much-celebrated Frederick the Wise. Faced by such potent opposition, the Peasants' Revolt rapidly collapsed by mid-1525, at least as far as Germany proper was concerned, after having lasted approximately one year.

While Ferdinand's constitutionally feeble position as regent of the empire and his chronic financial distress made it impossible for him to pose as commander-in-chief of his nation's various armies who were in the field against the rebellious agrarian element, he was, nevertheless, more deeply and lastingly entangled in this social upheaval than any other German prince or political dignitary of the period. There were two particular geographical areas within his immediate jurisdiction where the social turmoil had been excessively intense. The first was the Duchy of Württemberg, territorially within the empire but under direct Habsburg
administration since 1520; the second, Austria, once an integral part of the empire, since 1282, a hereditary fief of the Habsburg dynasty. Of these two areas, Württemberg represented, by far, the greater threat to Ferdinand's authority.

Taken at its face value in 1520, the acquisition of the Duchy of Württemberg seemed to be a masterpiece of Habsburg political sagacity. Its roots go back to 1519, barely after Charles's imperial election, when the restless and incompetent secular lord of the duchy, Duke Ulrich, was driven from his position into exile -- for reasons that need no elaboration here -- by the arms of the Swabian League whose members then intended to divide his land among themselves. A group of imperial councillors, however, immediately realized the inestimable strategic advantage of the duchy to Habsburg hegemony, for it could serve as a necessary link between the family's western possessions in the Low Countries and Austria in the East. After prolonged negotiations and financial compensation made to the Swabian League, the Habsburgs succeeded in annexing the Duchy of Württemberg to their dynasty's hereditary domains.23

The outright annexation of Württemberg by the Habsburgs may have proved, in the long run, not to have been so sagacious after all, for the Swabian League enjoyed all Germany's sympathy for unseating Duke Ulrich while the Habsburgs writhed under a mounting sentiment that their imperialism
had set a dangerous constitutional precedent because it obviously had deprived Christopher, Ulrich's son, of his eventual ducal rights to Württemberg. Additional Habsburg territorial expansion would not be condoned by the head of any other German territorial state. Finally, the exiled duke became a most ardent foe of the Habsburgs, constantly ready to plot against them with anyone.

No wonder Duke Ulrich, residing in Swiss exile since 1520, could hardly pass up the opportunity offered by the German upheaval to recover his lost territory. He joined the ranks of the rebellious peasants in Württemberg and became fully involved in a cause for which he had only a slight sympathy at best. Duke Ulrich's personal association with the rebellion lent a distinctive political hue to the agrarian uprising there which taxed Ferdinand with problems far greater in scope than those he encountered in German domestic malcontent elsewhere.

The moment chosen by Ulrich for the initiation of hostilities in Württemberg was February, 1525, a highly propitious moment indeed as both Ferdinand's and the emperor's military forces were tied down in Lombardy against the French monarch. It is plausible to assume that French subsidies assisted Ulrich in raising an army fifty to sixty thousand strong, an army of professional mercenaries who represented virtually all Europeans, though Swiss and Bohemian soldiers were predominant. When one added to
this already impressive military contingent an equal number of men-in-arms drawn from the local peasantry whose loyalty to Duke Ulrich was reinforced by the weakness and unpopularity of Ferdinand's provincial Württemberg government, the invasion of the duchy began to take on the appearance of an invincible juggernaut.

Despite a series of military successes scored initially in Württemberg by Ulrich's invading armies, the whole movement collapsed within a few weeks. Although the aggressors easily managed to occupy several key Württemberg positions and already threatened, by the end of February, 1525, the capital city of the duchy and the seat of Ferdinand's government -- Stuttgart itself -- to such an extent that it had to be evacuated and its bureaucracy relocated in Tübingen, the Habsburg victory at Pavia was destined to deliver the coup de grâce to Ulrich's political ambitions. The news of the stunning imperialist victory over the French in Lombardy, which reached the rebellious army the first week of March, created a mass panic in its ranks. Over night Ulrich's professional armies virtually melted away, deserting him in such frightening numbers that the duke himself was forced to seek safety in flight. By mid-March, 1525, Duke Ulrich was back in Switzerland.26

When one considers these events from the viewpoint of those mercenary troops who served the deposed duke, their full-scale retreat from Württemberg seems logical and
salutary, for the crushing defeat of the French at Pavia had not only meant the resuscitation of Habsburg prestige in Europe with the concomitant availability of a well-trained and sizeable imperialist army at beck and call but also precluded any further prospective French assistance for home-grown traitors in Habsburg domains.

Though the army melted away, the Württemberg peasants were still there, determined to press the identical socio-economic program being agitated for elsewhere in Germany. Their demands, like Ulrich's ill-fated designs, were doomed to catastrophic failure with one important difference; these simple tillers of the soil had no Swiss haven or refuge anywhere when the blows fell. George von Truchsess, an exceptionally capable military man in charge of the forces of the Swabian League, succeeded through lengthy bargaining in dividing the ranks of the Württemberg peasantry, and those who proved recalcitrant to the end were brutally crushed in a pitched battle near Herrenberg May 10. By the conclusion of that month, the days of internal violence were definitely over. Law and order returned to the duchy, but it was only temporary, as Duke Ulrich and his Protestant allies later, in 1534, decisively defeated the Habsburg forces in Württemberg and permanently recovered this lost duchy.

While the Austrian affairs of Ferdinand are beyond the bounds of this study, a brief discussion of the peasants' uprising there in the hereditary lands of the Habsburgs
appears to be essential because of its distinctively anti-clerical nature which confirmed Ferdinand's developing theories about the underlying causes of the recent German turmoil. The Austrian provinces over which the German regent ruled in the capacity of an archduke proved also to be fertile soil for those widely-sown seeds which sprouted agrarian discontent. While disturbances of varying extent had occurred nearly everywhere in Austria, none had been so obstinate and long-lasting as those disorders in Salzburg and Tyrol.

The province of Salzburg, nearly 8,000 square miles in its physical extent, was still, as late as the sixteenth century, an ecclesiastical fief ruled by an archbishop and as such only nominally under Ferdinand's direct control. In Salzburg, because of its ecclesiastical status, the agitations of the local peasantry took on a sharply anti-clerical coloring. Inconoclastic outbreaks were frequent; monasteries and abbeys were converted to schools and hospitals, while large tracts of Church land were appropriated. Considering these disturbances a challenge to his archducal authority, Ferdinand spent the better part of 1525 in Salzburg negotiating with his discontented subjects. Realizing that his opponents were unyielding in their demands and that their claims were not totally without justice, he finally agreed to a compromise which gave legal sanction to the secularization of some ecclesiastical property.28
In the province of Tyrol, conditions were even more alarming for Ferdinand. Here, unlike anywhere else in the German-speaking areas, his rebellious subjects were exceptionally well organized and enjoyed remarkably capable leadership on the part of a local peasant, Michael Gaismayr. His ranks included a large number of miners, artisans, and shopkeepers as well as the usual agricultural underpinning. The ruggedly mountainous terrain of Tyrol and the refusal of the local militia to bear arms against their own people help explain their successful and prolonged defiance of Ferdinand's authority. Their stubbornness in resisting all pressure to come to terms with the establishment lent to the socio-economic aspect of their program for reform certainly nothing a modern democracy would find outrageous, but for the sixteenth century, their proposals were unparalleled radicalism. Their demands called for the following: nationalization of the mines (that is, revocation of mining permits hitherto held by foreigners and only to be granted to local entrepreneurs); stabilization of all prices on basic consumer goods by the government; election of judges and officials by universal adult male suffrage; secularization of the bishoprics of Trent and Brixen; and, finally, execution of all "godless" persons who persecuted and obfuscated the "true word of God" through the use of pictures, shrines, and adherence to the practice and procedures of the Mass.

Since the archduke could hardly sanction such drastic
measures to please his Tyrolean rebels, chances for any compromise became remote and hostilities continued well into 1526. For a time Gaismayr's clever strategy defeated the troops sent against him, but he was finally outwitted and compelled to flee to Italy in May, 1526.

Gaismayr's absence brought a quick end to the Tyrolean resistance. Victorious and in full control of the situation, Ferdinand showed, unlike most of his German contemporaries, a remarkable sense of leniency toward his defeated subjects. He penalized only a few individuals within the upper echelons and even made some concessions to the vanquished. He consented to the partial secularization of the bishopric of Brixen until a general council of the Church would effect a final decision; he agreed to the nomination of church officials and civil servants by members of the community where they would exercise their authority; and, finally, he made the Tyrolean provincial assembly pass legislation explicitly designed to ameliorate the economic lot of those lowest in the social scale.

Ferdinand's willingness to grant to his formerly mutinous and now utterly routed subjects a series of important economic and political concessions which entailed a trimming of that paralyzing grasp of the Church on national wealth reflected a marked degree of statesmanship and a charitable disposition proper for a ruler. Nothing else better illustrates Ferdinand's position than a letter, dispatched to the
Bishop of Brixen, in which he brusquely informed the ecclesiastical dignitary, without showing any sympathy, that the partial secularization of his bishopric was a necessary and unavoidable step urgently needed for the pacification of the Tyrolean province.

Ferdinand's experience in his Austrian provinces makes it possible to interpret properly his letter of March 14, 1526, to his sister Mary, Queen of Hungary and Bohemia. In it, Ferdinand offered his theory that Lutheranism and social rebellion were always found together and that the latter always sprang from the former. Protestantism and rebellion were lumped in such a fashion that all social protest could only be engendered by religious heat and dissention.

Indeed, when one looks at the Austrian part of the peasants' uprising, the most elementary proposals for economic justice are so laced with religious demands, so intertwined with ecclesiastical dispute, that it is hard to determine where one leaves off and the other begins. Ferdinand rubbed shoulders with his rebelling Tyrolean peasants, shopkeepers, and artisans to such an extent that he could come to overlook conveniently the fundamental social and economic driving forces which lay behind his Württemberg and Salzburg uprisings. It became all too easy -- at least when writing this letter -- for him to associate all internal social protest with what he thought were his subjects' real motivating energies -- a desire to give expression to
their religious zeal and gain converts for the new teachings.

This misorientation which equated a propensity for religious reform with all desire for social and economic ameliorization, in spite of Luther's explicit and well-publicized disavowal of the rebellious element and subsequent condemnation of its actions, can be partially excused by the following mitigating circumstances: the overwhelmingly anti-clerical hue of the program put forward by his subjects in the Austrian provinces; the undeniably heavy influx of zealous preachers and pamphleteers — all of the Lutheran persuasion -- into the eastern hereditary lands of the Habsburgs by the mid-1520's; and a deep-seated personal bias against Luther which, as evinced in his letter to Mary, probably caused him to mistrust that staunch support the Wittenberg reformer voiced in behalf of the economic and political status quo of the empire.
CHAPTER IV

REACHING THE APEX: 1524-1526

It was when the turmoil and confusion of the Peasants' Revolt and its aftermath were waning that Ferdinand reached the apex of his regency, an apex he never foresaw as the sudden death of one of his kinsmen brought a meteoric turn to his personal wheel of fortune. Before looking at that sudden rotation, however, it is necessary to examine the German scene emerging from civil bloodshed.

The losses in life and property incurred by all those who were involved with Germany's Peasants' War were phenomenal and hitherto unprecedented in that nation's history. The establishment, commanding large bodies of professional soldiers equipped with the latest in military hardware, suffered lightly, relatively speaking, as this military cushion kept its casualties down to only a few thousand. Its losses, however, as far as property damage was concerned, were staggering as the rebellious agrarian element destroyed hundreds of castles, monasteries, and other ecclesiastical and urban real estate. The lot of the vanquished peasants was even more appalling. From their ranks alone more than one-hundred
thousand perished in battle or in purges following hostilities. Hundreds of villages were depopulated or ruined or impoverished by huge indemnities. Homeless peasants by the thousands roamed the highways or hid in the woods. Widows and orphans were legion, but charity was grudgingly granted or refused outright.

No wonder that during this upheaval and its aftermath normal activities in Germany came to a standstill. In the "age of the Fuggers," commerce and trade became paralyzed; there were no fairs held, and the nation's transportation arteries, once crowded with merchants hauling their cargoes in every direction, were now deserted. Germany's leading mining and textile industries ceased to be productive as the labor force abandoned its thriving centers and the financiers were reluctant to provide further capital amid a torrential outpouring of uncertain events. A serious interruption also marred the nation's intellectual and artistic creativity as its output either ceased or swerved into a retrogressive path. Save for vitriolic polemics from Luther and others, nothing else came to life in the genre of belles-lettres. The field of fine arts, which had reached a promise of maturity already before the outbreak of social turmoil, sank into sterility, or, at best, in the case of a Dürrer, sought an escape from the sordid realities of contemporary events by expressing mystical, ecstatic, and other-worldly artistic yearnings. The healthy heartbeat of normal political
activity, too, was largely arrested. There were no diets or other gatherings at summit levels in the empire, and what transpired politically in this period was conditioned by and urged into existence by unavoidable domestic calamities.

The significance of Germany's wounds, still open and unhealed by the closing months of 1525, must have completely eluded the understanding of the absentee emperor as he summoned the nation's estates -- in a printed dispatch from the Alcazar of Toledo and dated May 24 -- to a diet which was to convene at Augsburg by October. Charles, victorious in the field of Pavia and with France no longer a thorn in his side, must have felt that the hour had come to deal effectively with the German situation. His lack of other distractions was now a God-given opportunity for imperial leadership which he must exploit to its fullest extent. His instructions specifically listed the following issues needing consideration by the prospective diet: the excision from the Christian religion of all "pernicious" doctrine and innovation through a general church council, the convocation of which he would personally promote; the restoration of internal law and order; and the defense of the empire against the Turkish threat.¹ This dispatch conspicuously reveals that the emperor -- like Ferdinand and other German political dignitaries -- readily associated Protestantism with all the social unrest as he blamed the "mischievous religious innovations" for the outbreak of peasant insurrections and the
subsequent bloodshed.

The emperor's political desire to assemble an effective diet could not be realized. A Diet of Augsburg, scheduled by Charles for October, 1525, had to be postponed to November and was not actually opened by Ferdinand until mid-December. This particular Augsburg gathering of German imperial estates was so thinly attended that it does not even merit the appellation "diet." Out of seven electors only one, the Archbishop of Trier, made his appearance, and many of the princes and towns were not even represented by deputies. No business of any importance could be attempted and the rump quickly adjourned by mid-January of 1526, deciding to reconvene in full the following June, at Speyer where the attendance of all the estates was enjoyed. Despite its sparse attendance and brief duration, the Augsburg gatherings had succeeded in formulating a memorandum which emphasized the absolute necessity of treating effectively in Speyer the German confessional crisis, "a weighty and difficult question" which harassed the German nation more seriously now -- it was theatrically declared -- than ever before "in the memory of man."2

Ferdinand, who presided over this rump diet at Augsburg as the German regent and his brother's representative, remains, quite surprisingly, silent about its belated commencement and its sporadic attendance. His correspondence reveals no explanation for or description of this assembly,
nor is there any documentary evidence that Charles made legitimate inquiries about it. Posterity is obliged to surmise the circumstances for it. While the possibility of the German estates outrightly defying an explicit imperial demand to convocate an Augsburg Diet can be dismissed, one can unearth an explanation in the existing domestic conditions. The nation, having gone through a twelve-month internal mutiny, had not yet reached, by late 1525, a wholesome stage of recovery. The scars left behind by the Peasants' War were still sore; law and order were still not completely restored; transportation was still grossly hampered by burnt-down bridges and multitudinous highwaymen who infested the public roads. Still immersed in the amelioration of these internal hazards, only a few of the German estates could afford in the concluding months of 1525 to forsake such cogent responsibilities and participate in a lofty political gathering.

Turning from a consideration of German political activities at a summit level to those unfolding simultaneously in local areas, one becomes aware of how social turmoil further hastened the political fragmentation of the empire. In the hectic early summer days of 1525 when a stamping-out of the agrarian unrest was far from completed, several princes of northern Germany were brought together, by sheer necessity, for a series of discussions at the city of Dessau -- capital of the tiny principality of Anhalt -- which led by July to
the formation of an alliance known as the Dessau League. This team of political dignitaries was comprised of the Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, Duke George of Saxony, and the Dukes Eric and Henry of Brunswick -- all steadfast adherents to religious orthodoxy. The character of the league was, at least at the outset, strictly defensive as its members pledged themselves only to subduing the rebellious peasantry in their respective territorial states through the combined might of their military resources. Nothing else demonstrates more vividly the league's initial non-sectarian religious orientation than its invitation to and subsequent admission of Elector John of Saxony and Landgrave Philip of Hesse whose pro-Lutheran sentiments were commonplace knowledge throughout Germany.

The ferocity that characterized the Peasants' War as well as its successful suppression brought about a climate of reactionary opinion entertained by the orthodox founders of the Dessau League which fed itself on and went beyond the successful retaliatory measures used to smash the peasants. These Catholic princes began invariably to see Protestantism at the roots of all the recent social disturbances. Satiated by their victories and staunchly believing in the dissension-sowing energies of the new teachings, the original signatories of the Dessau League secretly forged a Ratschlag or Proposal for Action -- to be delivered to the emperor in order to solicit his help -- in which they pledged themselves,
if given any imperial encouragement, to enforce the 1521 penal mandate of Worms, claiming such action was needed to forestall any recurrence of social upheaval and fracturing of "Christian order" among their subjects. In addition, they recommended a whole bevy of sound reform measures, all designed to trim the excessive and inordinate privileges of the four mendicant orders of Germany.\(^5\)

Though the Dessau confederates had not intended, at least as far as their Ratschlag discloses, to attack Lutherans outside their own territories, their ambition to join up with members of the Ratisbon Union and other princes hitherto religiously uncommitted was felt as more than a perilous threat to those whose consciences were already colored by the teachings coming forth from Wittenberg. Nevertheless, nothing concrete materialized from the religious designs of these ultra-conservative Catholic nobles as they were unable to maintain the secrecy necessary to their plans. Led by Luther himself who in pamphlet form penned in his customarily acid tone a condemnation of these schemes as a "godless conspiracy done at the instigation of Satan," the Protestant-oriented estates, as well as a number of religiously neutral political dignitaries, reproved this overly-zealous orthodox undertaking.\(^6\) The emperor himself felt the necessity of clarifying his position in this matter. In a dispatch from Toledo, dated February, 1526, he assured his estates that a conclusive treatment of the religious issue
would lie exclusively within the jurisdiction of the coming Diet of Speyer which he, too, planned to attend following his imperial coronation in Rome. 7

While no one in sixteenth-century Germany would have questioned the right of a territorial lord or a body of urban magistrates to enforce, in his respective area of jurisdiction, an imperial penal mandate like the Edict of Worms of 1521, the veil of secrecy surrounding the Dessau League's intentions and thoughts of its possible success struck a deep spell of fear -- perhaps unreasonable to a certain degree -- into certain princely and urban estates of the new faith who then felt compelled to band together into a similarly defensive league for the protection of their traditional political rights and their confessional unorthodoxy. Under the auspices of a Saxon-Hessian alliance, conferences were held -- throughout the better part of February, 1526 -- at Gotha and Torgau (both towns were then under the jurisdiction of electoral Saxony) which resulted in the emergence of the so-called Torgau League, joined by a score of minor German princes and urban magistrates. 8 Among these noteworthy members were Duke Henry of Mecklenburg, Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt, Count Albert of Mansfeld, and the city fathers of Magdeburg. With this act the long-impending political fragmentation of the empire became a fait accompli.

At this time, in the early months of 1526, the European
political situation itself began to alter rapidly, thereby accelerating the political fragmentation of the empire and undermining the undisputed supremacy held by the Habsburgs since 1525. After slightly more than a year's imprisonment on Spanish soil following his capture at Pavia, the French monarch was finally released and allowed to return to his native country. But in order to effect his freedom, Francis I was obliged to consent to a harsh and certainly humiliating treaty with the emperor. Signed on the 14th of January, 1526, the Treaty of Madrid coerced France into surrendering completely her Italian claims, giving up Burgundy, and abandoning her suzerainty over Artois and Flanders. It also required that the two oldest sons of the vanquished French monarch, Princes Francis and Henry, be handed over as hostages to the emperor to guarantee the faithful execution of the agreement. Francis further consented to marry the emperor's sister Eleonora, Queen-Dowager of Portugal.

Having agreed to accept and carry out these terms of the treaty, Francis was delivered, on March 17, 1526, to the Franco-Spanish border and there on a barge in the Bidasson River, which separates Spanish Irun from French Hendaye, was released to an anxiously-awaited French delegation but only after the exchange of his two sons. No sooner was he liberated than Francis made it quite clear that he never had intended to observe the terms of the treaty. Appearing
shortly after his release before the Parlement of Paris, the once humiliated monarch now openly repudiated the provisions of the Treaty of Madrid and that highest French court of law, in turn, nullified "all pacts, conventions, quittances, renunciations, derogations and oaths" that their monarch might have committed himself to "under force, constraint, and confinement" which were contrary to the honor of France and its national interest. Moreover, Francis appealed to the Roman pontiff, Clement VII, for an absolution from the oath he had sworn at Madrid.

When the stipulations of the Treaty of Madrid became generally known throughout Europe, during that sixty-day period which elapsed between its signing, Francis's liberation, and his subsequent repudiation, they aroused an almost universal hostility against the Habsburgs. Since one of its explicit aims was the conversion of the Italian peninsula into a Habsburg hereditary domain, there was a strong resentment emanating from the various Italian city states who were joined in their animosity by the Papal States. Strangely enough, the thought of an anticipated imperial absorption of four provinces in northern France even convulsed the German princes, Catholic and Lutheran alike. The prospect of Charles becoming the most powerful European ruler meant, as far as the German pro-Lutheran estates were concerned, the possibility of a dictated, unilateral solution of the nation's confessional problems
and their eventual prosecution under the provisions of the Edict of Worms of 1521. This helped to motivate them, to no small degree, in forming the defensive alliance of Torgau. Some powerful territorial princes of Germany who were adamantly Catholic -- such as the Wittelsbachs of Bavaria -- while generally in agreement with imperial directives pertaining to the religious settlement, were politically in perennial rivalry with the Habsburgs and could not readily accept such a phenomenal augmentation of their dynastic power. By the same standards, this undue upsetting of the balance of power in Europe could not be witnessed with equanimity by Henry VIII's Tudor government. The English monarch who previously had been friendly to Charles was now prepared to join the ranks of an ever-increasing anti-Habsburg camp.

By May, 1526, this unconcealed and overt rapacity for territorial expansion and unveiled ambition for global hegemony resulted in the emergence of an anti-Habsburg league whose expressed purpose was blocking the execution of the Madrid peace terms. Under French auspices and the titular headship of Henry VIII, this alliance bound together Milan, Florence, Genoa, and Venice. After having absolved Francis from his Madrid oath, Clement VII himself joined the ranks of malcontented powers. This particular federation of anti-imperial forces is known either as the Holy League, because of papal membership in it, or the League of Cognac, taking
this appellation from the French town (presently, the capital seat of Charante département) where the proceedings were actually concluded. These diplomatic steps irrevocably opened a new chapter in the age-long rivalry between the Habsburgs and the Valois and set the stage again for a renewed armed showdown for the mastery of Italy.

The most singularly significant aspect of this new anti-Habsburg coalition was that Clement VII had been enticed to join the emperor's enemies. The Roman pontiff, scion of the much-celebrated Florentine Medici family, had been as a cardinal a staunch supporter of the imperial cause, and his election in 1523 to the throne of St. Peter was largely secured through Charles's personal influence. But by 1526 he became, not in his capacity as spiritual lord of Christendom but as head of an Italian territorial state, jealous of the overgrown Habsburg political power in Italy. The emperor already possessed Naples in the South, whereas the Treaty of Madrid assigned him permanent footing in Lombardy in the North. Thus, the German-Spanish pressure hemmed in the pope from both directions. While this papal volte-face is totally excusable in the age of Machiavelli, his desertion of the imperial cause was certainly more than a heavy personal blow for Charles. Considered from the viewpoint of the future history of the Roman Catholic Church, it was one of the most fatal disservices ever rendered by its head to that ancient institution.
The wind blowing from this complete reversal of the European political scene, intensified by the formation of the League of Cognac, soon reached the sensitive vanes of the German estates who were about to gather for an imperial diet at Speyer. Each and every one of them, whether an adherent to the old faith or a partisan of the Wittenberg teachings, had to be affected by the changes transpiring in European politics. To the Lutherans this signified the coup de grâce to Charles's plans of enforcing the Edict of Worms and resolving the German confessional issues through a universal church council which alone could effect a general solution. The Lutherans knew they would be distinctively in the minority in such a body. So the new anti-Habsburg coalition would certainly mean renewed hostilities in Italy, and the emperor would need their amicable neutrality, if not outright support. Therefore, their objective could only be to gain at the prospective Diet of Speyer concessions that would leave free the religious issue until a church council, exclusively under German auspices, would adjudicate the disputes; in such a gathering, at which the Lutherans would achieve a more favorable numerical proportion, religious differences could be resolved on a multi-lateral basis.

For the ranks of the Catholic majority, the prospect of a papal-imperial quarrel meant the nullification, at least temporarily, of any possibility of summoning a universal church council and a division in their loyalty paid to their
spiritual and secular lords. For Charles, it meant the abandonment of his plans for his papal coronation and planning for his participation in the forthcoming Diet of Speyer, and tending to all the chores that the mustering of new troops might incur. For Ferdinand, as regent of Germany, it meant the imperial instructions to enforce the 1521 Edict of Worms at the Diet of Speyer were now a dead letter and the granting of far-reaching concessions to the Lutheran estates at that diet a foregone conclusion.

It was in this politically-explosive atmosphere that the German estates began to assemble by late spring of 1526. Although the diet's opening date was set for the 25th of June by Regent Ferdinand, the rank and file of German princes, prelates, and burghers already arrived by mid-May in such impressive numbers that a large attendance at this assembly was readily assured. In addition to the historically significant transactions and decisions for which this diet is justly famous, one even finds the entry of the Lutheran participants into Speyer and their preliminary activities truly epoch-making.

Posterity is indeed fortunate to possess an exhaustive account of these events in Speyer by an eye-witness who was there from mid-May through August, namely, George Spalatin, a Saxon clergyman of Elector John of Saxony and formerly the chaplain and secretary of Frederick the Wise.

A personal friend of Luther and one of the earliest
supporters of the Wittenberg teachings, Spalatin in his report strikingly reveals that ostentatious self-assured spirit of defiance which marked the pre-diet behavior of those princes whose religious sentiment matched his. To start at the beginning of this account, some of these princes made an unproportionately grand display of both wealth and power; the Elector of Saxony rode into town with a retinue of 400, the Landgrave of Hesse, with 200. The Lutheranism of these two princes was now, for the first time, on display in a way which sought to distinguish between themselves and the adherents of the old creed.\textsuperscript{11} The banners carried by their armed retainers contained the five letters: \textit{V. D. M. I. A.}, an abbreviation for the Latin phrase, \textit{Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum},\textsuperscript{12} which was also shown on those escutcheons hung out in the front of their hotels in town and even embroidered on the liveries of their servants.

Spalatin's recital discloses even bolder activities by these princes and their sympathizers who now conspicuously deserted the tenets of their old faith. They were never seen at mass in the city churches; they opened their living quarters for Lutheran worship conducted by preachers whom they had brought with them. While the salons of these princes were thronged, the naves and aisles of the city churches were void of worshippers. On one Sunday, as the report goes, a crowd of more than 8,000 attended the Protestant services, after which the tracts of Luther were freely
distributed. They were determined to demonstrate publically that certain ecclesiastical ordinances for which there is no direct reference in Holy Writ were no longer acceptable to their consciences, and meat was served to them regularly on Fridays and on other occasions designated as fast days by the Church.

These patterns of overt conduct and unmasked endorsement of the new teachings helped to point the popular tide more pronouncedly in the direction of the Reformation. The leaven of undisguised Protestant sympathy was rapidly spreading among those estates who hitherto had followed a middle course in the confessional crisis. Barely a few days after the opening of the diet, some new forces aligned themselves with the Lutheran camp. Duke Albert of Prussia and Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, following Luther's personal advice, abandoned his monastic vows, married, secularized the Lands of his order, and made himself the Duke of Prussia shortly before the diet. It was therefore natural that he should openly declare himself, on July 5, a member of the Torgau League. Shortly thereafter, delegates of certain free imperial cities -- such as Strassburg, Augsburg, Nuremberg, Ulm, and Frankfurt -- reached a secret understanding and pledged themselves to support any measure put forward by the Lutheran estates at the diet "in defense of the Gospel." Consequently, a conclusive testing of strength before the nation's highest tribunal between partisans of the old and
new creeds was near.

In the surcharged climate prevailing among the assembled estates in Speyer, Ferdinand opened the diet on June 25. In his Latin address, the German regent welcomed the convened estates in the name of the emperor and expressed his personal gratitude for their prompt and full attendance. Then, with a slight digression into the recent past, he declared that internal order had by now been fully restored in the empire and congratulated the estates for their effective participation in subduing the rebellious German peasantry.\textsuperscript{15}

After these preliminaries, he proceeded to list the various issues which were to be acted upon by the diet, summing them up under three major headings. The impending Turkish invasion of Hungary and the possibility of securing German military aid to that beleaguered nation commanded top priority on Ferdinand's agenda. According to reliable intelligence sources, the German regent declared, Sultan Suleiman had left Constantinople in April with an immense army, estimated anywhere between 150,000 and 200,000 in strength and armored with 300 cannons. This dreadful war machine was to be deployed in a northern campaign whose goal could be nothing less than the total subjugation of Hungary. The last report on Turkish advance had the invaders encamped in the Belgrade area, Hungary's most southern outpost of defense and held since 1521 by the infidels. In view of this grave and pronounced threat to Central Europe, Germany,
and the whole of Christendom, Ferdinand asked the estates for an *eilende Hülfe*, or instant assistance, in the form of military aid for the much-pressed Louis II of Hungary. Next, there were fiscal bills to be voted on which would again extend the existence for the next two years of the Council of Regency, the Supreme Court of Justice, and all other administrative paraphernalia of Ferdinand's imperial government in Germany.¹⁶

Then came the third and certainly most controversial issue on the whole agenda -- the one on religion -- which had to be considered by the estates in 1526 in accordance with Charles's imperial instructions (dated Toledo, May 24, 1525) explicitly outlining a prospective course of action that was to be implemented by the next imperial diet. Though more than aware of the bitterness and controversy the religious issue was likely to stir up at the diet among the estates, he could no longer minimize the seriousness of the confessional schism as he had done at the Nuernberg Diets of 1523 and 1524 but was compelled to communicate verbally his brother's mandate to the political dignitaries of the empire.

As previously stated, the emperor's instructions firmly upheld the principle of a unilateral solution to the German religious issue. It called, above all, for the unchanged continuation of all traditional Christian usages and ceremonies until a general council in possession of sole
authority could correct all clerical abuses and do away with confessional deviations and ecclesiastical irregularities. Since a considerable span of time would intervene before the convocation of such a council, Charles's directive exhorted the estates, in conjunction with Ferdinand and his imperial government, to find the proper ways and means to counteract the spread of heterodox confessional innovations by taking firm measures against those persons unmistakably responsible for them. These agitators of religious diversity, the imperial directive cautioned in its conclusion, were the principal instigators of the recent internal turmoils in the empire and still potentially capable of triggering further domestic calamities if remedial measures were not soon adopted.

Although Charles's instructions contained no direct reference to the Edict of Worms, his recommended course of action entailed in an undisguised manner the enforcement of his Edict of Worms of 1521 well before the convocation of an ecclesiastical tribunal. Nor could the much-awaited general church council, as previously mentioned, bring results satisfying to Germany's pro-Lutheran faction since the emperor, instead of sanctioning an all-German synod, insisted upon convoking a "universal" council where adherents of the new teachings would be woefully outnumbered by the Church's conservatively inclined and Mediterranean based majority. While the religious aims outlined by the emperor in his
imperial directives could be justified if considered from an orthodox Catholic viewpoint, an exposure of them to a non-sectarian analysis would immediately reveal their capital flaw -- they were, by mid-1526, unreservedly antiquated and unfeasible. A vehement reaction against these imperial instructions was a matter of course.

Ferdinand's presentation of the imperial directives, to no one's surprise, scored an overwhelming approval among the majority of electors and princes (members of the Saxon-Hessian League, of course, abstaining). In their memorandum, they wholeheartedly supported the emperor's intentions of preserving the traditional Christian usages and ceremonies. Though the unorthodox confessional innovations already had deep roots in German soil, they did not believe this made the confessional schism an exclusive problem for their nation to grapple with in isolation and so they readily consented to the convocation of a general council. Finally, they assented to the notion of enforcing certain legal measures against the Wittenberg faction though their punitive desires hardly transcended the curbing of the printing, selling, and importing of devotional Lutheran literature within their respective territories.17

As expected, a diametrically different position was endorsed by the majority of town delegates. They, too, drafted a memorandum which demanded the immediate abolition of all Christian usages and ceremonies without Scriptural
basis. Instead of deferring the controversial religious issues to the adjudication of an eventual church council, however, their joint statement urged an immediate and conclusive solution by the diet. These issues then were embodied in a list of grievances, the Gravamina, and presented to Ferdinand on August 1. Though similar lists of grievances already had been compiled and submitted to the empire's highest political forum (the 1523 and 1524 Nuernberg Diets), these former complaints dealt with certain abuses in the exercise of spiritual authority, fiscal machinations of the Roman Curia, immunity of clerical personages before the law, and a medley of relatively minor problems arising from dispensations, indulgences, excommunications, and other papal regulations. None of these former complaints were directed against the divine origin and nature of the Church, against the dogma of faith, the ecclesiastical system and jurisdiction, or the existing forms of worship.

The new Gravamina of 1526 was, however, of an express- edly different character, far more unmitigated in strictures and daring. It pressed for the abolition of the mendicant orders and the appropriation of their revenues by the local communities and for the elimination of widespread immorality among the clergy by discontinuing clerical celibacy. It proposed secularization of hospitals owned and operated by the Church, termination of the clergy's hitherto unfair privilege of being exempt from all public burdens, and abolition of a
great number of religious holidays on which the Church forbade useful labor. In order to stamp out various clerical abuses, it wished to empower secular authorities to depose church officials in the lower echelons if unfit to serve. Far more comprehensive was the new stipulation of the Gravamina that the practicing of traditional Christian usages and ceremonies should be left to the individual conscience, each person to have the prerogative to determine the appropriate practice for himself until a free and impartial national synod made a final decision, of course based on Scripture. Until the convocation of such a council, avowed this list of German ecclesiastical faults, the preaching of the Gospel should be left free and unhindered anywhere in the empire.¹⁹

These demands and recommendations set forth by Germany's Lutheran princes and their urban allies aimed at a substantial remodelling of the existing Church system, at a transfer of certain hitherto purely clerical matters to secular authority, and at the legal sanctioning of unrestrained proselytizing for the tenets of the new faith. For 1526, these aims were just as far-fetched and unfeasible as those already outlined in the imperial directives, for if the latter is to be labeled as obsolete for the first quarter of the sixteenth century, the former must also be viewed as premature when considering the prevailing Zeitgeist and political climate at hand.
The strident tone of the Protestant-sponsored memorandum and Gravamina submitted to the estates at the Speyer diet and the massive reaction that it engendered from the more religiously orthodox faction, which took the form of a stubborn reluctance to grant any meaningful concessions, brought proceedings of the diet to a complete standstill early in August. Although negotiations seeking a modus operandi between these antagonistic parties were continued, these conciliatory gestures were not out in the open in full sessions but restricted to the narrow levels of the sub-committee and the caucus. Moreover, and far more significantly, the 1526 deadlock with its unrelenting bickering over the religious question automatically forestalled any discussion and action on the other two capital issues on the agenda -- the fiscal bills which would have revitalized the debilitated body of the German imperial government with fresh financial plasma and the military appropriation measure which Ferdinand deemed vital for Hungary's safety.

If the impasse in the diet is seen from the historical perspective which the passage of time is apt to bring, one is readily inclined to put the blame on that pro-Habsburg faction which either failed to recognize or outrightly ignored the absolute necessity of yielding to some of the demands of their Protestant opponents in the light of the drastically altered political situation in Europe. On the other hand, the newly emerged coalition of German
Protestants could not resist the desire to be self-assertive for the first time. Whether this self-assertion was induced by genuinely religious inspirations or utilized religion as a disguise to mask political ambitions, there was a staunch determination to profit from contemporary historical events. No politician or religious seer of any acumen could ever have left such optimal opportunities unexploited.

This disruption in the proceedings of Germany's highest legislative forum slouched its way into a third week. Chances for a mutually-satisfactory compromise were distant and hazy. Fortunately, two unexpected events occurring in this very period of hopelessness frightened the religiously and politically conservative estates back into their right senses. On August 23, the two leading protagonists of German Protestantism -- Elector John of Saxony and Landgrave Philip of Hesse -- withdrew themselves from the political arena and without giving any explanation at all to the diet's president, Ferdinand, suddenly departed from the city of Speyer with some of their retinue. As part of the same event, the religiously uncommitted and presumably pro-Habsburg prince, the Elector of the Palatinate, followed the same pattern by making an abrupt departure without Ferdinand's permission the very next day. Although these princes returned to Speyer three days later, their temporary absence was sufficiently long to lead Ferdinand to infer that they desired to hasten the Speyer assembly into adjournment.
before it could pass a recess conclusively settling other issues still unattended.

Coming personally to Ferdinand was the other factor which helped to mollify the adamant stand of the orthodox majority; it was the receipt of a confidential dispatch from his imperial brother which must have reached him not later than the third week in August. Dated July 27 at Granada, Charles's communication, surprisingly, hit upon the idea of a religious peace in Germany by granting temporary concessions to the pro-Lutheran faction. Written while amassing all available reserves for the renewed Italian campaign, the emperor's explicit aim now was to secure a politically taciturn atmosphere at the Diet of Speyer which would be sufficiently receptive to any attempt by Ferdinand to gain access to German resources, if needed, for the anticipated military undertaking of the Habsburgs. Here, for the first time, Charles declared himself willing to offer temporary indemnity to those who had defied the Edict of Worms by endorsing the Lutheran cause and had thereby laid themselves open to this imperial ban. In return for this dispensation, the religiously recalcitrant German element should agree to submit to the verdict of an eventual general council, meanwhile placing themselves and their resources at the emperor's disposal. Charles, in concluding his clandestine imperial directive, added that he probably would publish this decision in a new and carefully prepared proclamation.
However much the emperor's secret message to his brother revealed a departure from or dramatic reassessment of Habsburg policy, its impact on the Speyer proceedings was not so great as one might have supposed, for it only partially and indirectly pertained to the German situation. Charles's intention to proclaim this decision was an outright anti-papal measure emphatically designed to strike terror into the Roman pontiff, Clement VII, by asserting his imperial right to call a general church council which could be assembled even without papal permission and participation. Such a council might all too eagerly revive the aims of the still potent conciliar movement within the Church wherein certain prelates hoped to trim excessive papal prerogatives while increasing their own, thereby democratizing this institution by promoting collective leadership. Such intimations for the future might force the pope, Charles hoped, into deserting his confederates of the League of Cognac and returning to the imperial fold.

Ferdinand would have realized by the third week in August, if not well before, the inescapable necessity of granting concessions to German Lutherans even if there had been no imperial guidance to sanction such a course of action. While a politically united, religiously pacified, and generally pro-Habsburg Germany was now an essential prerequisite for Charles who was facing a hostile Christendom, Ferdinand, both as regent of Germany and archduke of Austria,
had just as much at stake. The diet's action on the renewable fiscal bills would mean either life or death to his imperial government; German military assistance to the king of Hungary and Bohemia who was grappling with an impending Turkish conquest would not only prolong the well-entrenched Habsburg footing in these realms (since his sister Mary was married to the crown head of these two nations) but also shield his dynasty's adjacent Austrian holdings from an Asiatic onslaught.

So the dilatory tactics of the German Lutherans, the precipitous withdrawal of some of their leaders from the diet before its official conclusion, and the emperor's letter sanctioning the temporary suspension of his Edict of Worms coerced the conservative majority at the Diet of Speyer to seek a compromise settlement with their opponents. Once such conciliatory intentions had surfaced, the actual accomplishment of a *rapprochement* was a matter of course. On August 25, a recess was drafted, voted on, and approved by the overwhelming majority of the estates. Ferdinand gave his assent to it the following day. This epoch-making constitutional document in German history does not appear revolutionary if examined textually. The German estates, in their 1526 recess, admit that they, like their emperor, desire a general or national synod under the personal auspices of Charles at the earliest possible date to settle conclusively the confessional crisis. Until such a gathering
convenes, each estate is to have the right, as far as religious affairs and the enforcement of the Edict of Worms are concerned, to adjudicate these matters only in its respective territory and in such a way as to stand "ready to answer for their actions before God and the emperor."23

It used to be customary for both German and European historical scholarship in general to argue over the text of this declaration and its intended meaning. Such early attempts often were guided by unconcealed partisanship. Those of Catholic orientation promoted a sterile literary interpretation and emphasized the aspect of "personal responsibility before God and emperor" as the sole difference between the Speyer recess and the previous recess of the Diet of Nuernberg (1524) in which the estates promised to enforce the Edict of Worms as far as "possible." Those with Protestant leanings, on the other hand, facilely read into it a legal recognition of the territorial church -- that is to say, a sanctioning by the establishment of a spiritually independent ecclesiastical network within a particular territorial enclave of the empire whose doctrines and ceremonies were molded in accordance with the Evangelical spirit. Neither interpretation by itself is accurate and satisfactory.

Actually, the text of the Diet of Speyer's 1526 recess is a masterpiece of diplomatic expediency -- a mid-course approach which sought to strengthen the Habsburgs in their currently adverse situation. Moreover, it is a frank
admission of the temporary impracticality locked into the language of the Edict of Worms, which could neither be enforced nor repealed without offending a sizeable segment of the empire. What is singularly important is that it was conceived in a time when princely power in Germany was becoming resurgent and entering upon a new phase of greatness. Those in opposition to the Habsburgs would soon discover Lutheranism was not merely a religious issue but a political challenge as well, with the princes seeing their chance for the recovery of their ancient rights to a politically quasi-independent status. Indeed, the Speyer recess of 1526, with its foreshadowing of the principle of territorial control of religion (the embodiment of the idea of *cuius regio, eius religio* which was destined to serve as the ultimate basis of the 1555 German religious settlement), appealed to a formerly unexpressed secular right of choice by the princes which lay dormant in their consciences, awaiting expression.

With Ferdinand's approval of this declaration on August 27, the religious problem was finally removed from the agenda and the diet now quickly proceeded to consider the other two issues remaining unresolved. Within two unexpectedly brief sessions, occurring the next two days, all fiscal bills were approved, nearly unanimously, which provided the pecuniary support needed by the imperial government until the next diet. In its last session, the diet consented to a military appropriation bill which called for the mustering and
equipping of a contingent, 50,000 strong, to join with the forces of Hungary against the invading Turks. By an ironical twist of fate, the German-armed assistance to Hungary, for which Ferdinand had exerted so much toil and energy, was never to reach its destination. As the time arrived for that imperial contingent to commence a long eastward march for eventual deployment in Hungary, it was no longer needed.

Having given due consideration to all outstanding issues on its agenda and following the German regent's concluding address, the diet finally adjourned on the last day in August. The exodus of the estates from the city of Speyer, if contrasted with their ostentatious entrance, was rapid and unceremonious. Everyone was anxious to go home. By the first week in September, Ferdinand had reached the more amicable atmosphere of his Austrian hereditary lands in Innsbruck. Here, in more relaxed conditions, he found time to assess retrospectively his actions at the Diet of Speyer which he shared with his imperial brother in his letters to him.

The German regent writes that it was a sagacious and politically realistic move to postpone the enforcement of the Edict of Worms in the empire for the purpose of effecting temporary reconciliation between the Lutherans and Catholic factions. Looked at as a political instrument, the Edict should never be abandoned or repealed entirely. On the contrary, Charles should personally enforce it, following a
victorious conclusion to the renewed Habsburg-Valois hostilities, for he could extract great sums, in the form of penal fees, from the ranks of German Lutherans. While the Speyer recess and its corollary suspension of the Edict of Worms could conceivably engender further spread of the Evangelical sect, suggests Ferdinand, it would be ultimately beneficial to the Habsburg cause in the empire. During that span of religious permissiveness, each and every German subject would have to make his choice, more conclusively than ever before, between the tenets of religious orthodoxy and religious innovation, and bear overtly the mark of his preference. This process of forcing the choice would separate and identify their enemies from those who chose to remain spiritually and politically loyal to the Habsburg precepts for the empire.25

It was also here in Innsbruck that Ferdinand received on September 11 appalling news of the Hungarian catastrophe. Princess Mary, his sister and wife of King Louis II of Hungary and Bohemia, notified him about the military setback the Hungarians had suffered at the hands of the overwhelming hordes of Sultan Suleiman.26 The decisive battle itself was fought on August 29 -- ironically, on the same day when the Diet of Speyer considered and approved a military appropriation bill for the aid of Hungary -- at the outskirts of a small and insignificant town, Mohács, which is situated slightly more than one hundred miles south of Hungary's
capital.

Hungary, long since smarting under the tyranny of a corrupt aristocratic oligarchy and destitute of financial means, arms, and all other requisites for war, proved to be incapable of arresting the Turkish western campaign of 1526. After prolonged delays and surrounded by treasonous or cowardly nobles, the youthful and inexperienced Louis II (barely twenty and without issue) reluctantly raised an army of 25,000 and marched out with mad heroism to face an enemy many times his superior in every way. In the encounter that followed, the Hungarians were slaughtered almost to a man, and Louis himself met death while fleeing from the scene with a few of his retainers by drowning in a nearby stream which had overflowed its banks because of the frequent August rains.

The demise of the heirless Louis II meant the termination of the reign in both Hungary and Bohemia of the Polish-Lithuanian Jagiellons whose cadet branch had ruled in union both nations since 1490 and thereby made heirless as well both Hungary and Bohemia -- those gigantic, disorganized, and ethnically disunited Central European lands which were henceforth destined to fall by dynastic right either to Poland or by nuptial contract to the Habsburgs.

This unexpected event in 1526 provided Ferdinand with the fortunate opportunity to fulfill the lifetime ambition of his paternal grandfather, Emperor Maximilian I -- to unify the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia under the auspices
of his dynasty. On the strength of his grandfather's po-
litical settlement of the succession in these two nations
and the rights of his wife Anne who was the sister and the
sole heir to the political legacy of the late Louis II,
Ferdinand claimed and eventually obtained, but not without
a friction-filled struggle, the thrones of these nations.
With such personal advantages to serve as a basis for ter-
ritorial expansion of his Austrian holdings, Ferdinand was
to become, after the emperor, the most prestigious and poli-
tically powerful figure in the empire, already the archduke
of his house's vast Austrian possessions and eventually to
be monarch of two nations, the Bohemian part of which would
entitle him to claim electoral rights and privileges in the
empire -- claims which no German territorial prince could
ever have made. This was the most auspicious hour of his
entire regency.

In summing up the political events in the empire during
the eighteen months from the outbreak of the Peasants' War
in late 1524 to the conclusion of the Diet of Speyer in
August of 1526, two major trends seem to take firm root:
the political fragmentation of the empire, now an accelerated
pace, into two mutually-hostile camps split along religious
lines; and the inability of the Habsburgs to capitalize on
their military gains to advance their own political and
religious objectives either in the empire or elsewhere in
Europe.
The exceptional harshness in spirit and action of the German peasants in insurrection, which threatened to con­vulse the very foundations of the empire, brought together out of necessity several German territorial lords of both orthodox and pro-Lutheran orientation who formed an armed confederation and whose cooperative efforts soon brought the wave of domestic chaos to an end. As the insurrectionary cloud dispersed, a narrow-minded political ambition among the more orthodox members drove a wedge of mutual distrust into the ranks of these princes and polarized them into antagonistic factions.

That splendid military victory scored by the imperial­istic arms at Pavia and which knocked France to her knees was never destined to bring fruitful political results to the Habsburgs. The excessive claims demanded in reparation from a prostrate France by the vainglorious victor, which were to serve as stepping stones to a global hegemony, aroused a large number of lesser European protentates -- chiefly of Italy and including the papacy -- to support instinctively the weaker side to preserve the balance. The outcome was an anti-Habsburg alliance, determined and ready to block any further territorial aggrandisement of that dynasty in Europe.

Nor were the Habsburgs able, following the conclusion of hostilities with France in early 1525, to reap substan­tial benefits from the temporary discontinuance of military
pressure on their dynasty even in Germany. Here their aim was to end the religious schism on the basis of a unilateral solution by executing the Edict of Worms of 1521. With such designs in mind, the emperor convoked the German estates to a diet to meet by October of 1525; on account of the still widespread and paralyzing effects of Germany's recent internal breakdown, it could not actually convene until mid-1526 at Speyer.

The emperor's repeated demands for the execution of his Edict, thereby hoping to construct a line of defense around religious orthodoxy, proved to be unenforcible. Before the diet had actually begun its deliberations, tidings about the alteration in European power politics reached the ears of each participant. Western Europe, alarmed at the ambitions of the emperor, had become a confederation against him. Therefore, he could not enforce the Edict of Worms for fear of offending the Lutheran princes on whom he was compelled to rely when sensing the shadow of the new anti-Habsburg alliance. And he could not repeal it for fear of alienating from him that majority still adhering to religious orthodoxy. He, consequently, devised a middle path which would navigate him through his difficulties and which would yield a bare minimum in concessions to his political adversaries.

Apart from this dilemma which confronted his imperial brother, Ferdinand himself soon realized that yielding to Protestant demands at the Diet of Speyer was unavoidable,
for the Protestant estates, determined to wreck the Edict of Worms of 1521, cleverly kept the religious problem on the agenda and by so doing procrastinated all deliberations on other major issues. A voluntary but temporary withdrawal of certain leading Protestant members from the diet before its official termination precipitated the Habsburg-supporting majority into capitulation.

Its immediate result was a recess which decreed that till a general council should assemble, the question of religion as well as the enforcement of the Edict of Worms against Luther and his followers would be an open one, and every territorial unit in the empire would be at liberty to act as it judged right. The remote result of the majority's capitulation was that this recess would be construed with an interpretation so elastic that during a subsequent period of three calm years -- from 1526 to 1529 -- it could only advance a spirit of religious liberty and promote a secular jurisdiction over religious matters previously under sacerdotal sway. The ground was being cleared for the construction of a new spiritual temple.

The other major event of 1526 began in agony for the imperial family but later was destined to gild with new riches the mansion of the Habsburgs. In late August, the armies of Suleiman the Magnificent, advancing from Belgrade, routed the Hungarian forces on the plain of Mohács. The victorious Turks then occupied virtually all Hungary and
steadied themselves for the next move against the Austrian Habsburg holdings. Here were the outlines of dark tragedy.

The young and childless Louis II also perished at Mohács, and his death made him the last of the Jagiellonian kings of Hungary and Bohemia and opened far-reaching prospects for the Habsburgs who could now seek to realize their claims to these territories. Thus, Ferdinand became through his wife the rightful heir to the thrones of both these nations. This stretching eastward of the wing of the Habsburg eagle, to be personified in Ferdinand, would carry that eagle into a dawn promising great personal gain and prestige but simultaneously so enmesh that eagle in the complexity of affairs in the East that they could only be pecked at while ignoring those transpiring in the West.
The few weeks that pressed in on Ferdinand after his reception of the news pertaining to the Hungarian military fiasco at Mohács were weighted with perilous forebodings. Not only had he in his rear a revengeful France and England, a religiously divided Germany, and a politically explosive Italy where hostilities threatened to break out any moment but he also had to live with the possibility of a Turkish invasion into his Austrian territories as the baneful shadow of the Prophet had fallen on Hungary.

Only 25,000 men, representing but a scant segment of Hungary's men-at-arms, perished at Mohács, but the domestic disorder rampant in the nation prior to Louis II's death was now accentuated. Divisive factionalism spread into the remaining ranks of the army and its leaders, viewing resistance against the Asiatic invaders as an utterly hopeless cause, embarked upon a course of debilitating defeatism. In such circumstances, Suleiman was able to press forward to Buda, the capital city of Hungary, encountering virtually no opposition on his way. Consequently, on September 11,
his forces entered in triumph a Buda which had been left defenseless, a city which the widowed Queen Mary had previously evacuated when she moved the seat of royal government to Pressburg. Pressburg was a town at the very western fringes of Hungary, only a few hours' riding-distance from Vienna. With the occupation of Buda, the road was open to the Austrian capital whose citizens awaited the approach of the Turks with trembling.

Again that streak of good fortune which had so frequently blessed the Habsburgs in the past came to Ferdinand's rescue. On September 25, following his two-week halt in Buda, Suleiman ordered a full-scale retreat to Constantinople. Electing the pleasant waterway offered by the Danube, he and his general staff departed that day while his armies, in endless caravans and booty-laden, began treading in a southeasternly direction, reaching the Turkish outposts in the lower Danubian region by October 9. Thus, after a six-week Turkish interlude, Hungary was again set free. The tidings of the unforeseen Turkish withdrawal from Hungary must have evoked no small amount of elation in Christendom; Ferdinand, too, must have been greatly relieved, for he assuredly expected Suleiman and his horde to while away the winter of 1526 at Buda and launch a massive attack against his Austrian patrimony the following spring.

During these fateful weeks when Ferdinand agonized over the Turkish military operations in Hungary, he remained at
Innsbruck. At this time, he and the members of his imperial government were engulfed by the chore of mustering, in both Austria and Germany, an army which was to be deployed in the renewed Habsburg-Valois conflict in Italy. Unlike his previous essay in recruitment in 1523 when he met with only moderate results, he and his subordinates this time saw their efforts crowned with remarkable success. On October 28, Ferdinand informed the emperor that a contingent of 10,000 men had been dispatched to Lombardy on that day. Out of this impressive figure, 8,000 had been raised in Germany and were now to serve as infantry while the remaining 2,000, of Austrian origin, were to be utilized as cavalry. In addition to this formidable manpower, Ferdinand also mentioned that he had collected and was directly sending to Charles 100,000 ducats as a token of his personal contribution to their dynasty's cause. Simultaneously, he excused himself for not assuming the command of these troops in person as any lengthy absence from either Germany or Central Europe might prove detrimental to Habsburg interests; instead, he assigned the captaincy to George von Frundsberg, a stalwart veteran warrior with an impressive record in the Habsburg service and who had already substantiated his worthiness by assisting effectively in the recruitment procedures.

Before proceeding with this historical narrative, a brief pause is in order for the purpose of analyzing both
the circumstances and the incredibly positive results of the 1526 Habsburg recruitment effort in the German-speaking areas. First of all, the men entering the imperial colors were mercenaries raised at Ferdinand's expense from funds which came from revenues levied in his hereditary lands, explicitly in both Austria and Württemberg; the same holds true for his monetary contributions as well. In considering the nature of the threat to which Ferdinand's Austrian lands were exposed in the early autumn of 1526, it does not appear logical that he would have toiled so altruistically and incurred such financial sacrifice for his brother's risky enterprises in Italy. Since the actual departure date of these troops and the release of fiscal assistance demonstrably followed the Turkish recoil from Hungary, it can be safely assumed that Ferdinand would have retained and deployed these resources to his own advantage if Suleiman had chosen to continue westward in his 1526 campaign.

Ferdinand caused the Germans and Austrians to rally with numerical superiority and swiftness to the Habsburg eagle. In the case of the Germans, this may be explained by the political tranquillity which the religiously liberal tone of the Speyer Recess of 1526 set afoot domestically in the empire. The motives of the Austrians are quickly understood when it is recalled that the Turkish menace supplied ammunition for their imaginations. Not even Ferdinand's appointment of George von Frundsberg could dampen the
enthusiasm of some German mercenaries to serve their emperor or make them regret their enlistment, though they agonized over the fact that their military commander would be a Protestant. And Frundsberg's appointment poignantly dramatized the fact that one could serve his supreme secular master politically without embracing that master's religious orientation.

During the Turkish occupation of Hungary and to a far greater degree after its cessation, Ferdinand was busy dreaming about how he would acquire the thrones of Hungary and Bohemia. Insufficiently experienced in diplomacy and the art of subtle negotiation on the heights of international summits, and hampered by his unfamiliarity with the historical and constitutional developments of these nations, he sought the counsel of his more sophisticated brother. Charles, as on many occasions in the past, proved to be no help at all. His advice was not only superfluous but also belated as it arrived in epistolary form in mid-November of 1526, by which time the crown of Bohemia had already been secured. He cannot, Charles states, as a Holy Roman Emperor of the German Nation under whose nominal jurisdiction Bohemia is demarcated as a fief and member of the empire, invest Ferdinand, or anyone else for that matter, with its throne, for such action would be in contradiction to the constitutional tradition of that nation. Ferdinand, of course, knew his brother could not by investiture raise him to the
Bohemian kingship and wanted suggestions on how to get around this barrier. His brother replied by telling him what he already knew and answering a question he had never raised.

Help came, however, from an unexpected source, from Archduchess Margaret, Regent of the Low Countries, paternal aunt of both Charles and Ferdinand, and at whose brilliant Brussels court the latter had spent three pleasant years in his teens. This remarkable woman already displayed -- and continued to do so until her death in 1530 -- an extraordinary talent for statesmanship and political agility, tempered by a sense for moderation that has invariably won her greater encomiums from Reformation scholars than those accorded to either Ferdinand or Charles.\(^5\)

The first step in Ferdinand's quest for the vacant thrones of Hungary and Bohemia, as Margaret states in her preserved letter, is to secure a truce with the Porte or Ottoman government since the permanent elimination of Turkish political interest in Central Europe is the mandatory prerequisite for Habsburg expansion into that area. Although Bohemia and Hungary are politically united with each other in a personal union hitherto provided by the Jagiellonian dynasty, the acquisition of their crowns should not be viewed as a joint enterprise under a single heading but two separate ones, for their short-lived co-existence is more a result of historical necessity than from choice. Both of
these nations possess a cherished record of an independent national past, with customs and a constitutional framework which should be respected by Ferdinand. Bohemia, whose soil has seen the firm entrenchment of the German imperial tradition, should be tackled first, for when faced with two uncertain objects in life, the one that appears to be a bit more certain is to have priority. Ferdinand's negotiators, who should address themselves to the national diets instead of seeking the assistance of influential nobles, should be mainly of Austrian and German background, for Spanish diplomats -- she asseverates with a slightly derisive undertone -- are not welcomed in that part of the world. With the exception of her proposal pertaining to an immediate truce with the Turks, Ferdinand followed the course outlined by his aunt and his steadfast adherence to these principles rewarded him with ultimate victory.

Some time late in September, Ferdinand appointed a team of diplomats for the initiation of negotiations with the Bohemian estates in Prague, and he himself moved from Innsbruck to Vienna to be closer to the scene. His delegates, headed by two members of the Austrian nobility -- Sigismund von Dietrichstein and Hans von Starhemberg -- were, if taken one by one, of exceptional caliber with lengthy experience in Habsburg statecraft. They soon proved that the confidence invested in them was not misplaced. No sooner had the negotiations got under way in Prague than it became apparent
that Ferdinand's claim to the Bohemian throne on the basis of his hereditary rights -- the fact that he was married to Anne who through the death of her brother, Louis, became the sole survivor of her dynasty -- would be shipwrecked by the obstinancy of the estates whose traditional privilege of electing the monarch was not to be slighted and presently became their paramount concern. Ferdinand, at this vitally important junction, was prudent enough to abandon his efforts to claim the Bohemian throne by his hereditary rights and agree to abide by the principle of elective kingship. As a mere candidate, he had his name submitted to the estates who now began to gather for a national diet. He also must have clandestinely given, at this particular moment, his promise to recognize and accept, in case of his election, a set of requests, now demanded by the estates and yet without statutory force, which were designed to set certain limitations on his monarchical power.

Since the accession to the throne of Bohemia was now to be accomplished through a free election by members of its national diet, many rival candidates came forward. From the ranks of the German princes, Elector John of Saxony and the Margrave of Brandenburg indicated an interest for their eldest sons; from the European crownheads, Sigismund of Poland and Francis I of France submitted their bids. The most serious efforts, however, were exerted by two Bavarian Wittelsbach princes, Dukes William and Louis, who viewed the
possibility of Habsburg acquisition of the Bohemian throne as a direct threat to and an infringement upon the quasi-political independence of the territory under their sway. Count Weissenfelder, their ambassador to Prague, was instructed to spend lavish sums in bribing politically influential nobles and make known the Wittelsbach willingness to assume financial responsibility for that vast national debt which the Jagiellonians had allowed to accumulate in the past. In spite of this hefty Bavarian involvement in the Bohemian succession, Ferdinand's negotiators had the upper hand. Much to the surprise of the candidates and many observers as well, the Bohemian diet unanimously elected Ferdinand to the throne of their nation on October 23, 1526.

By choosing Ferdinand from the list of other contestants, the Bohemian estates, undoubtedly, acted sagaciously. Had they elected the King of Poland, they would have restored the inept Jagiellonians, which they were anxious to avoid; the King of France, despite his prominence, prestige, and power among European rulers, soon would have reduced their country to a mere battlefield between Habsburg and Valois interests; none of the competing German princes, including the Wittelbachs, would have possessed the fiscal means necessary for the unraveling of Bohemia's financial jumble or commanded sufficient military resources in case of a national emergency. Ferdinand, in contrast to the other aspirants, had access to substantial human and material
reserves in his hereditary lands and, if needed, even those of his dynasty, and so he emerged as the logical person capable of rallying and politically uniting Central Europe -- from the middle waters of the Oder to the Danube -- against the menace of Islam.

The election of a Habsburg to the throne of Bohemia provoked a festering resentment among the claimants. But none were so bitterly disappointed as the Wittelsbach dukes who now determined to prevent, at all cost, Ferdinand's forthcoming coronation in Prague. Documentary evidence unmistakably reveals a whole series of secret negotiations between Munich and Paris, via Switzerland, which soon resulted in the establishment of a Franco-Bavarian alliance. The Wittelsbachs were to assault Ferdinand to terminate the Habsburg interest in Bohemia provided the French and their Italian allies could first inflict a major military setback upon the emperor in Italy.\footnote{10} Since neither the French nor their confederates succeeded in the ensuing months in alternating the political status quo in Italy in their favor, the Franco-Bavarian aspirations were aborted and never transcended the bounds of wishful speculation.\footnote{11} Accordingly, on February 27, 1527, the anniversary of the Battle of Pavia and the birthday of the emperor, Ferdinand was crowned King of Bohemia in Prague's St. Vitus Cathedral, a fourteenth-century ecclesiastical monument attesting to those bygone days when that city was the seat of the empire. With this
act the Habsburg quest for the crown of Bohemia was completed and the long-cherished political dreams of Emperor Maximilian I partially fulfilled.

The acquisition of the crown of Hungary, in contrast with that of Bohemia, proved to be a far more unwieldy task for Ferdinand. Ruled by various European dynasties since 1301, with this lengthy spell of foreign influence interrupted only once by a brilliant but brief reign of a native prince, there was for centuries a nationalistic party in Hungary whose mainstay lay in the gentry class, owners of medium-sized estates. The tragedy that befell the heirless Jagiellonian Louis II at the field of Mohács inflated the hopes of this element who now resolved to block the accession of another alien sovereign to the throne of Hungary and recapture the nation's crown for their own candidate. The man whom they chose and endorsed was John Zapolya, the first magnate in the land and Governor-General of Transylvania. He soon proved to be one of Ferdinand's most formidable enemies.

The Zapolyas possessed anything but a prestigious background. For centuries they were among the myriads of obscure gentry who populated the Hungarian countryside. The family's meteoric rise had begun a mere generation ago with Stephen Zapolya, John's father. Sensing at that time that public opinion would be overwhelmingly in favor of the candidacy of one Matthias Corvinus, a native prince who aspired
to the throne of Hungary in the 1450's, the elderly Zapolya was among the first to espouse Corvinus' cause and give him his unflinching support. Afterwards, he ably served the crownhead of his choice for slightly more than three decades; he was appointed commadant of Hungary's military forces, raised to titled nobility, and designated Lord Palatine of the nation; moreover, during his public career, he managed to amass an immense personal fortune; by the time of his death, he ranked as the largest landowner in Hungary and one of the foremost among those in contemporary Europe; he privately possessed several towns, 12,000 villages inhabited by countless numbers of serfs, and owned over seventy castles and other fortifications throughout the eastern part of Hungary. His daughter was married to Sigis- mund, the King of Poland, as European crownheads eagerly sought to establish ties with this upstart family. 12

The Jagiellonians who succeeded to the throne of Hungary, following the death of the heirless Matthias Corvinus in 1490, attempted to lessen within the bounds of law the Zapolya influence in the nation but they never succeeded in tarnishing their public image or diminishing their popularity. While John was bypassed for the Lord Palatine position which became vacant with his father's death, his successful opposition to and subsequent stamping out of a wide-spread peasants' revolt which seriously threatened the establishment in 1514 -- the forerunner of an equally severe domestic
disturbance which fell upon Germany a decade later and which
the inept Jagiellonians were unable to arrest -- led to
John's further popular enhancement. As the years went by,
it became clearly evident that he coveted for himself the
kingship of the nation. During the fateful August days of
1526 which witnessed the Turkish invasion of Hungary, John
Zapolya failed to join the royal forces at Mohács with his
powerful Transylvanian contingent; instead, he preferred
to stand by about 30 miles from the battle scene, purport­
edly awaiting instructions for action. Whether his lines of
communication with Louis II actually broke down or whether
he willfully allowed the young king to rush into certain
death remains unknown forever as historical scholarship has
not dispelled the uncertainty. It is a fact, however, that
Zapolya, informed about the king's demise, sent his agent to
the widowed Queen Mary requesting her hand for himself in
marriage.  

The unexpected withdrawal of the Ottoman hordes from
Hungary by early October, 1526, and Ferdinand's temporary
involvement in the affairs of Bohemia provided Zapolya with
the opportunity to have himself elected king. With such
purpose in mind, he convoked, on the 10th of November, a
nation diet at Stuhlweissenburg -- a city about 30 miles
in a southwesternly direction from Buda and frequently the
scene of coronations in the past -- where the delegates
elevated him, as John I, to the highest dignity of the
nation. Zapolya's Stuhlweissenburg election certainly did not command the approbation of the majority of Hungary's lawmakers; it was triggered overwhelmingly by the lesser nobility. Large segments of the titled nobility and the ecclesiastical dignitaries were absent from this gathering -- either unwilling to attend and sanction proceedings contrary to their wish or simply non-existent as many of them had perished at Mohács and their seats were still left vacant.

Faced by such adversaries in Hungary, Ferdinand was obliged to embark upon a carefully chosen course of action. Since he could not challenge, as in Bohemia, the national diet's prerogative to elect a king, his hereditary claims had to be abandoned. Acting through the agents of his sister Mary, his primary aim now was to build up a pro-Habsburg faction in Hungary which would be enticed by large sums of money and the distribution of promises. By mid-December, 1526, however, elements favoring Ferdinand's candidacy to the Hungarian throne had grown sufficiently numerous so that Queen Mary was able to justify a convocation of them at Pressburg (Zapolya, following his coronation, had established himself at Buda). Meeting there on the 16th and holding their session in a Franciscan monastery, Ferdinand's candidacy was unanimously accepted. His election, like that of his rival, was an unrepresentative one; it was by no means the result of a free election since Ferdinand's name was the only one submitted, and the
assembly making this decision lacked the attendance of those supporting Zapolya; Ferdinand himself was absent and the Bishop of Laibach acted as his proxy.

Having scored this nominal victory at Pressburg, Ferdinand now turned to Charles for advice. The emperor, however, had nothing but a few words of consolation for his brother's misfortunes in Hungary and by letter instructed him to keep peace with Zapolya, since their enemy, if hard-pressed, might be driven to seek assistance at Constantinople, an act which could be fatal to all Christianity. If Charles's concern for Christendom over a possible Ottoman-Zapolya alliance may be dismissed as diplomatic rhetoric, not to be doubted is Charles's obvious aim to prevent his brother from engaging in the East in any enterprise that may drain resources from their hereditary lands and the empire at a time when the outcome of the Habsburg campaign in Italy is far from certain.

Rebuffed but undaunted by the imperial directives, Ferdinand now resolved to follow a peaceful course of action, through which he hoped to settle his claim to Hungary's throne. In order to effect a firmer Habsburg footing there, he appointed his widowed sister Mary, in early January, 1527, the Regent of Hungary, with plenipotentiary power and full control of the crown's properties and other financial resources. Feeling that his kingship of Bohemia ranked him as a coequal with other European monarchs, Ferdinand now decided to seek justice for his cause on an international
level. At first, he turned to London for assistance and dispatched a mission there in early 1527 headed by his trusted Spanish diplomat and advisor, Count Gabriel Salamanca. All efforts at the court of Henry VIII brought only negative results. Later, by March, Ferdinand accepted the good offices of Sigismund, King of Poland, who showed a willingness to head a non-partisan commission entrusted to investigate the legality of his and Zapolya's claims to the throne of Hungary.16 These negotiations, conducted in the Bohemian town of Olmütz, led to nothing substantial.

Ferdinand's readiness to submit his Hungarian claim to the judgment of foreign powers is indicative, at least apparently, of a resigned backstepping in his purposes, and his selection of arbitrators was tantamount to gross political shortsightedness. How could he possibly have expected adjudications favorable to his cause from a Tudor monarch who, as titular head of the League of Cognac was his brother's untiring enemy, or from a commission presided over by his opponent's brother-in-law? This political pas de faux, if analyzed in the light of subsequent events, amounted to nothing but precalculated dilatory tactics. Writing to his sister Mary in the spring of 1527 while negotiations were still dragging on indefinitely and unfavorably for him in Olmütz, Ferdinand, for the first time, revealed what long ought to have been evident to him -- that it was only through arms, through direct military intervention that he
could dislodge his rival from Hungary.\footnote{17}

Mary, however, was of the opinion that her brother, instead of launching an offensive against Zapolya, should continue releasing funds to her disposal which she then could use to boost the pro-Habsburg faction, still a political minority in Hungary.\footnote{18} Seemingly, there was no way out of this embarrassing situation for Ferdinand. In late May, however, he received encouraging news about events occurring elsewhere which persuaded him -- in spite of Charles's explicit instructions and Mary's advice -- to reaffirm his plans of aggression. The news came from Italy.

The contingent of 10,000 men Ferdinand had dispatched to Italy under Frundsberg in October, 1526, was soon joined in Lombardy by a much smaller but equally determined group of mercenaries serving with Constable Bourbon. After an initial series of minor and undecisive skirmishes with papal forces in the North, the imperial army pressed on, by the spring of 1527, to Rome itself. By-passing the heavily fortified Florence and Siena still loyal to the League of Cognac, the invading combatants reached, on the 5th of May, the walls of the Eternal City. Next morning, following a brief but bloody assault, the imperial troops found themselves the true masters of Rome. Clement VII and some of his cardinals fled to the Castle of St. Angelo which was then successfully besieged and the pontiff made a prisoner. Shortly thereafter, that disgraceful and much publicized
event -- Sacco di Roma -- occurred. Elevated to a frenzy by their triumph and unpaid and driven by hunger, these soldiers felt an emotional longing for plunder that resulted in an uncontrollable and devastating pillage of the city.¹⁹

Despite the fact that the tidings of this unabashed vandalism committed in Rome scandalized all Europe and put the emperor temporarily into an unfavorable light, the seizure of that city and the captivity of the pope were of the utmost strategical significance to the Habsburgs. The elimination of the Roman pontiff and the emasculation of his military resources entailed a virtual coup de grâce to the ambitions of the League of Cognac and enabled some of the Austro-German troops, facing no French challenge in Italy, to return to their homes. Thus the decisive victory scored by the imperial arms in distant Italy coupled with the availability of veteran mercenaries, eager and willing to serve anywhere, encouraged Ferdinand to show his fangs as he turned his face toward Hungary.

Immediate plans for the invasion of Hungary began to crystalize in his mind by early June. Leaving Prague for Vienna, he commenced to assemble troops in the Austrian capital, no doubt in utmost secrecy as his representatives still went on with the Olmütz negotiations. During the summer months of 1527, which were largely taken up with preparations, a correspondence with many salient features for the historian took place between the Habsburg princes. Charles,
keenly aware, probably through his informers, that his younger brother is hatching pugnacious schemes, repeatedly warns him to avoid any military action against his Hungarian opponent and cautions him to seek amicable solutions instead. Without denying or finding excuses for his designs, Ferdinand plainly spells out, in his reply to Charles, his conviction that force is the only means by which he can redress the humiliation he is made to suffer in Hungary. Ferdinand reminds the emperor again, but now for the last time, about his continued interest in securing the Duchy of Milan for himself, a project -- with the recent disloyalty of the Sforzas to the imperial cause and the convenient death of Constable Bourbon -- now appearing exceptionally propitious. This repeated theme of Ferdinand which murmured through the years of territorial aspiration in Italy took on a strident tone of absurdity in the light of his multifaceted embroilments in both Bohemia and Hungary.

By mid-summer of 1527, time for action in Hungary was near. In the last days of July, Ferdinand entered that country for the first time accompanied by an army of not fewer than 10,000 men. The troops, especially its officer corps, were all experienced veterans of the Habsburg-Valois wars. While retaining the nominal overlordship of the armies for himself, Ferdinand assigned the technical leadership either to German Catholic princes -- such as Duke George of Saxony in charge of the cavalry units -- or to hard-core
professionals like Johannes Katzianer and William Roggendorf who headed the infantry. In the last minutes prior to the invasion and while visiting his sister Mary at Pressburg, Ferdinand received news heralding the birth of his infant boy in Prague. His first child being a son assured him a succession for his line. The newly-born was to receive the baptismal name of Maximilian, in reverence to Ferdinand's paternal grandfather, and succeeded him eventually as Emperor Maximilian II.

The actual military phases of Ferdinand's Hungarian campaign of 1527 need not be detailed here. In less than a six-week period Zapolya's forces were utterly routed by the superior and better disciplined Austro-German arms. The last encounter between the contestants was fought out in northeastern Hungary in the vicinity of the town of Tokay -- center of a distinguished wine growing district -- and proved to be so disastrous for Ferdinand's opponent that he barely managed to save his own life by crossing the border into Poland to seek refuge at his brother-in-law's court.

The victorious outcome of his military operations in Hungary provided Ferdinand the opportunity for reaping the benefits one would expect such an outcome to bring. In a self-assured manner, he convoked at Buda a national diet on October 6, 1527, which in full attendance unanimously and unsurprisingly confirmed his previous Pressburg election. Then escorted by an impressive armed retinue of 3,000, he
proceeded to Stuhlweissenburg, and there on November 3, he and his spouse Anne were invested, in a solemn ceremony, with the crown of St. Stephen. And so a hazardous mission came to its conclusion.

The fourteen-month period in Ferdinand's career transpiring between the conclusion of the Diet of Speyer of 1526 and the attainment of his Hungarian kingship found him exclusively absorbed with the affairs of Central Europe. Following tactical blueprints contrived by his aunt Margaret, benefiting from the centuries-long tradition of Habsburg statecraft, and assisted by his own obstinacy and persistence, he succeeded in this period of time in acquiring the thrones of both Bohemia and Hungary left vacant by the tragic death of his brother-in-law on the field of Mohács. It was not only the Habsburg nimbus surrounding him and the vast resources his dynasty commanded that singled him out over many others as the most eligible candidate for the crown of Bohemia. His political acumen and sense of statesmanship helped him to realize the necessity of de-emphasizing his hereditary claims while showing willingness to abide by the elective principle of kingship. Finally, he was ever ready to make bold concessions, to grant far-reaching privileges, and to respect the laws and ancient customs of his prospective subjects. All these virtues when combined were to reward him accordingly.

Encountering a far more difficult situation in Hungary
than in Bohemia, Ferdinand at first strove to counteract and neutralize his rival claimant's accomplishments by trailing in his footsteps or, in other words, imitating Zapolya procedurally by employing the same devices of faction-building and election by rump referendum. Later, he attempted to discredit abroad the legality of the claims maintained by his opponent and submitted his case to a non-partisan commission for arbitration. When it became overwhelmingly evident that these verbal battles were leading absolutely nowhere, he decided to let his cannon speak in lieu of friendly persuasion for he had long observed the Machiavellian tactics of his contemporaries. He prepared for war while still demonstrating his peaceful intentions. Then, with a swift and carefully-calculated campaign, he punctured the royal pretensions of his archenemy and, with that, accomplished his second objective in Central Europe.

Since the preparation for and launching of Ferdinand's military assault on Hungary evoked the emperor's objections, the fact that they were carried out against the tide of imperial opposition is of weighty significance for it unveiled in Ferdinand a growing power for self-determination and the will to pursue an independent course of action even when such action might appear contradictory to Charles's immediate interest. At the same time Ferdinand maintained a remarkable resiliency. Even while surrounded and plagued by his numerous engagements in Central Europe, he readily
came to his brother's assistance, bearing enormous sacrifices to ward off the challenge levied against their dynasty.

Ferdinand's prudent policies that rewarded him with the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary led to two ponderous historical consequences. In the latter kingdom his accomplishments appear to be of fleeting consequences, for his opponent, under the protective wings of Constantinople, soon re-emerged and caused further difficulties for him. And for the next century and a half the Turks were destined to be the undisputed political masters of central and eastern Hungary. However, Ferdinand's control of that country's western section and his command of the loyalty of its inhabitants enabled him (and his successors as well) to develop these geographical and human resources into a sixteenth-century cordon sanitaire, into a massive and hardly pregnable shield against the onslaught of Asiatic hordes. In that sense, Ferdinand was destined to fulfill a vitally important historical mission, for he, and not his intriguing fellow-rulers, would become, paradoxically, the real defender of Christendom.

Lastly, with his acquisition of the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary, Ferdinand should be regarded as the true founder of what later came to be known as the Habsburg Monarchy, that long-lasting supranational state which succeeded in forging together a diversified people and providing them with political stability and economic prosperity and whose
demise in 1918 is still regretted by many who lost these valuable adjuncts to civilization when this Monarchy entered upon its final dissolution in these lands bordering the Moldau and Danube.
CHAPTER VI
YEARS OF CATHOLIC REACTION: 1526-1529

Although the acquisition of the crown of Hungary by late 1527 seemingly satisfied Ferdinand's Central European ambition, he was hardly free to concern himself from that time on with the affairs of the empire. His new responsibilities as king of Bohemia and Hungary gradually alienated him from and limited considerably his field of action in Germany. In fact, between the two diets of Speyer or from the fall of 1526 to the spring of 1529 -- almost a three-year period -- he did not set his foot on German soil. In the interim, alternating his residences between Buda and Prague and frequently finding himself in Vienna, he toiled hard to strengthen his grasp on his eastern realms and attempted to remedy the chaotic conditions the Jagiellonians had left behind. His aim was to centralize the governments, introduce new institutions, and enact, in both of these two nations, new measures which were based on models already proved to be workable in his Austrian patrimony. His efforts in this direction seldom found corporate expression. The constant threat of renewed Turkish invasion
forced him to place far greater emphasis on military matters so that Central Europe could offer a strong martial resistance against this Turkish harassment.

If scrutinized in an ad hoc fashion, this period of time in the empire appears to convey a façade of internal tranquillity and inactivity in foreign matters. There were no civil wars or any devastating socio-economic upheavals to mar Germany's domestic scene, and the second phase of conflict between the Habsburgs and the Valois in Italy -- which broke out, progressed, and was almost concluded in this span of time -- left few marks on Germany as she was neither taxed nor compelled to participate in the hostilities. Yet the outcome of this dynastic struggle in Italy, mingled with the repercussion of events transpiring internally in the empire, were destined to activate one of history's chain reactions that substantially influenced the direction of future political and confessional developments in Germany.

Happily for the Reformation, the respite afforded by the religiously liberal tone of the 1526 Speyer Recess enabled the Lutheran sovereigns and urban magistrates of the empire -- who viewed this constitutional enactment as a legalization of confessional heterodoxy -- to extend materially the movement elsewhere and to consolidate it within the territories under their immediate jurisdictions. This three-year period in German history, therefore, vividly testifies to a large-scale disintegration of corpus Christianum.
through further vigorous spread of the new doctrines into areas hitherto untouched by them and through the establishment of territorial churches based on Reformation principles. This bold departure from ecclesiastical uniformity, however startling it may appear, actually reaffirmed an already deeply-grounded and dominant political tendency in the empire -- the assertion of the right of secular authorities to utilize their power as omnipotent delegates of their sovereign people, not only in worldly matters but also within the spiritual realm.

It already has been demonstrated previously in this study how the tenets of the new doctrines, stretching beyond their native soil of Saxony, branched into some of the neighboring territorial states and imperial cities, eventually enlisting the protective support of new sovereigns and political authorities. The pattern which the 1526 Speyer Recess set into motion caused an acceleration of this process. Whole provinces of the empire now forsook confessional orthodoxy. By 1529, or certainly by 1530, Silesia, East Friesland, Schleswig-Holstein, and Pomerania went over, almost unanimously, to the Lutheran camp. While this phenomenal growth was most prevalent in the northern and northeastern sections of Germany which were outside the limes of the ancient Roman Empire and hence not influenced strongly by her Latin inheritance, the southern and western areas nevertheless could not totally escape the ubiquitous impact of
the new faith when a score of larger cities there became professedly Lutheran.¹

Credit for this gigantic enterprise, for the winning of more than half of Germany to the tenets of Evangelicalism, should not be attributed solely to the dynamic force of Luther's personality. It was due also in part to the efforts of such zealous Lutheran propagandists as Johannes Bugenhagen and Johannes Agricola and a policy of secularization, a necessary corollary of the Reformation, which transferred to the territorial sovereigns much ecclesiastical property. This opportunity for economic gain helps to explain the readiness with which petty suzerains, in many cases, professed adherence to the new Gospel.

The rapid expansion of the Evangelical faith and the swelling hordes of new adherents clearly necessitated the organization of territorial churches. Luther himself saw this objective when the first Diet of Speyer recognized the right of the Evangelical princes to act upon religious matters in their territories according to their conscience. It was natural that Luther, in November of 1526, would beseech Elector John, as head of the state, to initiate measures to this end in the Saxon electorate. In his plea, the Wittenberg reformer graphically outlined the miserable state of public worship and education into which Saxony had sunk as a result of the disestablishment of the orthodox system. Almost everyone, he pointed out, lacked a sense of
responsibility for living in accordance with the Gospel, and each one was disposed to follow his own creed or sect. Hence came the necessity for the prince to take upon himself the lapsed ecclesiastical functions of the bishop, for he, as possessor of the supreme power of the state, must use his authority in the interest of the Lutheran Church.²

In response Elector John appointed a committee of four visitors -- two of his councillors and two Wittenberg theologians -- to examine the religious and moral affairs of the electorate, and he himself drew up an "Instruction and Command" syllabus for their guidance through which he hoped to establish a policy of pastoral visitation as a state instrument for the control of ecclesiastical matters. In accordance with his ordinance, the appointees carried out a preliminary inspection in the summer of 1527. Their investigation revealed a shocking state of disorder and demoralization among the congregations and underlined the necessity for a systematic organization of a Saxon Church. To this end and at the elector's request, Philip Melanchthon, Luther's university colleague and life-long collaborator, and a humanist scholar of international reputation, compiled a church ordinance, or Kirchenordnung, which was to serve as a practical blueprint for a constitutional Reformation. Melanchthon's directives emphasized the state's role in exercising episcopal authority as a temporary expedience until the work of Reformation and church organization was
completed. Since this study on Ferdinand can hardly attempt to discuss the organizational framework of the Evangelical Church or outline the general order of its public worship, it should be sufficient to say that the Lutheran Church emerged permanently with a consistorial constitution which invested the ecclesiastical government, under the supremacy of the Saxon elector, in a body of state officials called a consistory which was composed of theologians and jurists. Luther's goal of eventually abolishing the state's control of religion was not to be realized.

The Saxon method of church organization was soon adopted and pursued with slight modifications by other German sovereigns and urban magistrates. Certain cities in the southern and southwestern parts of the empire and geographically near Switzerland -- Augsburg, Strassburg, Constance, and Lindau, for example -- worked out their own virtually autonomous church systems in alliance with the state and molded them into more democratic institutions than those achieved by the Saxons. This unwillingness to follow the Saxon method of church organization poignantly dramatized, to a large extent, the inherent weakness of a Reformation whose energies radiated out in all directions rather than spread uniformly.

So it was that the Reformation, diffusing itself from Wittenberg and gaining a prodigious number of footholds in
the empire, fragmentized itself. Perhaps it could not do otherwise with its principles of private judgment and supremacy of conscience. These principles soon led to a dispute over the nature of the Sacrament of Eucharist and this sacramentarian controversy brought the reforming factions into collision. A symbolic interpretation of the Eucharist, opposed by Luther, seemed to gain ground among reformers in southwestern towns of Germany, along the upper course of the Rhine, and in the Swiss cantons as well. The foremost among these Wittenberg deviants were Martin Butzer and Wolfgang Capito, both active in Strassburg, and Johannes Oecolampadius and Ulrich Zwingli in Basel and Zurich respectively. In the development of theological differences between Wittenberg and Zurich, the latter became an ideological center for one side of this dispute and by 1527 provoked some vehement polemics between Luther and Zwingli whose inability to work out a reconciliation with respect to their divergent convictions seriously weakened the prospects of those prepared to carry the Reformation still further through the empire.4

Between 1527 and 1529, it became increasingly apparent that the Reformation movement was to be boxed in by further limitations. The Swiss Reformation intended to follow its own course and additional proliferations were in order. The next group to renounce the Lutheran doctrinal stand were the Anabaptists whose forerunners had already emerged in a haphazard fashion during the German Peasants' War. Now they
reappeared in large numbers in the Swiss cantons and their subsequent persecution there by the Zwinglians caused them to seek refuge within the empire. With their denial of infant baptism, their questioning of certain fundamental Christian doctrines, and their striving for complete separation between church and state, they were destined to be oppressed and martyred with hysterical persistence by the civil authorities as well as by Catholic and Reformation churches in the empire.

The victorious march of the new doctrines and their consolidation through the organizing of separate territorial churches in Germany, Switzerland, and the Scandinavian countries must have considerably worried the absentee Ferdinand. He saw the loss of virtually all of northern Germany and heavy Reformation inroads into its southern parts which were thought to be securely sealed off by the articles of the Ratisbon Union. He saw with alarm its penetration into his hereditary Austrian lands and his newly-acquired kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary. Yet the constitutional limitations inherent in his position as regent of the empire automatically cancelled any thought of counteraction he might have wished to take there.

In the numerous letters he authored to the emperor during the ascendancy of religious heterodoxy, no one reflected his viewpoint and stand on the confessional issue better than the one dating from the latter part of May, 1527,
composed after the news of the Sack of Rome had reached him. In it, Ferdinand rigidly upholds his moderate *idée fixe* as he repeatedly asserts that only Charles, as the leading secular prince of Christendom, can conclusively solve the German theological conflict. He urges the emperor to utilize their dynasty's presently advantageous position *vis-à-vis* the Papacy by coercing Clement VII to convolve a general church council which, if held on German soil and presided over personally by Charles, offers the only hope of restoring religious unity. The closing of hostilities in Italy, Ferdinand shrewdly adds, would enormously expedite this project.  

While he could not constitutionally challenge the expansion of the new doctrines in Germany, Ferdinand could and did take a strong stand against them in his Central European realms. Though the influx of Lutheran doctrines between 1526 and 1529 found a fertile ground in Habsburg Central Europe, combatting it was not Ferdinand's paramount objective, for the numerical increase of the new converts was far too small to justify the establishment of a territorial church, and its members -- invariably from the ranks of the affluent commercial classes and provincial aristocracy and in control of the financial assets of their respective countries -- could not be offended at a time when he still had to reckon with renewed Turkish offensives. Instead, his ire was primarily directed against those religious
dissidents who either held to a divergent belief concerning the Eucharist, like the Zwinglian reformers, or against those separatists collectively designated as Anabaptists, who by defecting from the major course of the Reformation sought to organize their own heavenly city on highly radical confessional and socio-economic programs for their age. Because the importation of Zwinglian tenets, at least in this particular three-year period, was unfavorably received in Ferdinand's crownlands and because the full-scale persecution of the Anabaptists by the reformed Swiss authorities throughout 1526 and early 1527 resulted in their exodus from the Helvetic cantons and settling in small communities in Austria and Moravia, this dissident group was singled out as the prime target of his reaction.

The extent to which the Anabaptists multiplied in the Habsburg domains and the large amount of suppression Ferdinand felt was necessary is convincingly evinced by the fact that between 1526 and 1529 he issued no fewer than ten penal mandates against them. Though nine of these were of limited scope and only effective on provincial levels, the one he authored from the Hungarian capital Buda on August 20, 1527, was by far the most comprehensive and successful. In this particular confessional ordinance, Ferdinand orders all spiritual and secular authorities in Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary to carry out the provisions of the Edict of Worms. Though theoretically directed against all religious
innovators, as seen in the detailed ban on importing, printing, and selling of Lutheran devotional material, the mandate reveals an unmistakably lenient spirit toward the adherents of Evangelical doctrines, for it permits "honest clerics to discourse on the Word of God from authorities other than themselves." Ferdinand's failure to define what was meant by this created an intended theological loophole. Especially severe censure is levied, on the other hand, against those who still misuse the sacraments, hold property communally, and refuse to participate in government. Such offenders cannot be publicly employed, buy or sell property or merchandise, or even exercise their testamentary privileges and are subjected to capital punishment. Some effort is made, however, to differentiate among these recusants as the decree prescribes less severe penalties for those who are merely misled by erroneous teachings but not involved in their actual promulgation.  

It was under the provisions of Ferdinand's Buda mandate of 1527 that Balthasar Hubmaier, a former Evangelical preacher and early convert to Anabaptism, whose unwearied activity resulted in the increase of his followers in the Habsburg crownlands, went to his death when the Austrian authorities in Vienna seized and burned him at the stake there in March, 1528. With Hubmaier's elimination the whole Anabaptist cause began to wane, and when Charles, who was anxious to second his brother's efforts and extend its effects within
the empire, issued his mandate in January, 1528, the movement was doomed. Though some isolated Anabaptist communities situated in the remote countryside of Moravia escaped the concentrated fury of the authorities, their subsequent influence in Ferdinand's lands can be dismissed as negligible. Certain Anabaptist canons, especially those emphasizing ethics and inner experience, were not destined to oblivion. Their weight was felt in the eighteenth century when Anabaptism, now trimmed of some of its previous excesses, experienced a fruitful revivification under the auspices of German Pietism.

The swiftness, severity, and the ultimate effectiveness with which the Anabaptists were stamped out in the Habsburg lands and later in the empire should not be attributed, in all fairness, only to the overzealous efforts of Ferdinand and Charles and the Catholic authorities. Both the Lutheran and Zwinglian hierarchies likewise were implicated in rooting them out by the thousands.

It is of great interest to observe that even Ferdinand's own family was not immune to the impact of the Reformation. Mary, his sister and Regent of Hungary, was blessed with an open and inquisitive mind. Although sharing her brothers' disapproval of the pecuniary greed, political ambition, and outright worldliness of the Papacy, she did not share their steadfast orthodoxy in spiritual matters. In the period before and after the Habsburg invasion of Hungary, Mary
overtly flirted with Lutheranism at her Pressburg and Buda courts. She read some of Luther's devotional tracts, employed a large number of Germans in her services, and provided for their spiritual needs by keeping a paid Evangelical minister at her court whose sermons she frequently attended. She even staged and presided over a religious debate between her Lutheran court chaplain and an itinerant Anabaptist preacher on the merits of baptism and communion.

Ferdinand must have been aware of Mary's Lutheran sympathies for a long time, but when he heard of her participation in the confessional dialogue, his previously suppressed ire broke out into vehement protest which then inspired an exchange of several letters between him and his sister. This exchange is of lasting importance to the historian since it delineates Ferdinand's essentially conservative traits of character and shows the framework of a mind not bent to intellectual exploration.

In his initial letter to his sister Mary, Ferdinand bitterly chides her for the religiously lax atmosphere prevailing at her court. Her unconcealed mingling with and the employment of a German retinue infiltrated with Lutherans puts her brothers into an embarrassing situation and sets a bad example for those who are contemplating dissenting from the Catholic Church. She should severely punish the Anabaptist preacher and drive him out of Hungary, and dismiss her Lutheran court chaplain. Then he goes on to inquire
about Mary's religious orientation. Has she read some of Luther's heretical writings? Is she in agreement with some of the Wittenberg doctrines?  

Repyling to her brother in an unassuming manner, Mary admits to having read some of Luther's confessional expositions, especially those directed against the anti-sacramentarian position of the Zwinglians and Anabaptists. Furthermore, she acknowledges the receipt of a consolatory commentary based on four psalms written and sent to her by the Wittenberg reformer himself in commemoration of her husband's death. Complying with Ferdinand's request, she dismisses the Anabaptist preacher who no longer is in Hungary. Her reason for sanctioning the Lutheran-Anabaptist colloquy at her court was to expose the dangerous and heretical nature of the anti-sacramentarian position, which, in her opinion, is far more perilous than the Evangelical stand itself. She is no Lutheran, Mary insists, but she unveils her freely investigating spirit by rallying, indirectly of course, to Luther's defense. Is it not possible, proposes this remarkably advanced sixteenth-century woman, that there may be some truth in the Wittenberg teachings. Should the case be otherwise, then how is one to explain its astonishing popularity, a popularity that neither of her brothers seems capable of arresting. She trusts that her attitude will not unduly upset Ferdinand, and she encloses one of Luther's tracts in which he so explicitly upholds the orthodox views.
of the Sacrament. In answering his sister, Ferdinand confesses his personal distaste for doctrinal issues and theological speculations in general. Primarily for this reason and because his Church has condemned Luther's devotional expositions as heretical, he has never set his eyes upon them. As a statesman his duty is to govern and rule his subjects, and any personal involvement in ecclesiastical polity or abuses within the Church is totally unwarranted, for such issues should be relegated to the jurisdiction of the Church itself. The spectacular expansion of Lutheranism amazes him but leaves him perplexed at the same time, for he cannot grasp why so many people forsake, mostly on doctrinal grounds, an institution which has for twelve centuries provided spiritual care for their ancestors. Uniformity in confessional matters should be maintained, Ferdinand asserts, not so much for the sake of faith per se but for the sake of their dynasty whose unwavering adherence to the tenets of Catholicism in the past has intertwined their political fortunes with the fate of the Papacy. Mary, if inclined to familiarize herself with devotional literature, should be more selective in her choice and preferably restrict herself to those that bear the sign of approval from the Catholic authorities. Both his and his sister's confessional stand, as well as their position on the Papacy's recently deplorable conduct in supporting Habsburg enemies, take their cue from
Charles, who maintained that the emperor alone, as senior member of their dynasty, possesses the prerogative to discern authoritatively and accurately the proper stance for such matters. In conclusion, he mentions the return, along with his reply, of that Lutheran pamphlet which Mary had dispatched to him for his personal consideration — unread. He includes, however, a list of errors and contradictions detected in it and prepared by Johannes Faber, his confessor and spiritual prop.

In the meantime, there occurred an incident in Germany which greatly hastened the growth of political alliances along doctrinal lines, nearly broke the Landfrieden or internal peace of the empire, involved even the absentee Ferdinand, and, in the end, discredited the Evangelical cause. This particular incident is known as the Otto von Pack conspiracy in German history. In February, 1528, Landgrave Philip of Hesse informed Elector John of Saxony that he was in the possession of a document purporting to be the authentic copy of an agreement reached among the foremost Catholic princes of the empire, both secular and ecclesiastical, at a secret meeting held on May 15, 1527, at Breslau (capital of Lower Silesia and, as part of Bohemia, under Habsburg hegemony). These princes allegedly had drawn plans for the eventual extermination of heresy and the restoration of the old faith in the empire. In case the Lutheran sovereigns failed to cooperate with them, they would be attacked and
their lands confiscated and divided among the victors. The document of this aggressive alliance, whose aim was to be the complete suppression of all estates espousing the new Gospel and whose suppression was to be achieved by violating the constitutional provisions governing the internal peace of the empire, was said to have been signed by Ferdinand, Duke George of Saxony, Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, Dukes William and Louis of Bavaria, some of the Rhenish ecclesiastical princes, and other dignitaries of the Church in Germany.  

A Saxon nobleman, Otto von Pack by name and former vice-chancellor to Duke George of Saxony, provided the landgrave, in exchange for 4,000 gulden, with this intelligence. This impulsive prince, without taking the precaution of testing its genuineness, set out to organize an offensive counter-alliance with the Saxon elector, realized by a treaty signed on March 9, 1528, at Weimar. While both princes went the length in raising armies, the Saxon elector, in deference to Luther who objected to using force before being attacked and probably sensed the spurious nature of the Pack evidence, refused to commence any hostilities. The less pliable and more sanguine Landgrave Philip then involved himself in forging together an anti-Habsburg confederation, international in scope, which included the following powers: representatives of the Zwinglian faction from south Germany and Switzerland; the Jagiellonian King of Poland; Frederick I of
Denmark, who had recently succeeded in ascending the throne of that nation by using Lutheranism to attain such personal ends; Francis I of France, who was included primarily for financial assistance; and even John Zapolya, Ferdinand's Hungarian arch-enemy and presently inactive politically and self-exiled to Poland.\(^{13}\) Thus the situation grew dangerous; all Germany was aroused and it appeared certain that the country was at the point of being turned into a battlefield.

While an outbreak of virulent enmity was daily expected in the empire by the spring of 1528, the rattling of swords suddenly came to a standstill when in May Pack's document finally was proved to be an outright forgery. This reduced the reactionary stipulations of the purported Breslau Treaty to a fiction concocted in a malignant mind. Led by Duke George of Saxony, all the alleged participants of this would-be Catholic conspiracy came forward, in both astonishment and indignation, to refute publicly such accusations. Although utterly embroiled with the affairs of the Bohemian diet in Prague, Ferdinand too felt the necessity of vindicating his position in this matter. By public dispatch he emphasized the fact that he had never entertained the thought of such a league or signed any document to such effect. He had not been, nor ever would be, guilty of acting in violation of either the Landfrieden or any recesses passed by the German diets. "In all respects," Ferdinand concluded his plea, "we shall always behave in a Christian and
irreproachable manner, as beseems an upright monarch, ac-
cording to the example handed down to us by our august
predecessors — Roman emperors, kings, and archdukes of
Austria."  

Realizing that he had been the dupe of a deception, the
Saxon elector immediately withdrew from the alliance, and
all foreign commitments of the Weimar Treaty became meaning-
less. But the Hessian landgrave had no intention of with-
drawing empty-handed and aggravated his blunder by making
some of the lesser German ecclesiastical dignitaries, named
in Pack's forgery as members of the Breslau League, pay for
the cost of the military preparations inspired by his im-
pulsive policy.

The Hessian landgrave's rash and inconsiderate polit-
ical enterprise was destined to blemish the cause of the
Evangelical party in Germany. First of all, it lost the
sympathy of that broad section of the empire, religiously
still uncommitted; it lost the hitherto benevolent support
and good will of the Elector of the Palatinate who had un-
tiringly negotiated between the two factions in the past;
it engendered a favorable upsurge in popularity for the
religiously orthodox party whose proponents now began to
view the whole Pack incident not as the machination of a
crafty scoundrel and the narrow-mindedness of a tactless
Lutheran prince but rather as a diabolical scheme bent on
violently breaching German's internal tranquillity and
extinguishing there the remaining roots of Catholicism. These repercussions of the Pack affair explain, at least in part, that conservative atmosphere which began to prevail by mid-1528 over the empire.

It should be affirmed at this point that Reformation scholarship -- whether inclined toward Catholic or Protestant partisanship -- has universally and invariably rejected the authenticity of Pack's secret intelligence on the Breslau Treaty, classifying it as a bona fide example of documentary forgery and as conceived in terms of a one-man conspiracy prompted by sheer pecuniary motives. Even the plausibility of a Breslau congregation of German Catholic princes for purposes other than those outlined by Pack is seriously doubted by subsequent historians. In retrospect, it appears exceedingly absurd that so many would in the 1520's believe a document which bore, in conjunction with Ferdinand's own name, the signatures of the two Wittelsbach dukes who were enemies of the Habsburgs since the latter had won the crown of Bohemia in opposition to their own candidacy, a victory which was less than a month old.

Before turning to a consideration of events transpiring outside the bounds of the empire in this three-year period, brief attention should be given to the correspondence between Ferdinand and Charles. Indeed, brief attention suffices, for the content of the letters was overwhelmingly identical in what they asked of each other -- men and money.
The emperor, still embroiled in his Italian campaign, invariably requests fresh troops and financial assistance from Ferdinand. On one occasion, Charles wishes that Ferdinand and the empire would be officially involved in the Habsburg-Valois conflict, and pleads that his younger brother arouse the Swabian League to declare war against France and England.16

In answering the emperor, Ferdinand firmly but politely refuses to comply with Charles's repeated requests for German military aid as he himself is always hoping for some military assistance against the Turks. Only once, in April, 1528, did he permit a contingent to be assembled for the emperor in Germany, probably because the expenses of the recruitment were prepaid by Madrid. Ferdinand appears from these letters to be anxious to avoid declaring war on France and England, arguing that there is no need for a formal statement on his behalf to that effect as Charles's actions are valid for both of them. By referring persistently to his eastern commitments and the perennial threat of a Turkish invasion, Ferdinand manages to justify his disinclination to assist the imperial cause in Italy. In the spring of 1528 -- since it was in that season that the Turks normally commenced their westward campaign -- Ferdinand himself pleads for help.17 Charles ignores his brother's entreaty, but not entirely; he promises that upon a victorious conclusion of his warfare in the West, he will come to Ferdinand's aid in
the East; for the interim, he recommends the Papacy, the King of Portugal, and their aunt Margaret as possible sources Ferdinand should explore for securing assistance. 18

That Habsburg proclivity for nuptial diplomacy, which ran thick in their ancestors' blood though Charles hardly inherited this tendency, seems to have asserted itself forcefully in Ferdinand's veins. Through the services of Joseph von Lamberg, his representative at the Buda court of Mary, Ferdinand urges his sister to consider seriously the possibility of marrying James V of Scotland since that country is within both the French and the English sphere of interest. The Stuart crown of Scotland may pass on to England, for the present Tudor monarch, Henry VIII, is uncle of the Scottish king, though the former is of sickly stock and is probably unable to produce any more children in addition to his single daughter. True, Scotland is an impoverished country and her ruling dynasty anything but opulent; yet James is particularly handsome. Residing at Holyrood, postulates the royal matchmaker, Mary could often visit her aunt in the Netherlands. 19 Mary, however, bluntly refuses to remarry -- either James or any other person for that matter; her first marriage was a marriage of love; its memory she still wishes to retain and cherish. 20

While the empire was still recovering from the shocks caused by the Pack affair, the international situation once more took an adverse turn for the Evangelical party as the
outcome of the Habsburg-Valois warfare in Italy gradually tipped in favor of the imperial cause. In the twelve-month period preceding the convocation of the second Diet of Speyer, two events in foreign affairs deepened the gloomy forebodings of Germany's Lutherans who had already suffered a setback by both doctrinal division within their ranks and the unfavorable publicity evoked by the von Pack incident. These two developments were the reconciliation between the Papacy and the emperor and the continued military fiascos of the French in Italy.

The humiliated Clement VII, who paid dearly for his anti-imperial policies and his engineering of the League of Cognac by having to witness the capture and sack of Rome in May, 1527, appealed secretly to Francis I and Henry VIII for assistance. Meanwhile Francis, having allowed his principal ally to be destroyed without sending the help he had promised, was now preparing a final attempt to win Italy from the Habsburgs. A series of treaties and a personal meeting with Henry at Amiens resulted in a formal declaration of war on the emperor by England and France in January, 1528. As was usual, the outbreak of hostilities preceded the declaration of war by several months. The belated French help to the Papacy, in the form of 30,000 men under General Lautrec, had already crossed the Alps in July, 1527, and easily recovered the northern section of the Italian peninsula. Then continuing his victorious drive, Lautrec set out for the Kingdom
of Naples in the South and, by averting Rome which was still held by Spanish-German forces, he effectively besieged the city of Naples through a double blockade -- he with his troops on land and the Genoese fleet, now in French service, bearing down from the sea.

The position of the imperialist armies grew desperate as Naples, being hermetically sealed off from the rest of Italy, began to starve. But once again the Habsburgs were rescued by men and events entirely out of their own control. In July, 1528, Andrea Doria, head of the Genoese navy, was offended by the haughtiness of Francis I and went over to the imperialist side. From that moment the French were lost in Italy. With the Republic of Genoa in the Habsburg camp, Doria called off the naval blockade and provisioned the besieged citizenry of Naples. Caught by opposition from both directions, ill-supplied with arms and food, and decimated by plague that broke out in their midst, Lautrec's army rapidly melted away. Lautrec himself died in August and by September the Habsburg recovery of southern Italy was a fait accompli.

In these circumstances the pope, now a fugitive from Rome at Orvieto, was destined to enter into a series of lengthy negotiations by November, 1528, with the emperor's representatives. Though these papal-imperial proceedings of reconciliation were not actually completed until June, 1529, under the auspices of the Treaty of Barcelona and a few
months after the adjournment of the second Diet of Speyer, the very fact that a truce had been established between Charles and Clement VII greatly weakened the cause of anti-Habsburg forces, which included some of the German Lutherans. Any political observer after November, 1528, would presume that the Papacy could and would no longer aid French political ambitions in Italy but would move against Germany's religious dissidents by calling a general church council which would invest Charles with the imperial crown in exchange for his promise to preserve the territorial integrity of the papal states.

The French could not even maintain their foothold in northern Italy. Following the demise of Lautrec's army at Naples, fresh French troops entered the plains of Lombardy in the fall of 1528. Led by General St. Pol, the major Valois aim was now to forego the weeding out of the remaining traces of German-Spanish arms in the North and penalize instead the Republic of Genoa for her disloyalty. Unable to bring about the necessary cooperation between his forces and those of the League of Cognac, St. Pol's campaign was marked by failure from the outset. Though the final blow did not fall until June, 1529, when in the Battle of Landriano the imperial forces defeated St. Pol and even captured him, it became evident that French political schemes in Italy were, once again, completely checkmated. Italy lay once more at the feet of the Habsburgs.
It was in this atmosphere of imperial resurgence abroad, coupled with a momentary weakening of the Lutheran cause in the empire, that Charles summoned by an edict issued at Valladolid on November 30, 1528, the German estates to a diet at Speyer for the following February. Owing to continued hostilities in Italy, the emperor explains, he is unable to carry out his long-cherished intention of personally coming to Germany to attend the next diet. There are two major issues that the forthcoming national assembly ought to consider and act upon in the following order: one, the Turkish threat, and two, the religious discord. Encouraged by refractory Christian princes, the Asiatic infidels will undoubtedly renew their attack against the West, and therefore proper defensive measures must be worked out. The proliferation of religious heresies, increasing in number and always threatening to bring Germany to the brink of civil war, should be dealt with so that all errors in the Christian faith may disappear and domestic peace and order be reestablished. Because of his improved relations with the Papacy, Charles hoped that chances for a general church council were no longer remote, so he felt free to implore all the estates to appear punctually for the diet at the appointed time and place.21 The wording of his imperial summons was moderate and hardly different in tone from what he had issued in the past. It was evident that his desire was not to draw the sword against the forces of religious innovation in Germany
but to have the highest legislative forum he could assemble proceed methodically to eliminate them.

The time approached for the German estates to assemble for this diet. It had been convoked for February but was not able to meet until the middle of March. In many respects, especially if the pre-diet events are considered, the 1529 gathering of the German estates strikingly resembled the preceding one of 1526 -- though under a different portent. The little Rhenish town of Speyer must have been all astir as each magnate announced his arrival at its gates and rode through its streets, pursued by an imposing array of armed retainers. While in 1526 the Lutheran princes entered the city's gates first, displaying their wealth and prestige, now the turn had come for the Catholics. First to arrive was Ferdinand, who again presided over the proceedings in the absence of his brother; he came attended by 300 Bohemian and Hungarian knights, certainly with the intention of reflecting thereby his change in status by having acquired new domains. After him came the Wittelsbach princes of Bavaria with an equally large retinue; then followed the ecclesiastical electors of Mainz, Trier, and Cologne, and the bishops of Trent, Salzburg, and Hildesheim -- each accompanied by brightly clad troops of horsemen.22

The last to arrive among the German sovereigns were the Lutheran princes who made their modest entry into Speyer during Holy Week. Elector John of Saxony came first on the
eve of Palm Sunday; only the Landgrave of Hesse felt the necessity of retaining his erstwhile pomp, for he entered escorted by a retinue of 200 horsemen, with a loud sound of triumphets and colorful pagentry. Instead of George Spalatin, the ever moderate and scholarly disciple of Luther, Philip Melanchthon now accompanied the Saxon retinue to Speyer. Unlike Spalatin, Melanchthon made no conscious effort to record noteworthy episodes transpiring before and during the diet, but some of his letters that he dispatched to friends sufficiently highlight the circumstances in which the German estates met.

To counter and possibly even to outshine that religious fervor which the Lutheran estates exhibited in behalf of their newly adopted spiritual orientation at the previous Diet of Speyer, some of the Catholic sovereigns now engaged in public demonstrations of their unflinching orthodox piety. While the Easter services were faithfully attended by the majority of the Catholic estates, Ferdinand and others carried their religious zeal to an inordinate summit of intemperance. On Maundy Thursday, he fed and clothed twelve poor men, washed, wiped, and kissed their feet according to the Biblical custom. Escorted by the Archbishop Elector of Mainz and the Archbishop of Vienna who also served as Ferdinand's own confessor, Ferdinand remained in the Speyer Cathedral, praying and fasting with the others for more than forty-eight hours, from Thursday afternoon until the
completion of the Resurrection services there on Saturday evening. This immoderate display of religiosity demonstrated in public by Ferdinand and his close associates during the Holy Week at Speyer no doubt proved most edifying to themselves though the Lutherans who witnessed this spectacular marathon from the outside of the cathedral must have had their own ideas.

In adding up Melanchthon's observations on the events leading to the Diet of Speyer of 1529, one notes that the self-assured, boisterous, and somewhat defiant spirit exhibited in 1526 by the Lutheran estates is no longer present. On the contrary, such patterns of behavior were now demonstrably apparent among the Catholic estates who were determined to benefit from both the external and internal events in the empire which had worked out in their favor. Therefore, with the circumstances and conditions as given, the outcome of this diet was a foregone conclusion. It has been customary for historians to seek in the full attendance of the Catholic delegates -- at least in part -- an explanation for the result of this diet. This contention, however, does not stand up; if the list of the attending and participating estates in scrutinized, it is seen that while the Lutheran sovereigns and urban deputies were in complete representation, the Catholic attendance was far from having reached its potential. The controversial recess which would be the ultimate outcome of the 1529 Speyer Diet was not necessarily
due to a numerical superiority of Catholic estates over Lutheran estates but to the revival of an energetic pro-Catholic sentiment rampant among many of its participants. The emperor must have attached great significance to and expected resounding results from this diet as he dispatched Waldkirch, an imperial provost, to it with his written proposal. He also urged Clement VII to send his representative to Speyer so that the Habsburg-papal reconciliation might be dramatized.

Although by the middle of March there were sufficient constituent members present in Speyer to warrant the opening of the assembly, Ferdinand nevertheless delayed it until the third week in March, for he wished to await the belated arrival of the imperial provost. Accordingly, on March 23, he commenced the diet by communicating his brother's proposals to the assembled estates. In contrast to the modest spirit of the imperial summons to this diet, Charles's instructions were dipped and coated with an explicitly autocratic tone. Promising a speedy convocation of a general church council which will remove all errors from and re-establish the Christian religion on a sound basis, he now commands that all estates of the realm -- until the coming of such a council -- maintain the traditional faith and usages under pain of imperial ban. Certain articles of the 1526 recess had stated that, pending the convocation of a Church council, the estates should individually govern and
act in confessional matters in such a manner as would be justifiable before God and emperor. These articles had led to individualistic interpretations which were gross offenses and vile disobedience against the common faith of the empire. Charles hereby declares them, by the right of his imperial plenary power, to be revoked and annulled. In place of these misleading articles, his own instructions are to be recorded by the recess of this diet. Therefore, Charles's proposal placed exclusive emphasis on the German religious issue and failed to touch upon the question of Turkish aid which was Ferdinand's prime concern.

The German estates, however, did not unconditionally recognize the plenary power of the emperor. A committee was appointed to consider the imperial instructions which recommended that the articles in question should be struck out of the recess in accordance with the emperor's wish. It recognized that particular articles of the 1526 recess had been by many "grossly misunderstood, twisted, and strained into justification of all sorts of outrageous new doctrines and sects." But instead of accepting the emperor's instructions verbatim, the committee proposed to adopt it in an essentially milder and modified form. Actually, the proposition now formulated by the committee entailed a "middle-of-the-road" solution: it would neither abolish nor enforce the 1526 recess; instead, it decided that the law and practice within each state, with respect to the enforcement of the Edict of
Worms should remain in effect until the conclusion of the expected general Church council. In other words, in certain states of the empire, the imperial penal mandate of 1521 would continue to be upheld and enforced, and Catholicism would remain the only confessional form to be tolerated by their inhabitants; other states, which, adhering to the recess of 1526, had acted in the matter of religion as their judgment dictated and had adopted Lutheran practices, should maintain their confessional status quo until the calling of the Church council.

There was, however, an important modification made with respect to those states which had embraced Lutheranism. While no further religious innovations were to be made in them and no further secularization of Church property should take place, the Catholic minority's spiritual rights should be tolerated; adherents of the old faith were not to be forbidden to attend Mass in the traditional form. Former sacerdotal offices were to be reestablished where local congregations might so desire. The Zwinglians, as deniers of the real presence, and the Anabaptists, as fomenters of sedition, ought to be summarily punished, declared the committee's proposal, in accordance with an imperial mandate (issued January, 1528) to this effect.28

Without actually declaring the illegality of the Evangelical faith, as the emperor requested, the committee's decision assured the exclusive supremacy of the old faith in
the religiously orthodox states and openly encouraged Catholic reaction within the Lutheran principalities and cities. By drawing a clear line of differentiation among the new sects and by explicitly outlawing religious movements other than the Lutheran, the committee's proposal was a skillful device for playing off the new denominations against one another. It professedly provided for the existence of the Evangelical party, yet, simultaneously, contrived to undermine it.

The Evangelical members of the 1529 Speyer Diet were hesitant to abide by the majority proposal. At the instigation of Elector John and Landgrave Philip, the Lutheran estates, on April 12 and before the diet vote on this proposal was actually taken, appealed the committee's decision on both conscientious and constitutional grounds. In their appeal, which emphasized their readiness to render due obedience to the emperor and to further the welfare and peace of the empire, they expressed their inability to act against their consciences in a matter directly involving "the honor of God and His Word and the salvation of their souls." They could not, therefore, agree to restrictions on their liberty relative to the extension of religious rights to the Catholic minority within the territories under their jurisdiction, for it was "contrary to the Word of God and the institution of Christ" and would compel them to act against the dictates of their consciences. Such demands
would be unjust and incompatible with the Recess of 1526, which they had sworn to observe, pending the meeting of a general Church council. Consequently, the majority of this present diet had no constitutional right to overrule a mutually binding statute of the empire. They had, however, no objection to the clause against the Anabaptists and Zwinglians.29

Since the arguments voiced by the Lutheran princes failed to be effective, the assembly, by an overwhelming plurality on April 12, accepted the committee's proposal. Ferdinand, as the presiding head of the diet, thanked the estates for endorsing the committee's recommendation, the substance of which, he added, was to be embodied into a recess and published throughout the empire.

On April 18 the diet met again and at this session Ferdinand himself took the floor. Since the imperial proposal had not concerned itself with the Turkish question and inasmuch as the assembly, up to this time, had occupied itself with confessional matters, Ferdinand in his address to the estates proposed measures which, if approved, would have sanctioned the raising of a massive army in the empire against the Ottoman Turks. Sensing correctly that the resolution adopted by the diet relative to religious issues must have alienated the Lutheran estates whose good will he could not disregard, he wished to minimize its significance. The new recess, Ferdinand argued, would concede to the
Lutheran estates the right of maintenance of their church system until the resolution of a general church council, and would require of them that they leave others equally undisturbed in the expression of their religious convictions.

Turning to the Turkish question, he underlined the gravity of the situation now facing Christendom; according to his most reliable intelligence sources, his Hungarian opponent, John Zapolya, recently had concluded a pact of non-aggression with the Porte, and the Turks had already departed Constantinople for the West with a great force of men. Though he did not expect Zapolya to join up militarily with the "Turks, the amicable relationship of his enemy with the Asiatic hordes would greatly facilitate their unopposed penetration through Hungary. If appropriate means were provided for him by the assembly, he would not resort to sheer defensive measures but initiate a general offensive against the Turks, not restricting it in scope to Hungary but carrying it into "Danubian lands."

Ferdinand's address, which evoked a standing ovation from the diet, was important and in many aspects historically a consequential one. To begin with, it sufficiently moved the assembly to grant him 16,000 men on an emergency basis, though conceivably he had counted on a greater amount of aid. But then his plans of an offensive against the Turks were initially criticized and finally rejected by the Lutheran party on the grounds that such measures, if adopted,
might jeopardize the position of their Hungarian ally, John Zapolya, whom they still regarded as their confederate under the provisions of the Weimar Treaty of 1528. The outright Lutheran refusal to assist him in combatting the infidel invaders greatly angered Ferdinand who by now had begun to consider himself as a medieval crusader divinely appointed to fulfill a historical mission. It appeared to him tantamount to the most violent treason and shocking breach of faith a Christian prince could commit. From now on he became a most determined and staunch enemy to those professing the Evangelical faith. Moreover, his intention of carrying the warfare to the lower Danubian regions and clearly beyond the boundaries of Hungary not only reflected his intention of liberating southeastern Europe from the Turkish yoke but also foreshadowed the foundation of that centuries-long Habsburg ambition of wanting to expand its rule into the remote lands of the Balkan peninsula. Finally, this speech, his first before an imperial diet, was delivered in German, which demonstrated his willingness and ability to acquire the mastery of a language spoken by the majority of his subjects.

On the following day, April 19, in conjunction with the imperial commissioners, Ferdinand formally accepted, in the name of the emperor, the decision on the religious issue reached by the majority of the assembly, ordered it to be drafted into a recess, called upon the Lutheran estates to
acquiesce, and pressed for adjournment of the diet. Not anticipating such a sudden termination of the diet and still determined to adhere to the recess of the former diet, Germany's Evangelical party left the assembly hall in a body and withdrew to a chamber to consider an appropriate action. There they penned their much celebrated Protest of Speyer in which they repudiated the new recess, denied the right of the majority to impose its decision with respect to the confessional issue on the minority, and refused to recognize its validity on both conscientious and constitutional grounds. Otherwise, they were prepared to accept the clauses of the new recess relative to the Zwinglians and Anabaptists. They requested that their Protest be included in the acts of the diet and declared their intention to forward it to the emperor and publish it along with a detailed statement of the reasons for their refusal to abide by the decision of the majority.

In the vain hope of securing a reconsideration for the new recess, they sent their Protest to Ferdinand, the imperial commissioners, and the diet itself on the next day. Equally abortive were the results of a brief series of negotiations with the more moderate members of the Catholic majority -- the Margrave Philip of Baden and Duke Henry of Brunswick -- which aimed to bring about a modus operandi suitable to the Lutheran estates. At the last session of the diet, on April 24, the estates considered the Evangelical
Protest, but its ratifiers failed to attend this meeting in person. Accordingly, they were notified by a deputation on the following day that it was impossible for the assembly to comply with their request, on constitutional grounds, because by acceding to it, they would establish a dangerous precedent -- the willful disregard of an opinion shared by the majority. Furthermore, they were informed that neither the names of the protesting estates nor the text of their Protest could be included in the diet's recess, for it might provoke fresh disturbances in the empire. Instead, they would have to be satisfied with the presentation of their Protest among the acts of the diet, and that it was within their liberty to forward it to the emperor.33

Having rejected the proposed modifications of the terms of the 1529 recess, Ferdinand, his imperial commissioners, and Charles's personal representative, Provost Waldkirch, signed and sealed the acts of the diet on the next day, and departed from the scene. Thus, the second Diet of Speyer, a momentuous episode in German history, was concluded. Both parties had spoken, and both parties remained adamant in their decision. This marked the permanent political fragmentation, the actual split, of Germany on confessional lines; henceforward, on the strength of their Protest of Speyer, Germany's Lutheran estates constituted a distinct political party confronted and opposed by the emperor and the Catholic estates; and henceforward, the chances for the
disruption of national unity by arms were great.

In analyzing retrospectively the events that transpired at Speyer in 1529, the following questions emerge immediately: was the protesting Lutheran minority, or Protestants — a term which came to be applied to them for signing their Protest — constitutionally in the right to defy the decision of a Catholic majority? Could a majority rightfully reverse the recess of a previous diet and require adherence to a new one which failed to enlist the support of a minority? From the German constitutional viewpoint, the Evangelical position appears to have been of dubious validity. The Recess of 1526 was, after all, a temporary agreement, designed to hold until the convening of a general Church council, leaving the emperor (who had never consented to it) free to convene another diet to deliberate anew on the same question. Moreover, it was within the jurisdiction of a regularly constituted assembly to legislate further, or not at all, on an identical issue, and if the emperor should submit proposals for the diet's consideration, such a body could adopt or reverse these proposals and embody them into a law which accorded with the viewpoint held by the majority.

The real strength and importance of the Lutheran Protest at Speyer in 1529 lay, not in the right of the minority to defy legally the will of the majority, but in their appeal to the higher law of conscience, to the duty of obeying God rather than man in a matter pertaining to the salvation of
their souls. It was their appeal on a spiritual rather than a constitutional basis which merits consideration of the Evangelical minority action. In the final analysis, theirs was a repetition -- now on a broader scale -- of what once Luther himself had vindicated at Worms: the glory of the individual conscience, the principle of private judgment in matters relating man to his Creator.34

In summing up the events unfolding in the empire in that three-year period between 1526 and 1529, between the conclusions of the first and second diets of Speyer, one of the most striking developments was the phenomenal growth of the Evangelical faith and its corollary, consolidation into an independent ecclesiastical body under the protective wings of secular authorities. Meanwhile, encouraged by Luther's strong emphasis on private judgment and prompted by his sola scriptura approach, a tendency of proliferation became apparent among the ranks of those who fell away from Rome's obedience. Thus two additional forms of Protestantism emerged -- Zwinglianism and Anabaptism. The former became the faith of Swiss and south German progressive urban elements while the latter had a more proletarian appeal, and both made heavy inroads into the empire and the Habsburg domains as well.

Hampered by the constitutional limitations that paralyzed the effectiveness of his political power as governor, Ferdinand could hardly have arrested, let alone reversed,
this trend in Germany. Therefore, he concentrated his efforts on curbing Protestantism in his archduchy and crownlands. Finding there that the new converts to Lutheranism were stemming from the politically active aristocracy and urban merchant and artisan classes, he toned down the legal proceedings against them. Instead, he struck an effective blow at the Zwinglians and Anabaptists and, by issuing no less than ten penal mandates against them and enjoying the passive cooperation of the Lutheran element, succeeded in rooting out these sects.

The unconventional behavior and open flirtation with Lutheranism on the part of his sister Mary motivated Ferdinand to win her back to the tenets of Catholicism. Such efforts resulted in a series of spirited epistolary exchanges between the two Habsburgs which ultimately revealed in Mary an intellectually inquisitive mind and a sense of religious latitudinarism and in Ferdinand an essentially anti-intellectual proclivity, much narrow-mindedness, and a pronounced conservative insight into confessional matters.

In the first half of 1528, the Otto von Pack affair strained the relations between the two major religious parties, hastening the political fragmentation of the empire. It was precipitated by a forged document which purportedly showed that leading Catholic princes had concluded in Breslau a treaty among themselves in which they pledged to exterminate Lutheranism. By means of stormy invective,
the mercurial Hessian landgrave accomplished the forming of an effective counter-alliance in Weimar. It was hoped that the Lutheran princes would surprise their alleged political enemies with a superior force before the latter could make an assault. In order to ensure victory for the Evangelical cause, a score of foreign powers were brought into this alliance. With that political step, the Reformation officially entered the international arena of European affairs. From now on, it tended to become not only a religious but also a political party whose weight was felt in the chanceries of Europe. Although the spurious nature of the Pack document was discovered in time to prevent a German civil war, the gullibility, the readiness with which the Lutheran princes sought assistance from abroad, and the landgrave's subsequent demand for ransom greatly undermined the popularity and hitherto firm position of the Evangelical faction. Singled out as head of this supposed anti-Lutheran league, Ferdinand, along with the other alleged signatories, publicly refuted the charges.

The correspondence between Ferdinand and Charles during this three-year period was largely taken up with mutual requests for aid. With frequent repetition, the emperor's epistles urged his younger brother to raise troops and monetary contributions in Germany for the successful continuation of the Habsburg campaign in Italy. In his replies, Ferdinand invariably rebuffed the emperor's repeated pleas
on the basis that Germany's human and fiscal reservoir was needed for the protection of the West against the Turks. Partially to augment his meager resources and partially to ward off Charles's incessant demands, Ferdinand himself appealed to him for aid which was likewise denied. Of far more interesting content was Ferdinand's correspondence with his sister Mary. Prompted by the centuries-old Habsburg policy of political matchmaking, he pressed his widowed sister to marry James V of Scotland so that their dynasty's power might be enhanced. Though he proved to be wrong about the thirty-seven year old Tudor monarch's inability to sire any additional heirs, his prognostication about the eventual Tudor-Stuart merger or the union of the crowns of Scotland and England, which he desired Mary to share through his marital designs for her, was indicative of innate political farsightedness.

The negative effects of the Pack affair on the Lutheran estates, the reconciliation between the pope and the emperor, and the continued military fiasco suffered by the confederates of the Cognac League in Italy, created an atmosphere conducive to the political and confessional ambitions of the Habsburg party in the empire. Charles was thus free to attempt, without any effective opposition, to reverse the Speyer Recess of 1526 at a second diet which he had convened in the same city in March, 1529. Its result, a new recess, as expected, included the emperor's instructions in a
diluted and modified form. While the 1529 resolution re­quired no single Lutheran to renounce his confessional stand and provided no penalties for existing converts, its implicit intention of arresting the geographical expansion of the Evangelical faith and its stipulation for the voluntary re­establishment of Catholicism in areas already in defiance of Rome, was geared to debilitate the ranks of Luther's fol­lowers so that the Reformed movement might later be stamped out entirely, either through further legislative measures or, if necessary, through sheer force. Moreover, the new recess counteractively assailed that time-honored political tradition, according to which each principality had the right of regulating its own internal affairs. The regulation of the faith and public worship of their subjects was one of these prerogatives.

Ferdinand's address to the diet, delivered for the first time in German, largely assured its desirable goals as he succeeded in securing substantial military aid against the Turks from the estates. Using the pretext that his anticipated offensive might partially be directed against John Zapolya, the Habsburg archenemy in Hungary and still their confederate, the Lutheran estates refused to grant subsidies to Ferdinand on their behalf. The outright re­fusal of the Evangelical party to cooperate with and par­ticipate in a Christian enterprise against the Turks, when their menace was indeed genuine, brought Ferdinand -- who
was more and more imbued with a passionate crusading zeal -- to a virtual breaking point in his relations with the Lutherans.

 Returning finally to those clashing and seemingly contradictory viewpoints cherished by the Catholics and Lutherans at the 1529 Speyer Diet, it ought to be added that neither party advanced to a true apprehension of the principle they professed; the Lutherans vehemently protested, on conscientious grounds, against any interference with their former right to debar anyone from participating in the celebration of Mass in their territories or prohibiting anyone from acquiring property for establishing a church other than one in the Evangelical fold; the Catholics forcibly argued, also on conscientious grounds, in behalf of their prerogative to interdict Evangelical preaching within their own territories. That steadfast championing of the Speyer estates -- whether of Catholic or Lutheran inclination -- of their right to override the consciences of those who failed to ascribe to their confessional orientation was entirely inconsistent with their insistence on the imperative claims of conscience which they were so fond of using to buttress their arguments. Moreover, while protesting on behalf of liberty of conscience for themselves, both Catholics and Lutherans united readily in their approval of brutally suppressing the Zwinglians and Anabaptists. What transpired in 1529 in Speyer conveniently captures the spirit of the sixteenth century, an age when
religious bigotry and intolerance triumphed over human reason and the individual's liberty of conscience. It was truly an age awash with many zealous advocates of Christianity, among whom could be found only a handful who lived up to what its Founder had once preached.
CHAPTER VII

FINAL YEARS TO AMBITION'S END: 1529-1531

While modern historical scholarship has apparently proved that Ferdinand in the spring of 1529 could not have been in possession of bona fide intelligence on the renewed Turkish assault against the West and that his plea before the German estates in Speyer, from which he sought and secured some assistance, was therefore only a calculated guess about the future, subsequent events duly justified his motives of expediency. In the early part of April and while the imperial estates at Speyer still deliberated the German confessional issues, Suleiman actually set out from Constantinople with what has been estimated as a quarter of a million men and three hundred cannons, escorted by countless throngs of camp-followers. The undisclosed objective of this behemoth-like westward thrust was nothing less than an unparalleled extension of Ottoman imperialism into those parts of Christendom which lay beyond the boundaries of Hungary. Its stated purpose, however, was to oust the Habsburgs from Hungary and restore to her throne John Zapolya who had, in the interim, already returned from his Polish
exile and entered into an alliance with the Porte. So the Turkish campaign of 1529 could have threatened no prince in the West more piercingly than Ferdinand. Virtually his entire political fortune — the Kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia as well as the Archduchy of Austria — were now clearly at stake.

The news leaking out of Hungary certainly foreshadowed an impending disaster. Though considerably slowed down in their advancement by water-soaked and often impassable roads that the seasonal torrents had caused, the Turkish columns managed to reach Belgrade by early August. By mid-August they were on the field of Mohács, and there, on the 18th day of that month, and the third anniversary of that fateful military encounter between the Turks and the Hungarians, Zapolya paid his homage to Suleiman and accepted a vassal status for his nation in exchange for Ottoman support in his desire to regain for himself Hungary's crown from the Habsburgs.²

By early September the Turks forced the Hungarian capital to surrender, and the two thousand troops in the well-equipped German garrison capitulated to the eastern invaders. After the conquest of Buda, the Turks continued their victorious incursion westward along the Danube River, and by the third week in September they reached the outskirts of Vienna. From the spire of St. Stephen's, the Viennese could see the surrounding plains and hills darkened with thousands of
Ottoman tents, soldiery, and armament. One of the most fateful hours in the history of the Austrian capital had ticked out its opening moments.

Long before the banners of Islam were hoisted on the battered surroundings of Vienna, Ferdinand had already taken several steps for the defense of Central Europe. He knew that the lands directly exposed to the threats of the aggressive Muslims -- Hungary, Austria, and Bohemia -- could hardly by themselves arrest the tide of Asiatic invasion even with assistance from the German empire, as he repeatedly sought additional help elsewhere. But his plans to arouse and enlist outside powers to an all-European defense under his captaincy completely misfired as the Habsburg-Valois conflict in Italy was still in progress and European rulers were reluctant to aid a prince whose dynasty strove for a global hegemony.

The Jagiellonian King of Poland, the first among those Ferdinand approached, excused himself from participating in a thrust against the infidels because of a Polish-Turkish non-aggression pact whose violation, he felt, would be most unchristian. Even more discouraging was the outcome of a meeting between Ferdinand's envoys and the court of Henry VIII. The Tudor monarch, thoroughly satiated with continuous French military reverses in Italy, had already withdrawn from the League of Cognac when Ferdinand, in late 1528, entrusted Johannes Faber, his own confessor and spiritual
guide, to head a mission to London, hoping Henry's *volte-face* would make him amenable to Faber's florid Latin oration. But this ambitious and militant churchman in vain delineated the atrocities the Turks commonly committed on Christian captives; in vain did he conclude his appeal with ominous warnings befitting an Old Testament prophet that if the English rejected this noble cause, the Turks would soon water their horses on the Thames. Ferdinand could not even exploit the conciliatory negotiations between the emperor and the Holy See. Plagued by the immense cost of a lost war and his resources depleted by footing the bill for the occupation of the imperial armies, Clement VII could hardly offer more than his moral support.3

Nor was Ferdinand's own family of any help to him in any concrete way. His numerous letters, dating from the summer months of 1529 and all imbued with untiring pleas for assistance, hardly motivated the rather phlegmatic emperor beyond the extent of some practical suggestions. In early August, for example, Charles seconds Ferdinand's entreaty for the termination of hostilities with France, and considers it his next objective. Later he informs him about the conclusion of the papal-imperial treaty at Barcelona and promises that he will get Clement to excommunicate Zapolya as the latter's teaming up with the infidels is an outrageous and unpardonable sin. Epistolary messages from Charles in early and mid-September recommend the mortgaging to the
Fuggers and Welsers of certain personal assets of Ferdinand's patrimony in order to cover partially the cost of defensive measures.4

The advice of Ferdinand's aunt turned out to be of far greater and lasting value. Archduchess Margaret chides her nephew for having passed up the opportunity to establish a truce with the Porte. She had already recommended such a policy to Ferdinand three years ago in 1526, when he was involved in the quest for the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary, but he had not paid heed. She affirms her awareness of the threat the renewed Turkish offensive may harbor for their dynasty, but she cannot, at least at this particular juncture, offer any effective help. Her own subjects, situated on the distant shores of the Atlantic and far away from the areas likely to suffer from the Asiatic invasion, cannot be aroused for a cause which is not of their immediate concern. The safest and most competent policy in life is to rely always on one's own resources, for promises by others are subject to change. Naturally, Ferdinand should put up a fight against the Turks, but his reaction should be entirely defensive as he cannot afford to risk an open encounter with the enemy. Only in rare instances should rulers venture to lead their armies on open fields and only when they are assured of victory by the sheer superiority of their contingents; otherwise, all military undertakings are to be left to the discretion of professionals, for there is no need for
uncalled royal bloodshed and unnecessary seeking after vain-glory. The latter remark was, no doubt, a clearcut reference to the needless bravura of the late Louis II when he charged upon an enemy whose army was ten times larger than his own.

With the channels of foreign assistance either depleted or forthrightly denied, Ferdinand gradually resigned himself to the necessity of depending on his own resources. As he had already secured some help from the German estates in Speyer, his attention was turned to his kingdoms and hereditary lands. Leaving the affairs of Hungary to his sister Mary, he convoked a diet for mid-August in which both the Austrian and Bohemian estates were to be combined at Linz, the capital city of Upper Austria. Here, escorted by his spouse Anne, he appealed to the congregated deputies for assistance and saw his efforts meet with partial success. Although the Austrian and Moravian representatives voted him substantial aid both in men and money the absence of the Bohemian estates, who refused to attend a summit meeting not held in Prague, considerably reduced this accomplishment. His address before the joint Austro-Moravian delegates at Linz was a memorable one as it clearly embodied the extent of Ferdinand's crusading idealism. Before the German estates in Speyer, he had revealed first his ambition of leading an all-European offensive into the lower Danubian region against the Turks. In Linz, faced by the Austrian and
Moravian estates, he aired no lesser an objective than the actual disestablishment of the Ottoman state in an eastern crusade which would culminate with the liberation of Jerusalem itself. By early September, Ferdinand moved to Prague in order to make a personal appeal before the Bohemian diet. Here he was joined by his sister Mary, who had, in the meantime, lost completely her footing in Hungary and become a political refugee at her brother's Vienna court. Drawn-out negotiations followed then with the Bohemian estates in Prague who were reluctant to aid the Hungarians against whom they had traditionally harbored a patriotic grudge or assist their new monarch uncritically in a venture which might serve to further his own dynastic ambitions. Finally, on October 4, the Prague diet voted 40,000 infantry and 20,000 cavalry to the two desperate Habsburgs -- though, ironically, these troops were never to see any action. It was also here in Prague that Ferdinand received the tidings about the Turkish siege of Vienna and, isolated as he was from his armies, he decided to remain in the Bohemian capital. Some scholars have consequently accused him of cowardice for sitting out the siege of Vienna safely in Prague. Such charges, if scrutinized objectively, hardly hold. Ferdinand's rush from Linz to Prague, well before the Turks ever reached Vienna, was a logical step as he rightly believed in the necessity of a personal appearance before the uncooperative
Bohemian diet if he hoped to stir them into an active participation in common defense measures. Any subsequent effort of his to break through the Turkish siege so that he might join those beleaguered in Vienna would have been tantamount to sheer suicide.

Looking now at the blockaded Austrian capital, certain facts which often slip by unemphasized ought presently to be mentioned. Though the Turkish storming itself lasted for only three weeks, from the third week in September to mid-October, it was not restricted to the surroundings of Vienna, for numerous raiding parties devastated the Austrian countryside, and some foragers managed to get even as far as Linz, more than a hundred and twenty miles to the west. Of the imperial contingent which was voted into existence at Speyer, not more than fourteen infantry companies were able to reach Vienna on time; and none of the Bohemian units. The garrison that defended Vienna -- predominantly of Austrian origin -- has been variously estimated by historians as between 15,000 and 20,000 in strength. These men gave generously of their valor and loyalty to a cause which many in the West had failed to appreciate and withstood subterranean mining operations and numerous assaults against the walls. On October 14, Suleiman called for a final and decisive effort on Vienna and promised enticing rewards for his troops. But their attack was repulsed with great loss, and on the next day the Turkish sultan ordered a retreat. This was his first defeat and also
the first meaningful military victory of the Habsburgs in Central Europe.

The unexpected Turkish abandonment of Vienna has long taxed the imagination of posterity. Experts on Ottoman affairs maintain that as the defenders were on the point of surrender by mid-October, it was a strategical blunder for the Turks to lift the siege prematurely. They also accentuate the weakness inherent within the Ottoman military tradition wherein neither the cavalry nor the infantry would campaign in winter, a season they utilized to while away the time in the salubrious climate of southeastern Europe or Asia Minor. Only a few of these experts are ready to admit that Suleiman's lines of communication were too far extended and which in turn failed to provide his armies with adequate supplies to continue their operations in Austria. But all of them ignore conveniently Ferdinand's efforts in organizing the defenses, the heroism of the Vienna garrison, and that Luther himself, by summoning his adherents to join the Habsburg resistance in the East, created a spiritually united front behind Ferdinand. Had the Turks decided on prolonging their siege of Vienna or staying in Austria the winter of 1529, they most certainly would have aroused the sweeping martial fury of the entire German nation.9

Aside from its immediate advantage militarily, successfully warding off the Turkish invasion of 1529 proved additionally to be of substantial political value to the Habsburgs.
Both Charles and Ferdinand were able, at least for the next few years, to reap certain undeniable benefits from this prestigious event. Yet the Turkish campaign of 1529 also marked the beginning of an eclipse of Habsburg power in Hungary which would remain unaltered, by and large, for the next century and a half.

The orderly retreating Turkish armies reached Buda by late October and were cordially received there by John Zapolya who with his political supporters had established himself in the interim in the Hungarian capital. Suleiman, en route to Constantinople, stopped long enough to confirm his protégé as the lawful ruler of Hungary. The Turks then continued their easterly march and by late-November withdrew completely from Hungary. They had evacuated Hungary once before, three years earlier, but the circumstances involved in 1529 were markedly different; in 1526, they left behind a bleeding but independent nation; now they were leaving one not half so battered but in the orbit of Constantinople.

The Turkish withdrawal from Central Europe encouraged Ferdinand to map out again a plan to oust the Zapolya faction from Hungary. As the troops assigned to him by the various national diets for joint defense measures were to be deployed only against the Turks, he could not redeploy them for his Hungarian objectives. Before releasing these armed contingents from his service by mid-November, however, he planned to retain a portion of them as mercenaries.
Military operations, on a modest scale, were finally undertaken by late December with partial success as a number of western Hungarian counties were recovered. Ferdinand was soon compelled, however, to bring his campaign of 1529 to a halt as he was unable to keep this undertaking financially afloat.11

Naturally he turned first to the emperor for some financial buoyancy before having to admit to himself that his Hungarian enterprise was about to submerge. In a letter to his brother, he makes the following observations: except for a small diplomatic mission which is to supervise the newly established Zapolya regime and its activities, there are no Turkish troops stationed anywhere in Hungary, and the pretender and his followers there command only the limited support of the population. Plans to recover Hungary at this particular juncture are not grandiose or unrealistic. Such schemes would not only please God and be beneficial to their dynasty but, Ferdinand declares rhetorically, would serve all Christianity. Imperial financial aid is mandatory, for his troops cannot be expected to go on fighting without due compensation.12

Charles, who now was anxious to reward his brother for his recent military accomplishments in defense, sanctioned his Hungarian campaign and released to him some funds of an undisclosed amount. By late January, 1530, Ferdinand was again plagued by insolvency and had to repeat his plea for
further succor from the imperial court. After initial success, Ferdinand complains, his Hungarian campaign is beset once more with difficulties. As his troops are unpaid and poorly provisioned, they occasionally resort to plundering the civilian population or desert. Some even defect to Zapolya. He had exhausted all possibilities available; the future fate of Hungary now indisputably rests with Charles.13

The emperor's reply dimmed completely Ferdinand's high hopes about Hungary. On account of his drawn-out Italian campaign, Charles confesses, the imperial treasury is nearly depleted and what has remained is dearly needed to cover the expenses in connection with his forthcoming coronation in Italy as the Holy Roman Emperor. Under such circumstances, there is only one recourse accessible -- a truce with the Turks. Contacts to that end ought to be established with the Ottoman government directly, for any Habsburg negotiation with Zapolya now could entail their de facto recognition of the Hungarian pretender. In order to offset the dismal note about his inability to assist any further his brother's ambitions in the East, the emperor discloses something which Ferdinand had long yearned to see, ever since he had been appointed head of the imperial government of Germany. The auspicious outcome of the Habsburg-Valois warfare in Italy and his reconciliation with the Papacy will enable him, following his imperial coronation, to convene a diet in Germany which he will personally attend. One of his objectives,
among others, will be to secure his brother's nomination for the Roman kingship.\textsuperscript{14}

A promise, weighty and in such concrete form, brought its intended result. Military operations were completely suspended in Hungary in spite of the fact that Zapolya managed -- through a rump diet that had assembled at Buda in February, 1530 -- to have the Habsburgs declared officially dethroned in Hungary. Ferdinand even went along with Charles's plans of seeking a truce with Constantinople as he sent his ambassadors to the Porte in May, along with Charles's. This initial Habsburg-Turkish peace program, however, misfired. Documentary evidence amply indicates that Ferdinand's diplomacy with Suleiman was anything but realistic: he demanded nothing less than the unconditional Turkish abandonment of Zapolya and a promise of complete non-intervention of the Turks in the affairs of Hungary. If these preliminary conditions are not met shortly, he states in his instructions, the Ottoman state will have to face the concerted wrath and fury of all Christendom, whose military machinery Ferdinand will command. Ferdinand's representatives also pressed their master's claim of legality to Hungary's throne in contrast to that of Zapolya.\textsuperscript{15} Such short-sighted arguments and vainglorious threats stalled at once any hope for truce negotiations and showed that Ferdinand accepted the status quo in Hungary only as a temporary measure, for he really never relinquished his hopes of her
eventual reconquest.

Before concluding Ferdinand's eastern activities, there is one piece of correspondence worthy of mention. Although this particular missive by Ferdinand does not concern itself with any of the cogent religious and political issues then weighing on his mind, its contents are significant because they throw substantial light on his character and personality. Addressing his imperial brother in Italy in the early spring of 1530 from the Bohemian town of Budweiss, already an important commercial center and famed for its brewery industry, he dwells at great length upon the matrimonial difficulties then facing the royal family of England. Henry VIII's dissatisfaction with his spouse, Catherine of Aragon and the maternal aunt of Ferdinand and Charles, and his feverish attempts to have the Church dissolve this marriage for raisons d'état and to satisfy his own concupiscent impulses, had become the cause célèbre of the early sixteenth century. As the Tudor king's efforts to obtain an annulment of his marital union by ecclesiastical pronouncement had repeatedly proved abortive, he now appealed to the universities of Europe for favorable adjudication.

Ferdinand is apprehensive that Henry will yet, despite the inhibitory position steadfastly maintained by the Papacy, accomplish his goals unconventionally. Matrimony is one of the holy sacraments, moralizes Ferdinand to his brother; it permanently couples two people for life's duration; its
binding ties, with the exception of a few instances, are not to be abolished unless death claims one of those involved; therefore, he sums up sententiously, divorce is unjustifiable and inexcusable. Should the King of England ever succeed in breaking up his marriage, Ferdinand will at once resign his knighthood in the Order of St. George and return its insignia which has been granted to him by someone whose hands will then be soiled by a repulsive deed.\(^\text{16}\)

These uncompromising, orthodox maxims of Ferdinand regarding a possible Tudor divorce should not take the reader by surprise. Ferdinand was, above all, a good Catholic and doctrinaire with respect to the dissolubility of marriage. Moreover, a constitution interlaced with implastic moral fibers predestined him to attempt a morally immaculate life and to bestow upon his own marriage a halo of perfection and impeccability. As a duty-conscious Habsburg prince who loved his dynasty and constantly was worrying about its well-being, he could hardly have closed his eyes to an impending act which might bring disgrace to a member of his family. Ferdinand's outright condemnation of Henry VIII's plans was presumably fed by that course of action the Tudor court had recently twice chosen to follow in 1527 and 1528 respectively when both the Salamanca and Faber missions were flatly rebuffed in London.

A survey of the Habsburg activities in the East, from the conclusion of the second Diet of Speyer to mid-spring,
1530, has been completed. Attention now will shift to those events meanwhile transpiring in the West. Some of these events actually began before this interim and came to an end in this period, while others, growing out of the first, naturally were encompassed by this time.

One of these events concerned the relationship between the emperor and pope. Defeated and humiliated by the imperialist armies and forsaken by his French, English, and Italian allies who had failed to come to his assistance in the hour of his direst need, Clement VII soon realized his pas de faux. Accordingly, the Roman pontiff's prime objective grew to be a desire to achieve a separate peace with the emperor. Negotiations to such ends between Rome and Madrid had already commenced in the fall of 1528 and continued into 1529 without any concrete results. The diplomatic impasse was finally broken in the summer of 1529 by the news of the renewed Turkish offensive, and a truce was soon concluded between these former belligerents. The time was June 29 and the place, the Spanish town of Barcelona; Cardinal Campeggio headed the team of papal envoys and the imperial side was guided by the exceptionally capable and highly influential Chancellor Gattinara.

The signatories of the Peace of Barcelona declared themselves, in the typically high-flown diplomatic language of the age, to join hands for three explicit objectives -- to heal the spiritual schism of Christendom, to promote a
general peace among the European powers, and to ward off the Turkish invasion. Indirectly, Ferdinand, too, was remembered; without mentioning the name of Zapolya, the Holy See agreed to excommunicate any prince of Christendom who has degraded himself by becoming an ally of the Turks. The most significant stipulation of the Barcelona Peace, which also marks a new direction in Habsburg policy, is Charles's insistence upon and Clement's compliance with his desire to convene a general Church council to remedy the breach within Christendom. What motives could have led the emperor into this new course of strategy in which a general Church council became such a pressing goal? Perhaps as he surveyed Clement's opposition to such an idea, he became convinced that Clement's traditional hostility to Spanish interests in Italy could not have been the sole factor for the dragging of the papal heels. Perhaps Charles came to feel that the Medici Papacy had a great fear that such a council would force the ecclesiastical apex of the Church to set its own house in order if it hoped to heal the German confessional crisis. Clement would have to be forced to take such a step.

One of the consequences and necessary corollaries of the papal-imperial truce was the ending, for the time being, of the Habsburg-Valois conflict. Though peace between these two leading dynasties in Europe was expected by the general populace, both contestants were adamant when it came to making the first conciliatory gesture. In spite of an
uninterrupted series of French military disasters in Italy, Francis showed no real interest in stopping the hostilities, while the apathetic Charles, in spite of Ferdinand's continued pleas from the East, made no genuine effort to terminate this war of attrition in the West. What these two men were unprepared to do, two women accomplished with ease, Margaret, Regent of the Low Countries, and Louise of Savoy, mother of Francis, who put an end to the comedy of rulers and taught a lesson in the art and wisdom of peace to their respective nephew and son. On August 3, 1529, Margaret and Louise managed to have both parties conclude a conciliatory treaty at Cambrai, a town near the French border and then under imperial jurisdiction. The truce, on account of its feminine initiative, is known to posterity as the *Paix des Dames*, or the "Ladies' Peace."

The explicit terms of the Peace of Cambrai need no elaboration here. With few exceptions, it was a mere repetition of those stipulations that Charles had coerced Francis into honoring in 1526 at Madrid. What was new was Charles's willingness, in exchange for 2,000,000 gold crowns, to release from his custody the two sons of Francis and to relinquish the legal claims the late Duke of Bourbon once had against the French crown. Like all other peace treaties concluded in the past between the Habsburgs and the Valois, the Cambrai reconciliation was hardly of permanent value. In reality, it merely provided the exhausted French
monarch with breathing space to recover and to intrigue again against the imperial dynasty in order to break his nation's encirclement. For Charles, it merely brought a temporary respite from his embroilments in Italy and gave him a second chance to solve the political and confessional problems in Germany.

In the summer of 1529 Charles reached the summit of his public career and began new imperial strategy. With the submission of the Papacy and the anti-Habsburg coalition in Italy, he was indeed on the way to becoming the unopposed dominant ruler in the West. Two objectives, however, remained to be accomplished to complete the imperial grandeur -- the receipt of the imperial diadem from the hands of the Roman pontiff and the coercion of Germany into accepting the national kingship of his dynasty. Prior to this time, Charles had remained in Spain for eight years, growing steadily more Iberian in his outlook and sympathies and attempting to rule his vast territorial holdings through deputies. His undue attention to and exclusive preoccupation with the affairs and interests of Spain he now realized were a mistake. From the summer of 1529 he delegated the interests of Spain to a secondary place and gave Germany first consideration.

The emperor landed at Genoa August 12 and his historical encounter with the pope saw fruition, after some delay, in early November. In the intervening three-month period, Charles made arrangements for a final territorial settlement
in Italy which was far from what might have been dictated by a greedy victor. In fact, his plan for reorganization of the Apennine peninsula was remarkable for its moderation, and his accent was placed on the goal of achieving political stability. In spite of their frequent treacheries and disloyalties toward the emperor in the course of the 1527-29 Habsburg-Valois involvement, nearly all the Italian petty sovereigns were allowed to retain their original holdings, and the indemnity levied upon them was hardly excessive. Even the illegitimate line of the Medici family, of which Clement himself was a member, was restored to power in Florence. As a final measure, to protect the future status quo of the new Habsburg order in Italy, a league under imperial auspices was created which included all political entities of the Apennine peninsula.\textsuperscript{19}

It was during the emperor's Italian sojourn that a three-man delegation, dispatched by those Lutheran princes of Germany who had authored the famous Speyer Protestation, reached Charles at the city of Piacenza. By handing over the authentic text of this protest and explaining the circumstances under which it was drafted, the German envoys' indubitable aim was to excuse and justify the action of those whose signatures this document bore. Though granting them an audience on September 13, Charles gave them no immediate personal reply. On the next day, through his secretary Alexander Schweiss, he informed the German delegates that he
was well acquainted, via the good offices of Ferdinand, with what had transpired at the last diet and was resolved to maintain the constitutionality of the recess then passed. He had already notified the Saxon elector and his associates to obey unconditionally the decree published by the Diet of Speyer of 1529, calling upon the allegiance which the German princes owed him and the empire. Should they disobey him, he would be obliged, for the maintenance of his imperial dignity and for example's sake, to execute appropriate punishment.

Anticipating too well what the emperor's reaction might be, the German delegates had prepared in advance a memorandum in which they appealed to their right for each to follow his individual conscience, and it was turned over to the imperial secretary. Irked and unduly provoked by the audacity of this three-man German Protestant delegation, whose humble middle-class origins must have weighed heavily against them, the emperor ordered their immediate arrest. Charles's act was undoubtedly rash and unwise, for the forceful detention of these delegates further widened that confessional gap already in existence in the empire and unnecessarily provided with heroic haloes three obscure German subjects.

Setting out from Piacenza on October 23, the emperor now went on to meet the pope at Bologna. Here, on November 5, the two universal powers of Europe -- one in matters spiritual and the other a pontiff in the secular -- encountered
each other. As both Clement and Charles shared the same palatial residence in Bologna and were virtually next door to each other, discussions between them were carried out on a personal basis, largely without any diplomatic aides. Though there are a few sporadic notes that Charles took down during his protracted negotiations with the Roman pontiff, they are inconclusive. Far more significant is the letter the emperor received from his aunt during his Bologna stay. Margaret asserts that Ferdinand should be helped at once in his struggle with the Ottoman Turks, and the only logical source of money for such a purpose is through the sale of ecclesiastical lands throughout the Habsburg realms. Pressure ought to be brought on Clement to endorse such policy. Then she advances her solution for the religious schism in the empire, calling for a conciliar approach of her own unique variety: three simultaneously held and yet separate general Church councils, each presided over by a member of their dynasty. Charles should be firm with the pope, and force him, if he must, to the acceptance of conciliarism, and Charles himself should adopt it as a main feature of his program. 21

While Margaret's speculations about a tripartite Church council may be dismissed as too illusory, the salient fact remains that she believed in the conciliar approach for the solution of Germany's religious disunity. It is, therefore, quite possible that Charles, who had always welcomed his
aunt's advice, was himself inclined along such lines of reasoning. There are two additional facts that could further validate the previous assumptions: Charles's envoys during the Barcelona negotiations explicitly requested and obtained the papal pledge for a council; the all-important imperial chancellor, Gattinara, whose recommendations Charles was always prone to heed, was a well-known champion of a peaceful and multilateral solution to the German confessional schism by the efforts of an all-European ecclesiastical assembly. In one of his dispatches, penned shortly before his death, he makes himself unmistakably clear to the emperor: "Assemble the pious men of all nations, and let a free council deduce from the Word of God a scheme of doctrine such as may be received by every people."\textsuperscript{22}

Unfortunately for the future fate of Germany and Christendom, there was little real sympathy between the emperor and pope, even as late as their Bologna encounter. Though cowed by the sack of Rome and made politically dependent on the emperor since that incident, Clement, as an Italian Renaissance prince, considered the destruction of Spanish footing in Italy more vital to the Papacy's interest than the restoration of Christendom's spiritual unity. As the supreme overseer of the Church he must have, no doubt, wished to save Germany for Rome, but for such ends he would not risk any action that might involve the slightest chance for the diminution of papal power and pretensions which might plausibly
grow out of a free, general council of the Church with the anti-papal tradition of Constance and Basel behind it. Thus the papal objectives in connection with Germany's religious ills, which he ventilated at Bologna in late 1529, were, in all probability, diametrically opposed to those advanced by the emperor and his entourage. There is sufficient documentary proof that Clement -- and especially his much trusted diplomatic prop, Cardinal Campeggio -- pressed for a completely unilateral solution through the instituting of violence. Classifying the German reformers as ordinary heretics, the Holy See urged Charles to confiscate their properties (and here was the papal remedy for raising funds against the Turks) and prosecute them through inquisitorial procedures matching the severity of those inaugurated against the Albigensians. Perhaps Clement hoped not only to wipe out German Protestantism but also embroil the emperor in an open warfare with forces of the Reformation which, in turn, would weaken the imperial position in general. The extent to which these two contradictory and markedly different approaches -- the council and the sword -- were reconciled with each other remains unknown.

These papal-imperial discussions were prolonged till January, 1530. Charles seemed to be in no particular haste; the passes of the Alps were locked, avalanches and snow-drifts threatened those who would scale their precipices at that season; and news pertaining to the Turkish withdrawal
from Central Europe obliterated any need he might feel to rush to Ferdinand's rescue. Here in the salubrious climate of Bologna, on January 20, he issued a summons for a German imperial diet which was to be held at Augsburg in April and which he would personally attend. "Let us put an end to all discord," the emperor appealed to the German estates, "let us renounce our antipathies; let us fight under one and the same leader -- Jesus Christ -- and let us strive thus to meet in one communion, one Church, and one unity."24 Couched in terms remarkably gracious, the imperial summons unmistakably reflected that conciliatory and sympathetic spirit which was then moving the emperor.

Before concluding his Italian sojourn and as a fitting climax to the papal-imperial rapprochement, Charles was bestowed at Bologna with the supreme token of secular power his imagination had ever envisioned. With his traditionalist and legalist mind, he would, no doubt, have preferred to be crowned in the Eternal City instead of Bologna. For sheer tactical reasons then, plausibly to avoid Clement's resentment over the devastation Charles's troops had inflicted upon Rome, he acquiesced in the selection of another city. On February 22, Charles accordingly received the iron crown of Lombardy and two days later the imperial golden diadem in the midst of the customary pomp, glory, and military display provided by the best traditions to be found in late-medieval Europe. The Caesars' crown on his brow, brought to Charles,
as Emperor of the Romans, not only the realization that he had attained the loftiest secular summit in Christendom but also made him feel he had restored the unity which should always reside between the earth's highest temporal and spiritual authorities. Furthermore, the day selected for his imperial coronation -- February 24, 1530 -- was the thirtieth anniversary of his birth and the sixth of the imperial victory in the fields of Pavia, the very turning-point of his career.

It was now the beginning of April. Spring had unlocked the passes of the Alps and Charles, with the purpose of meeting the diet he had summoned to Augsburg, departed from Bologna for Germany. Proceeding at a snail's-pace and retarded by omnipresent festivities staged in his honor along the way, the imperial retinue -- via Mantua, Trent, and the Brenner Pass -- reached the boundaries of the empire at Innsbruck by late May. In this Austrian city, there were additional blissful hours in store for the emperor, springing from a rare reunion with members of his family as both Ferdinand and Mary had rushed there to meet him. Another event, however, darkened the gay spirit prevailing at Innsbruck. Here, on June 5, Charles's long-time diplomatic aide and one of his most competent statesman, Chancellor Gattinara, was taken ill and died. 25 Having spent his entire life in unceasing labor for the Habsburgs, Gattinara undoubtedly was responsible for the numerous accomplishments of Charles, and
his untimely demise was duly mourned by Protestants in the empire, for they recognized his generally tolerant spirit and his untiring championing of a conciliar solution to German confessional crisis. In an age of bigotry, one of these flickering flames of moderation had been extinguished.

The emperor finally moved again with his entourage which included, in addition to his brother and sister, Cardinal Campeggio in the official capacity as papal legate to the forthcoming Augsburg proceedings. On June 6, the imperial party reached Munich, the capital city of the religiously-orthodox Bavarian state, and made an entry through streets richly decorated with Habsburg insignia and thronged with applauding crowds. On June 15, the imperial court approached the outskirts of Augsburg.26

Before discussing the Diet of Augsburg of 1530, a brief examination is needed of the German scene at the eve of the emperor's return. The unprecedented military and political victories scored by the Habsburgs during the course of 1529 in the West as well as in the East dramatically underlined the necessity for union among the ranks of German Protestants so that they could present a solid front against their political and confessional adversaries. The Landgrave of Hesse, who had undertaken with characteristic ardor the cumbersome task of reconciling the doctrinal differences between the German and Swiss Protestants, saw his work capped by the divisive trends inherent in names. The former came
to be known as Lutherans, the latter the Reformed. He had hoped to iron out the doctrinal differences between the two groups to cement together an energetic, defensive coalition against the Habsburgs and their allies in both Germany and Switzerland. Shortly after his return from the second Diet of Speyer, he sent out invitations to the heads of Protestant parties whom he wished to gather together for a religious discussion at his castle in Marburg.

This religious conference, lasting from October 1 to 3, 1529, took the name of the Marburg Colloquy in German history and brought together all the notable divines on either side. With Luther came Melanchthon, Jonas, and Argicola; with Zwingli, Bucer and Oecolampadius. Although they reached an agreement on fourteen of fifteen articles of faith discussed, they differed with respect to the nature of Eucharist. In spite of this doctrinal deadlock, the Marburg conference was not an absolute failure, for both parties consented to refrain from controversial polemics and observe peace and charity among themselves.

A series of meetings at this time, designed for the purpose of finding a common theological denominator between the northern and southern estates of the empire, hardly contributed to the cause of German Protestant harmony. These doctrinal deliberations were concluded on October 16, with the promulgation of seventeen statements of faith, known after the town of their origin, the Schwabach Articles.
Since these represented a strict interpretation of the Wittenberg position, a number of South German towns -- Strasbourg, Ulm, Constance, Lindau, and Memmingen, for example -- refused to accept them.\(^{27}\)

The third and final attempt at reconciliation between Germany's Protestant factions before the Diet of Augsburg proved to be even more disheartening. At a conference, held in the Thuringian town of Schmalkalden in December, 1529, the two principal secular champions of the German Reformation -- the Saxon elector and the Hessian landgrave -- bitterly clashed over their respective viewpoints regarding both doctrinal issues and the proper course of future political action. The much older and more conservatively inclined head of Saxony repeatedly refused to unite -- either doctrinally or politically -- with any other German coalition that still professed asherence to the Zwinglian interpretation of the Eucharist. The more fiery, impetuous, and aggressive head of Hesse was primarily motivated -- on account of the threatening political situation -- by his genuine concern for the defense of the Reformation, at all cost, regardless of conflicting theological viewpoints, and was therefore willing to ally with virtually anybody. Furthermore, Saxony strove for a recognition of the strictest Lutheranism and contemplated no political action against the emperor while Hesse advocated the promotion of international Protestantism -- even by arms if need be -- and securing of
all help possible from Habsburg enemies abroad.\textsuperscript{28} With these sharp disagreements on fundamental religious issues and major policy between Saxony and Hesse, the chasm dividing German Protestantism was widest in a particularly perilous hour when more political sagacity and less dogmatic zeal should have been cultivated.

The emperor's summons for the Augsburg diet, issued from Bologna in January, 1530, designated early April for its commencement, and this, coupled with his own belated mid-June arrival, provided the German delegates with ample opportunity to reconnoiter. The first to reach the scene of the forthcoming summit meeting, in early May, was the more conservative faction of German Protestantism. Led by the Elector of Saxony, this group had managed a month prior to its arrival to compile -- through the efforts of the Wittenberg theologians -- a summary on the tenets of undiluted Lutheranism so that it might be presented, in systematical form, before the diet. It was also escorted by a team of divines from whose rank Luther had been excluded. Since the Wittenberg reformer was nominally still under the imperial ban, the Saxon elector prudently left him behind at his castle at Coburg -- a few days' journey to the north of Augsburg and on Saxon territory -- from where he could be kept \textit{au courrant} with the transactions through letters.

The doctrinally more liberal and politically more defiant section of German Protestantism was the next to follow.
Headed by the Landgrave of Hesse and trailed by a large retinue of colorful armed retainers, this party must have believed in the necessity of displaying its political weight through symbols of authority and emblazoned trophies of power. In the second half of May, a stately procession of ecclesiastical electors and high Church dignitaries of the empire passed through the gates of Augsburg. Last to arrive by late May were the ultra-Catholic princes and die-hard advocates of the Habsburg cause — the Elector of Brandenburg and the Duke of Saxony — who imitated the representatives of German Protestantism's more refractory wing in their wish to make an indelible impression through the massive number of armed subordinates who escorted them. At last came the crown and flower of all those grand spectacles — the emperor himself. After a prolonged absence of nine years and standing seemingly on the pinnacle of his power, Charles had finally arrived to deal personally with the domestic ills of the empire.

The emperor's entry into Augsburg, amidst a splendid and cordial reception, took place on June 15, on the eve of the Corpus Christi feast, but the diet itself did not commence until June 20. In the five-day interval, the spirit of religious antagonism emerged to rasp the fervent welcome he had been accorded. On the evening of his arrival, he requested the Protestant princes, at a special audience, to impose silence on their preachers for the duration of their
stay in Augsburg and to join him in the Corpus Christi procession on the following day. He was met by a courteous but firm refusal on the grounds of conscience and doctrine. Fortunately for the sake of harmony so dearly needed at the diet, the preliminary skirmish between the emperor and his Protestant subjects was quickly ironed out by Ferdinand. Acting as his brother's spokesman and interpreter, he managed to bring about a compromise by convincing both sides to modify their stand. According to the terms of Ferdinand's conciliatory arrangement, the Protestant members of the diet were excused from participating in the religious procession, and they accepted the emperor's promise to appoint clergymen whose sermons would avoid touching on confessional questions presently under dispute, thereby refraining from inciting further controversy during the Augsburg proceedings. 

At length, the 20th of June arrived and the delegates, congregating in Augsburg's renowned city hall, held their first session. For the next five-month period, until the second half of November or as long as this diet lasted, Ferdinand, changing the pattern of other such previous occasions, was not in the spotlight. Due to his brother's presiding over all the diet's transactions, he had to assume a secondary role which, with the exception of one singular instance, would relegate him to the background where he would act in an advisory capacity to the emperor. After some inaugural addresses delivered in strong partisan tones
by the papal representatives, the emperor outlined -- through the Elector of the Palatinate since he spoke no German -- the topics which were to be considered by the Diet of Augsburg. Stipulating them under three separate headings, he recommended them in the following priority: Hungary and the continued Turkish menace, the question of confessional disunity, and plans for the radical reorganization of the imperial government in Germany. The majority of the delegates, however, whatever their religious persuasion, insisted on and managed to pass a resolution stating that the religious issue would be tackled first. Next, opportunities were sought for the presentation of confessional problems in order to set debate into progress. The Protestant party, through Chancellor Brück of Saxony, petitioned that they might be allowed to expound briefly the substance of their doctrine before the emperor and the diet. This request was sanctioned.

This confession of faith, based on an enlarged and slightly remodeled version of the Torgau Articles by Melanchthon, was presented on June 25. The document, which was read by Chancellors Brück and Bayer in German and Latin respectively, bore the signatures of all the princes who had signed the Protestation at Speyer the previous year, with the addition of the Saxon elector's eldest son, John Frederick, and Count Albrecht of Mansfeld. Of the cities, only two of the fourteen signatories of the Speyer Protestation -- Nuernberg and Reutlingen -- adhered. The absence of
the other twelve is significant in showing the rapid spread
of the Swiss or Zwinglian influence in contrast to the con-
fessional certitudes of the Wittenberg faction.

This statement of faith -- known to the delegates and
posterity as Confessio Augustana, or Augsburg Confession --
was a religious account so manifestly designed to facilitate
peace that it eventually frightened men of conviction.
While its explicit theological tenets cannot be detailed
here, a few general characteristics should be given. It was
divided into two parts -- one treating doctrinal matters, the
other ecclesiastical abuses. The first was geared either to
minimize the doctrinal points at issue between the two sides
or to amplify the common basis of divergence from the Zwing-
lian and Anabaptist stand and those once embraced by various
medieval heretics. The second part, less temperate and more
outspoken in tone, forcibly inveighed from both theological
and practical considerations against a number of clerical
abuses and a multiplicity of uncanonical usages and ceremo-
nies. Its essential objective was, in fact, to prove that
the exclusion of the Lutherans from the Church had been un-
justifiable, and that the antagonism between the two parties,
Catholic and Lutheran, was merely a divergence of opinion in
regard to certain traditions. Melanchthon's Augsburg Confes-
sion belongs more to those diplomatic masterpieces of concil-
iation than to those noted for their expression of strong
faith. 32
Melanchthon's document, designed to state the Evangelical tenets in a conciliatory form with a view to a possible accommodation, failed of its purpose as Luther had foretold. Its presentation provoked a mixed repercussion, ranging from the recommendation of moderate to reactionary courses of action. The diet's more temperate majority, however, advocated the examination of the Lutheran Confession for both virtues and errors by competent theologians. Only in case it contained doctrines contrary to the tenets of the old faith, should penal measures be considered against its exponents if they refused to retract. This was the course endorsed by the emperor himself, who saw hope in the mildness of Melanchthon's statement of faith and wished to play the part of an arbiter. With such intention in mind, he commissioned several Catholic theologians -- the chief among whom were Faber, Eck, and Cochlaus, all old antagonists of Luther -- to scrutinize the document. The ultimate result of this effort, known as the Confutation, whose first drafts were rejected by the emperor for their violent invective, was presented and passed by the diet August 3. Though moderate and even courteous in tone in its revised version, this statement of faith stoutly upheld the existing system and usages of orthodoxy, cited authority more than Scripture, and pointed out in its conclusion that the claim of the Confession to be in general accord with Catholicism could not honestly be maintained.\(^\text{33}\)
Apparently dismayed by the deadlock reached in the religious deliberations and probably anxious to accelerate the adjournment of the diet, Landgrave Philip -- who by now was more an advocate of the Zwinglian faction than that of Wittenberg and opposed from the very outset to any union with the old faith -- secretly left Augsburg August 6 without asking imperial permission. The emperor, of course, was in no position to close the diet as virtually nothing concrete had so far been accomplished. Inclined to break the confessional impass by means of diplomacy, he appointed and ordered a bipartisan sub-committee to continue the negotiations. Thus, for the next six weeks, deliberations went on, during the course of which Melanchthon repeatedly displayed an extraordinary sense of enthusiasm for making further concessions to the Catholics, and the Protestant princes themselves showed a proclivity to make substantial restoration of confiscated Church property. Both parties of the committee re-examined the Augsburg Confession meticulously; in many of its tenets no divergence from orthodoxy was discovered; with regard to many others, a certain amount of harmony was achieved, but in case of others it was impossible to come to any understanding.\(^{34}\)

Actually, the fundamental issues irrevocably clashing with one another in this prolonged religious colloquy were not necessarily diverging dogmas, alterations in ecclesiastical discipline, or even the question of episcopal
jurisdiction; the real crux of the matter was the acceptance or rejection of the institution of the Papacy and its infallibility -- whose lawful existence could not be justified to the Protestants on any Scriptural basis. Luther's forebodings that there could be no plucking up of the roots of religious disunity proved to be right. Writing from his Coburg retreat to Melanchthon in late August, the Wittenberg reformer asserted that the confessional dialogues could lead nowhere unless the Roman pontiff was willing to abolish his Papacy, and he urged his lieutenant at Augsburg to terminate the fruitless negotiations and come back home.35

The imperial designs for which the Diet of Augsburg had been summoned were manifestly miscarrying. The unhappy emperor must have been at his wit's end and was joined, no doubt, in this dismay by Ferdinand. To complete this imbroglio, an edict arrived from a consistory of cardinals whose meeting, held at Rome June 6, disallowed and rejected in toto the Lutheran statement of faith as "opposed to the religion and prejudicial to the discipline and government of the Church."36 In light of this authoritative stand taken by the Papacy, chances for confessional rapprochement at Augsburg, even on a tentative basis, were altogether out of the question. The failure of his attempts at reconciliation and his frustrating experience in acting as mediator between Catholics and Protestants gradually became evident to the emperor. No other course, therefore, was left to him than
to draw up a recess which pertained exclusively to religious matters and in agreement with the views professed by the Catholic majority of the estates.

In this recess Charles authoritatively declared that the Augsburger Confession had been incontestably refuted with arguments drawn from the Gospel and Scripture. It allowed its adherents a six-month respite — until August 15, 1531 — in which to accept tentatively the articles of the Confutation pending the decision of a general Church council. In this period of grace hereby extended, the Protestant estates were to prohibit further controversy through the press in matters of faith, refrain from any renewed efforts of proselytizing in behalf of their creed within their own territories and elsewhere, and assist the imperial government and the Catholic estates in the persecution of the Zwinglians and Anabaptists. In return, Charles promised to use his influence with the pope to summon a general council for the reformation of practical abuses within the Church.37

As the Protestant estates were by no means disposed to acquiesce to this recess, the result was a reaction against the whole idea of compromise. Embodied in the form of a countermand and known as the Apology, it was presented to the emperor and the diet, on behalf of the Protestant princes and six cities, by the Saxon Chancellor Brück on September 23. Couched in stronger terms than the Confession itself, the new Protestant reply denied the contention of the recess that the
Confession had been confuted substantially from Gospel and Scripture, declared the signatories' determination to abide by it, and withdrew many concessions previously already granted. It also emphasized, as at Speyer in 1529, the signatories' allegiance to the Word of God and to their consciences while declaring their readiness to obey the emperor and the diet in all lawful matters. At the same time, it was greatly weakened by its hostility towards the Zwinglians and Anabaptists. Having presented their final stand in matters of faith and showing a marked unwillingness to consider any other issues remaining on the diet's agenda, the Protestant princes, led by the Saxon elector, withdrew, with imperial sanctions, from the Augsburg proceedings. Sectarianism had triumphed.

Since only two cities signed the Augsburg Confession and an additional four the Apology, efforts were next made by those still remaining to secure a peaceful accommodation with other refractory cities of the empire. These endeavors with urban representatives still present at the diet suffered the fate of those undertaken with the Protestant princes and thus came to naught. Only two towns -- Nördlingen and Esslingen -- yielded to the recess; others, like Strassburg, Memmingen, Constance, and Lindau, for example, adhered to their own separate Confessio Tetrapolitana, and others -- Frankfurt, Ulm, Schwabach, and Hall -- outrightly refused to submit. To add to the further embarrassment of the imperial
party and the protagonists of religious orthodoxy, the list of defiant towns was joined by Augsburg itself. Despite the disunity that seemed to be so alarming within the Protestant ranks of Germany before the diet, the number of remonstrant princes and cities at Augsburg came to equal the number which had signed the Protestation at Speyer in 1529.\(^{39}\)

The insistence of both the Catholic and Protestant estates upon deliberating first the German religious problem before anything else on the diet's agenda left the issue of Turkish aid completely untouched as late as early autumn. Although it is quite conceivable -- as some scholars in the field suggest -- that the Protestant delegates during the diet occasionally verbalized their willingness to appropriate among themselves enough of a subsidy for an adequate anti-Turkish defense provided the imperial party would mitigate its rigid doctrinal criteria for confessional unity, the official minutes of the Augsburg summit show no evidence of this, and one is compelled to assume that such bargainings were conducted behind the scenes. As the earlier recess and its corollary *Apolo gia* deadlocked attempts at any substantive reconciliation between the two rival faiths, chances for securing an all-German response on the Turkish issue so important to Ferdinand, seemed a far-off hope; then, with the retreat of the Protestant princely estates and some of their urban coreligionists from Augsburg by late September, expectations of such an end were further dimmed. With only
a Catholic rump remaining in session, an attempt was as last, by mid-October, made to introduce a bill to obtain defensive appropriations against the Ottoman threat.

For the purpose of addressing the representatives and presiding over the ensuing debate, the imperial choice fell upon Ferdinand whose activities at the Augsburg Diet up to this point are entirely undocumented in the minutes and probably unimportant and incidental. Delegating his brother to make his first and only public appearance during the Diet of Augsburg instead of holding forth himself with interpreters as usual, the emperor was not completely altruistic in his motives. He must have been aware that Ferdinand, on account of his linguistic efficiency and his proven ability against the infidels in Central Europe, was a far greater asset for this particular legislative measure than he was. Ferdinand's appearance before the delegates on October 16, unescorted by Charles, was propitious as he was greeted with a standing ovation by them because of his impressive record in struggling with the Ottoman tide.

Ferdinand, in his German address, briefly outlined the major episodes of his 1529 campaign, though he omitted any reference to his haphazard endeavors by which he had striven to dislodge the Zapolya regime in Hungary. By quoting statistical evidence to dramatize the extent to which the Ottoman resources outnumbered his own in 1529, he managed to impress them with reliable intelligence reports.
whose messages spelled out an even more intensified Turkish invasion in the future. In the resolution passed with ease the following day and signed into law shortly by the emperor, the diet pledged itself to provide Ferdinand with 60,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry during the next three-year period with the stipulation that these contingents be deployed for no other purpose than a defensive one within the bounds of the empire. Upon Ferdinand's specific request at the ensuing session, the diet agreed to modify its former definition of the empire by amending it with the qualitative adjective "historical," thereby extending its boundaries to include both Austria and Bohemia. Though Hungary was lost and no proposal was submitted either by the diet or Ferdinand to encourage its reconquest, the new imperial decree, coupled with the Austrian and Bohemian resources he could draw upon, provided handsomely for the future protection of the Habsburg realms in the East.

When all efforts to reconcile German Protestantism with Rome had proved to be utterly without success at the diet, the imperial council went into deliberation to consider a proper course of action against the recalcitrants, should they continue to defy the imperial law after the expiration of the period of grace. Cardinal Campeggio, who worked hard to prevent the emperor from coming to terms with the Lutherans, counselled recourse to arms and from the ranks of secular dignitaries only the Elector of Brandenburg and the Duke
of Saxony were sufficiently sincere or sufficiently bigoted in their orthodox religious belief to favor the use of forcible measures. When this proposal, however, came to a vote before the imperial council, the militant Catholic clique was overwhelmed by the moderate Catholic majority. In the forefront of opposition to subduing the recusants by force stood the two Bavarian dukes whose unpliant anti-Habsburg and pro-French orientation now divided the Catholic party at the critical moment. The Wittelsbach core also attracted to its fold the hitherto uncommitted Elector Louis of the Palatinate and two of the ecclesiastical electors, the Archbishops of Mainz and Cologne. These German dignitaries, no doubt, would have welcomed an end to the confessional schism but not if it involved assigning additional power to the Habsburgs who, with many triumphs elsewhere, looked capable of making all too real the imperial position of strength in Germany. In addition to furthering their political particularism, the Bavarian princes were determined to block, out of sheer dynastic rivalry, Ferdinand's election to the kingship of the Romans, an honor the older Wittelsbach prince, William, coveted for himself.

The moderate viewpoint of the Catholic majority took the day at the diet. The resolution thus passed favored, instead of aggressive action through arms, a course of legal proceedings against the Protestant estates. While it recommended the enforcement of the Edict of Worms with strict
injunctions among all estates, it underlined the advisability of making further attempts, through peaceful means, of winning over the religiously obdurate orders. In the six-month interim, the Catholic estates were not to resort to arms, save in case of unprovoked aggression against them on the part of the Protestants.

In accord with and in the spirit of the resolution supported by the majority of the diminished diet, a final recess was promulgated on November 19. This famous recess of Augsburg and an imperial decree over Charles's signature condemned all phases of Protestantism, renewed the Edict of Worms against its subverters, restored the jurisdiction of the Catholic hierarchy, restored in Protestant territories its seized ecclesiastical property, and empowered the Reichskammergericht, or the Imperial Court of Justice, to deal with all contraventions of these provisions. Germany's Protestant estates were to have until April 15, 1531, to accept the tenets of Conformation peaceably, and within that period were offered immunity from the Edict of Worms.42 Thereafter, without force and only through means of litigation, Protestants could be sued and deprived of ecclesiastical revenues with which they had enriched themselves at the expense of the Catholic Church. And in a more remote future, if the Protestants of Germany should still prove to be intractable and if commitments elsewhere would permit, the emperor might have to solve the religious divisions by
force.

In customary fashion, the promulgation of the recess signalled the adjournment of the diet on the next day. With the two most burdensome issues facing the empire eliminated -- the problem of religious unity and the question of German subsidy against future intrusion of the Turks -- but eliminated only to the partial satisfaction of the Habsburgs by the remaining delegates, the emperor now turned to dealing with his third objective. Ever since 1524, after Ferdinand's generous contributions of both manpower and money to the success of the imperial arms at Pavia, Charles must have given some thought to the elevation of his brother to the kingship of the Romans. Ferdinand's gallant resistance in 1529 against an enemy so disproportionate to his own resources and his subsequent loss of Hungary presumably crystallized these random thoughts into a solid determination by 1530. This act, if sanctioned by Germany's supreme lawmakers, would assure the timely succession of their dynasty there and also transform the major structure of Germany's imperial government; it would end the impotent and disrespected Reichsregiment headed by Ferdinand and invest Ferdinand, in its stead, with sufficient power and dignity to command respect. Circumstances favoring the carrying out of such a design were particularly optimal by late 1530. Charles's presence in Germany and his recent imperial coronation at Bologna, a constitutional prerequisite, had been
accomplished.

While it is highly plausible to assume that Habsburg tentacles were probing the Augsburg delegates to ascertain the prevailing sentiment to such a project, the matter was never brought up officially before the diet. This was no tactical oversight on the part of Habsburg diplomacy. The summa of German constitutional law, the Golden Bull of 1356, explicitly designated the first order -- the august assembly of the electors -- with the duty of electing through a sheer majority vote the King of the Romans who would be the heir apparent to the imperial throne. For the next six-week period following the adjournment of the diet, both the imperial chancery and the diplomatic corps must have been in high gear. Indeed, countless hours must have been spent in protracted negotiations with the electors, and generous bribes handed out to them to induce support for Ferdinand's nomination. For obvious reasons, such diplomatic proceedings were hardly publicized, let alone documented, and the course of their history remains largely conjectural. A few basic steps of these clandestine dealings can be safely discerned.

In spite of the prestige he had earned for himself through his successful arrest of the Turkish offensive in 1529, Ferdinand's image in the empire was far from sufficient to command the outright approval of the six electors for his candidacy -- reduced automatically to six as his
Bohemian kingship made him the seventh and last elector. Among these, only the Elector of Brandenburg, one of the staunchest Habsburg allies, could be counted on to support the imperial objectives unconditionally. The Saxon elector, as paterfamilias of Germany's Protestant party, was so firmly behind the Wittelsbach candidate that he could not even be enticed into preliminary negotiations. The remaining four electors had already revealed their political orientation by supporting the Catholic "peace party" opposed at the diet to the emperor's policy of Protestant suppression and were undecided and wavering between supplanting the Habsburg or Wittelsbach endorsement. It was the good fortune of the imperial party that their arbitrators recognized in time the hesitation and uncertainty common to these persons and, by winning them over to the Habsburg side, secure a carte blanche for Ferdinand's nomination. The enlistment of these princes, of course, required lavish bribes and favors to satisfy their avarice; the Elector of the Palatinate was purportedly paid 16,000 gulden; the others, high churchmen and in accordance with their spiritual functions, were awarded a medly of ecclesiastical benefices which the Papacy happily conceded to them. This cooperation between the Holy See and the imperial family and the readiness of the former to forego sizeable ecclesiastical revenues unmistakably unveils the Church's approved of Ferdinand's candidacy.

In the midst of the pandemonium festering within
Germany after the Diet of Augsburg and brought to a head by the commotion that Ferdinand's impending election had stirred up, the reverberations from a mournful event throbbed through the Habsburg dynasty. On November 30, Archduchess Margaret of the Low Countries closed her eyes to the world forever. Even those scanty references made to her at random in this study have already sufficed to single her out as one of the most competent ruling personalities in Reformation Europe whose unexpected death must have evoked grave concern from both her subjects and the members of her own family. Her last letter, composed on the very day of her death, did not fall an inch short from that image of herself she had created and maintained for the world. Though nominally addressed to her three nieces and two nephews, Margaret's final message was directed primarily to Charles in which she cautions him again to preserve peaceful relations with England and France. Next, she bestows on him the lands she had governed, which Charles should find in solid order and populated with prosperous and loyal citizens. In her closing lines, she bids farewell to all, displaying a fearless but modest Christian spirit which she hopes will guide her to her Redeemer. 44

The vacuum left behind by Margaret's demise was not easy to fill. Eventually, in the spring of 1531, Charles's choice fell upon his widowed sister Mary, Regent of Hungary. Though only twenty-five years old and lacking the vast experience and personal qualities Margaret so amply possessed,
Mary was soon destined to prove that her imperial brother's confidence in her had not been misplaced as she was determined and able to follow in the governing footsteps once trodden by her aunt. This safely assured the Habsburgs the obedience of these exceptionally rich provinces of the Low Countries.

As the year 1530 came to an end, Ferdinand's nomination was a fait accompli. Of the six electors, five were definitely behind him and the Wittelsbach challenge lapsed into oblivion. The only dissident was the Saxon elector who, nevertheless, along with the others, received in late December an invitation requesting that he participate in the name of the emperor, in the election of his imperial successor on January 5, 1531. Because the city of Frankfurt, traditionally the site for such historical occasions, was in a state of insubordination for having refused to register the Augsburg recess, Cologne was selected instead. Here on the date appointed, the convoked dignitaries formally carried out what had been a foregone conclusion -- they elected Ferdinand unanimously as King of the Romans. This event and the gay festivities that followed it were marred by one ominous note, the absence of the Saxon elector. Through his eldest son, John Frederick, the elderly Saxon prince formally protested the results of the election on the grounds of constitutionality, claiming that the fountainhead of German law, the Golden Bull of 1356, gave no warrant for the nomination
of a brother to this title during the lifetime of an emperor. 46

In his election oath, Ferdinand delineated a course of action for himself which immediately alienated him from the advocates of Protestantism in Germany. He pledged to maintain the old faith in accordance with the Augsburg recess until the conclusion of a general council and to protect and defend Christendom, the Church, and its supreme head at Rome. 47 By serving notice that he intended to support rigid conformity to religious orthodoxy, he markedly transcended the limits of traditional election oaths in which pledges were usually made only to protect and observe certain basic rights and those time-honored practices German subjects had grown accustomed to in the past. In this virgin speech of the newly-elected German king, the conciliatory spirit was totally absent; in fact, his was an undisguised ultimatum disinclined to use peaceful means for providing coexistence between Catholics and Protestants in Germany.

Less than a week after his election at Cologne, Ferdinand on January 11 was bestowed with the highest symbol of his new position when he was crowned King of the Romans. The coronation was celebrated with customary splendor and pageantry and solemnized at Aachen, a city where German rulers had traditionally been so honored throughout history and within whose walls Charlemagne's remains rest. Ferdinand had reached the goal of his ambitions.
Simultaneously with his coronation, Ferdinand scored his first diplomatic victory. Obviously both irked and intimidated by the Protestant block's dissent, he managed prudently to conclude a defensive alliance with five electors against any power or combination of powers -- whether domestic or foreign -- which might attack him to challenge the legality of his election. Through this act, the future security of his new position seemingly was assured.48

The next day, Ferdinand called the Council of State into its first session under his new authority to deliberate future policies for the empire. With that act, he passed into a new phase in his career and faced broadening horizons. But these are beyond the scope of this study.

Before the curtain is drawn completely, a few additional nuggets of thought are in order on why Ferdinand was able to obtain the position he so long had coveted. They will serve in lieu of a recapitulation of the episodes of this chapter which already have been scrutinized in detail.

The question must be asked whether there are deeply hidden motives and undercurrents of thought present among those who were responsible for Ferdinand's election -- the German electors and the emperor himself -- aside from the obvious ones already aired in this chapter and discernable through the availability of documentary evidence. Why did the bulk of the German electors throw their support behind a Habsburg whose ultimate ambition could be nothing less
than to force upon them eventually the hereditary rule of
his dynasty and the political centralization of their nation
when they were obsessed with concepts of particularism and
decentralization? Could the miscellaneous bribes and favors
spread among them so effectively blindfold them? The answer
lies in their ability to see two evils confronting them. By
elevating the emperor's brother instead of his son to the
leading position of their nation, which Charles could have
requested as an alternative, they prudently selected the
lesser evil. With remarkable historical insight, they must
have envisioned the eventual and permanent bifurcation of
the Habsburg power-colossus into its Spanish and German com-
ponents.

To clarify, the emperor's own motives which he exerted
in behalf of Ferdinand's election ought now to be examined.
Were the various gestures that Ferdinand displayed in the
past for the sake of their dynasty really so extraordinary
and was he an indisputable political success as regent of
the German empire? Could Ferdinand's deeds and accomplish-
ments justify Charles's overlooking the position of King of
the Romans for his own offspring -- his first son, the fut-
ure Philip II of Spain and then three years of age? Why
would he show an outright disregard for both the prevailing
practices at the royal courts of Europe and the historical
precedent that his dynasty had deeply cemented into the Ger-
man tradition of electing to the kingship the first-born son?
Charles, like the electors, could follow no other path because of the feebleness of his own position and the delicacy of the general European political situation, and he had the sagacity to recognize the necessity of stirring the election in the direction of his brother instead of his own son whom he naturally would have preferred as his successor. He must have realized that his son's candidacy would not only be turned down flatly by the electors but might also ignite the vapor of German dissent into a widespread, bitter civil war, though the ever-mounting difficulty of governing single-handedly the vast territorial holdings of his dynasty could not have occurred to him at this juncture. In the final analysis, the emperor's choice of Ferdinand as his imperial successor on the throne of Germany as well as the frustrating and discordant outcome of the Diet of Augsburg symbolize dramatically what must have remained hidden to all participants and contemporaries -- that the first Habsburg attempt at forging a global empire, under the disguise of a respublica Christiana, had shattered itself on the shoals of history.
CONCLUSION

Before glancing back over the first ten-year period of a new Habsburg regime in the Holy Roman Empire from the height of a broad historical perspective -- a regime embodied by the absentee emperor Charles and his delegated personal representative Ferdinand -- an observation ought to be made with respect to the period antedating their joint arrival on the German scene. Attention should be called to the whimsical twist of destiny which arranged for the political future of these two brothers. It was indeed a misfortune that Ferdinand could not have succeeded his maternal grandfather to the throne of Spain. Born, raised, and educated in the atmosphere of the Iberian peninsula, he was essentially a Mediterranean prince imbued with the values and sharing the general Weltanschauung of this geographical region of Europe and was therefore far better suited for the wearing of the Spanish crown than his older brother. Ferdinand's subsequent compensation by receiving the archducal title for the Habsburg hereditary possessions in Austria and his appointment to the German regency were likewise unsound. Unable to divest himself of his Iberian heritage at once, it
took him a considerable amount of time, a decade at least, to acclimatize himself to the standards of an alien environment.

Charles, on the other hand, was manifestly predestined for a political career within the western boundaries of Europe. His native milieu, the Atlantic seaboard where he saw daylight and spent his formative years, forged him to fit the molds of western man and eminently qualified him for a leadership of his comppeers in the West. His selfish aspirations, coupled with the short-sighted insistence of some Spanish legitimists, directed him in 1516, well before his German emperorship, to assume the political leadership of the Iberian peninsula. Unwelcomed by the xenophobic Spaniards, who even staged a short-lived revolt against him, it required Charles more than a decade to ingratiate himself with his newly-reluctant subjects. With the exception of a brief interlude occasioned by his election to the German imperial position and his participation in the Diet of Worms of 1521, he exclusively remained in Spain from 1516 to 1529 and devoted all his energy to the tightening of his grasp over that nation at the expense of Germany. Consequently, his early western constitution transformed itself into an Iberian one and prompted, probably unknown to him, a slavish obedience to Spanish interests. His protracted struggle with the Valois monarch can be interpreted in terms of a desire to perpetuate Spanish domination in Italy and even
his own matrimonial policies reflect a design to appease a Spanish palate. But the price he paid for promoting a kernel of popularity into an ascendancy in Spain proved to be enormous.

The course of Ferdinand’s German regency may be divided — for easier comprehension — into two chronological, almost identical phases; the first, commencing on his arrival in Germany in 1521, lasted till the Battle of Mohács in the early autumn of 1526; the second, continued from that point onward to his elevation to the German kingship in 1531. The most characteristic feature of the first phase of Ferdinand’s political career in Germany was his utter dissatisfaction with the position he had been called upon to fulfill. It took him no time at all to discover the shallowness of his office and the nebulosity of his authority as the political backwardness of the empire became apparent to him from the outset. Those archaic constitutional chains which rendered the sphere of his authority nearly ineffective, the fact that even the meager existence of his position depended financially on the mercurial mood of the imperial estates, and the deeply-entrenched spirit of political particularism that the overwhelming majority of German dignitaries staunchly espoused, struck him at once as an outrageous burden. In order to unload the weight of further embarrassment and avoid the constant disrespect exhibited by his German subjects, Ferdinand envisaged two possible alternatives.
He could have himself elevated to the position of the German kingship which would entail the immediate consolidation of his power with an enormous increase of authority and respect and guarantee the eventual ascendancy of his family to the imperial throne of Germany following the death of his brother. Or, he could withdraw completely from the German orbit and be compensated instead with some Italian principality, preferably with the Duchy of Milan, which could be molded — if combined with his present Austrian holdings where he did exercise full authority — into a hereditary kingdom constituting a junior branch of the Habsburg dynasty.

The emperor, the sole person with the authority to guide the course of Ferdinand's political future, was disinclined to change his younger brother's status in Germany. To Ferdinand's scheme of an Austro-Milanese kingship he never responded, while the idea of German kingship, meriting at first sufficient imperial interest and theoretical approval, was shortly abandoned as a project temporarily impractical. Although it is difficult to say which of these two channels was the closest to Ferdinand's heart, it could be argued that his preference would have been the realization of his Austro-Italian design, for as late as mid-1526 he hardly missed a single opportunity to further this objective at the imperial court. In order to attain his goal and to ingratiate himself even further with his brother, Ferdinand went out of his way to provide troops and financial means to
assure the success of the Habsburg campaigns in Italy.

The events that transpired on August 29, 1526, in central Hungary changed dramatically the course of Ferdinand's political destiny and conveniently concluded the first phase of his German regency. The unexpected death of his childless brother-in-law, the Jagiellonian Louis II of Bohemia and Hungary, placed Ferdinand in the forefront as the most logical choice for the vacant thrones of these nations. Realizing in time that the provisions of a former Habsburg-Jagiellonian family pact, which would have guaranteed him the succession to the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary on a hereditary basis, were hopelessly outdated and hardly justifiable before the national assemblies of these two countries, Ferdinand consented to register his interest as a candidate in an open election. His subsequent acquisition of the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia, even on the basis of the elective principle, undoubtedly constituted Ferdinand's most sweeping and enduring accomplishment if his ten-year tenure of the German regency is considered alongside his entire political career.

Ferdinand's involvement in the affairs of Central Europe only seemingly provided him with an unforeseen and third escape route from the burdens of the German regency. These new lands made him forego his fancy of gaining a foothold on the Apennine peninsula, but he soon found he could not afford to minimize his role in Germany. As it was the
Turkish defeat of the Hungarians at Mohács that brought him to political eminence in Central Europe, it was also the shadow of an impending Islamic threat that made him recognize that neither Bohemia nor Hungary could possibly arrest by themselves any forthcoming westward Muslim thrust. Therefore, he could not afford to treat light-heartedly the German estates on whose assistance he would have to depend for the defense of his new Central European acquisitions and his Austrian patrimony as well. His reliance on German resources became even more pronounced as he bitterly realized that his grandiose scheme — to pose as a crusader commander leading the mobilized forces of Christendom against the infidels and liberating from their yoke both southeast Europe and the Near East -- was being capsized by the apprehension of Christian princes that his victories in the East might further the hegemony of his dynasty in the West.

In addition to the Turkish problem, another discomforting trend in the empire for the Habsburgs was the deepening religious schism. What seemed in 1517 a theological defiance of an obscure German monk, whose recalcitrant stand at Worms in 1521 the emperor managed to have the diet condemn, soon germinated into a powerful movement against the organized authority of Church and state. The Edict of Worms, which proclaimed the imperial ban on Luther, remained a dead letter from the very first and was robbed of all effectiveness. To the minds of most Germans, Lutheranism represented a
national protest against the moral abuses within the Church and the usurped power and influence of Rome, and most of them resented the constant drain of money from their lands to support the worldly ambitions of the Medici popes. These then were the essential underlying feelings which fed -- rather than the doctrinal disputes -- the national attack on the Church and which accounted largely for the rapid and almost universal spread of the new doctrines throughout the empire. Furthermore and as an accident of circumstances, Lutheranism, with its logical sprouting into territorial churches rather than a reformed Catholic Church, fitted well the political ends of certain German estates who saw their strength in the maintenance of religious divisiveness.

The capital error of the emperor, during Ferdinand's regency, was that he failed to comprehend that the whole success of the Habsburg political and dynastic policies depended on a solution of the religious difficulties in Germany mutually satisfactory to both confessional parties. In other words, Charles failed to realize either the true scope of German religious dissent or the inherent weaknesses of the Edict of Worms. In contrast to his brother's unfounded optimism, Ferdinand proved to be a political realist as he recognized, from the outset, the expanding dimensions of German Protestantism and saw the ultimate solution to the confessional conflict in a twofold approach: Charles's personal involvement in the domestic affairs of Germany by
attending all the diets; and the convocation of a general Church council which would iron out both the abuses and the doctrinal matters under issue. These recommendations, which soon grew into an idée fixe with Ferdinand, fell on the deaf ears of Charles who could hardly see beyond the Edict of Worms, and it took the political betrayal of the Habsburgs by the Papacy to drive him to the position Ferdinand had long urged him to adopt. From 1530 onward, the restoration of religious unity in Germany became the cornerstone of imperial policy, and everything was gradually subordinated to it; even the attainment of a lasting peace with France became not so much an end in itself as an essential condition ensuring effective action in Germany.

But his shifting to a new strategy by 1530 came much too belatedly. The establishment of territorial churches, the political polarization of the empire, and the bold defiance of the Protestant estates of imperial and majority viewpoints at the diets proved that the religious rift had gone beyond the bounds of rationality on both sides and was not to be bridged by reconciliation. In vain the emperor came to Augsburg in 1530 with the intention of arbitrating between the hostile factions; his fundamental error lay in underestimating the religious conviction girding the revolt, for he still supposed that political and economic ambitions -- territorial particularism and the confiscation of Church property -- were more prominent in the action of the
dissident estates than any issue of faith. Had he heeded Ferdinand's advice in the early 1520's, had he attended the Nuernberg diets of 1523 and 1524, for example, when the Lutheran faction still advanced a set of relatively modest demands, the emperor probably could have brought the German confessional crisis to an end and saved the unity of Christendom as well.

While the emperor could be charged with negligence in not tackling sooner the religious ills of the empire, the culpability of the Church, in all fairness, should be repeatedly emphasized. In an age of expanding territorial states, no such government could tolerate within its frontiers an administrative and financial independence such as that exercised by the Church of Rome; therefore, the secularization of large portions of ecclesiastical property and the extension of secular authority over ecclesiastical administration were inevitable. As the Church opposed these as well as the persistent demand for a vigorous self-reform, she found Germany solidly against her. It was during Ferdinand's German regency that the Papacy lost its first great chance of saving Catholic unity by its steadfast refusal to give a fair answer to the numerous Gravamina forwarded to Rome in the 1520's by the German diets. Adrian, obsessed with the doctrinal issue, and Clement, preoccupied with the political interests of his family in Italy, could not or would not see that the first step toward winning back Germany to the fold
of orthodoxy was a purification of the institution from within and compromises with the newly-rising territorial princes similar to those once wrung from Boniface VIII by Philip the Fair.

What was really needed in Germany was a national concordat with Rome. There was no national government, however, sufficiently strong and representative to negotiate such a far-reaching agreement; and, in its stead, only a few isolated states made their own terms with Rome. The Wittelsbach princes for Bavaria and Ferdinand eventually for his hereditary lands in Austria, for example, obtained from the Papacy a large number of advantages, namely, an almost complete control over their bishops, the privilege of dealing with heresy without consulting higher ecclesiastical courts, and a fifth of the ecclesiastical revenues of those territories in perpetuity. No doubt such agreements or their lack accounted largely for the firm stand made by Catholicism in South Germany and Protestantism in the North and not those trifling systems of alliance that these antagonists concocted among themselves. The most salient example in this respect is the ultimate collapse of Catholicism in a ducal Saxony which failed to obtain such a compact with the authorities in Rome in spite of the untiring efforts of Duke George.

Viewed from sheer dynastic considerations alone, the initial first ten-year period of the new Habsburg regime in
Germany, which was perhaps the most crucial phase of its entire span, was essentially a political failure for several reasons. First of all, the Reichsregiment, or Council of Regency, with Ferdinand as its president and left behind by the absentee emperor to carry out the functions of government, was far too feeble through its constitutional handicaps to resist, let alone arrest, those centrifugal forces at work within the empire. Secondly, no attempt was made during the first nine years of this period to expand the authority of an all-German central government needed for national unification under the hereditary ascendancy of the Habsburgs. The first but belated attempt came in 1530 but was grounded by the dynasty's inability to solve the religious disunity, the first stumbling block in the direction of national unity. Furthermore, there was a nearly total absence of any meaningful directives for Germany -- either from Charles or Ferdinand -- beyond efforts to preserve the religious status quo at the expense of the new teachings and to keep the country as an obedient reservoir for their dynastic ambitions either in the West or in the East.

But Ferdinand's activities per se cannot be labeled a complete failure with respect to dynastic interests. He acclimatized himself in a relatively brief time to the demands of the new environment and he utilized his shadowy authority to its maximum extent in executing the functions of his office. Although a dutiful and obeying prince with
conscientious concern for the aggrandizement of his dynasty, Ferdinand cannot be accused of having been a mere "rubber stamp" for his brother, for in several instances, when his common sense dictated otherwise, he flatly ignored the imperial wish. His acquisition of the thrones of Bohemia and Hungary was far more rewarding, in the long run, for his dynasty than those territorial augmentations contributed by Charles; moreover, with his effective organization of solid resistance against the Turkish invasion of 1529, Ferdinand rendered a service far greater in significance to the welfare of Christendom than what can be cited for his brother's lofty undertakings.

To analyze these same events from a viewpoint emphasizing an all-German national interest is to point out that the political particularism shared by the overwhelming majority of the German estates -- both Protestant and Catholic -- thwarted successfully the first Habsburg endeavor to create a unified Germany. They found it easy to preserve their ancient privileges by using the religious schism, exploiting the Ottoman shadow, and allying with anti-Habsburg forces abroad. With the imperial ambitions frustrated in 1530 at Augsburg, the German estates left no other recourse for the Habsburgs than to let arms decide the issue. This long-impending showdown, which is to constitute the second Habsburg attempt at German unification, will be realized in the so-called Schmalkaldic War between 1546 and 1547, followed
by its sequel, a renewed Habsburg-Valois conflict between 1552 and 1553 when the vanquished Protestants allied themselves with Catholic France and the forces of political particularism again turned out to be victorious. The consequences of this arbitration with the sword will, incidentally, mark the beginning of an era of French encroachment on territories under German sovereignty that is destined to continue uninterruptedly for several centuries and motivate the emperor to withdraw and retire, in utter disgust, from the political arena. Charles's retreat then will result in the breakup of the Habsburg empire into German and Spanish branches, for he assigns Germany with the imperial title to Ferdinand while his son Philip is bestowed with the remainder of his vast holdings.

The third and final attempt at German unification under the Habsburg banner comes with the Thirty Years' War, almost a century after both Charles and Ferdinand have left the stage of history, and the end of this war will terminate an epoch designated as the Age of Reformation. It is now necessary to look at the consequences of this last Habsburg attempt at German unification -- the Thirty Years' War -- and come down to the present.

What first began as a German civil war became an inter-European conflict in which centrifugal impulses literally flew from a flywheel regulating the disintegration of the German nation. If the emperor was weak before, he would be
henceforth no more than an honorary president of a congress of sovereign powers as Germany would lose in 1648 the last vestige of her former status of statehood and be hopelessly dismembered into a frightening myriad of politically independent units, some of them not larger than a good-sized game preserve. As the result of this dynastic disaster, the Habsburg eagle would turn its gaze to the East and the formation of a Danubian empire, the West being lost beyond recovery. What Napoleon actually attained with a single stroke of his pen in 1809, when he dissolved the Holy Roman Empire and formally terminated the Habsburg ascendancy there, was already a *fait accompli* in 1648.

The eventual German national unification which came in 1871, under the auspices of Prussia, upset the delicate balance of power in Europe, for the community of European nations could no longer peacefully absorb such a powerful newcomer among their ranks. And the repercussions of Germany's long delayed national emergence led directly to a series of traumatic tragedies involving the whole world. If the German estates -- whether orthodox or of the new confessional creed -- could have forgone their obsession with particularism and assumed a more latitudinarian position on the dividing religious issues during the sixteenth century back in the days of Charles and Ferdinand, these two Habsburgs might have succeeded in forging a united Germany greater by far than the one hatched under the aegis of the Hohenzollerns
three centuries later and whose continuing presence in a position of strength on the international scene might have averted that chain of global holocausts, the effects of which still haunt mankind.
CHAPTER I: YEARS OF MATURATION, 1503-1522


3 Ibid., p. 40.

4 Karl Hebler, Der Streit Ferdinands des katholischen und Philipps I. um die Regierung von Castillien (Dresden: Waldmann, 1882), p. 87.

5 Despite its early date of publication, for the best comprehensive treatment in English of the reign of Ferdinand of Aragon, including the period of transition that followed his death, see William H. Prescott, History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1890).


9 For a detailed study of the intellectual and cultural milieu prevailing at the Brussels court of Margaret of Habsburg, see Josef Strelka, Der Burgundische Renaissancehof Margarethes von Österreich und seine literarhistorische Bedeutung (Vienna: Sexl, 1957).

10 Bauer, Anfänge, pp. 101-103.


13 Ibid., I, pp. 136-139.


15 As used in the sixteenth century, the term Vorderösterreich, geographically speaking, meant the area that encompassed Habsburg holdings and protectorates in Switzerland and southern Germany, including the present-day Austrian province of Vorarlberg. Through his wars with the Venetian republic, Maximilian I added Görz, Triest, Friuli, and parts of Istria to the list of Habsburg lands.


17 Ibid., I, pp. 116-121.
Here is the full text of that famous Latin couplet attributed to the authorship of Maximilian I, and its translation: Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria nube; nam quae Mars aliis dat, tibi dona Venus (Others may wage war, you happy Austria marry; what Mars gives others, Venus gives to you).


CHAPTER II: TRYING YEARS, 1522-1524

While there is an impressive number of works in English on the medieval German state, James Bryce's account, Holy Roman Empire (London: 1873 and repeated editions since), still remains the classic interpretation of the empire.

For a concise but comprehensive summary on Maximilian's political reforms in the empire, see Hans Baron, "Imperial Reform and the Habsburgs, 1486-1504," American Historical Review, XLIV (1938-1939), pp. 293-303. The viewpoint stressed by the author portrays Maximilian as a devout but impractical champion of constitutional reform whose political schemes found staunch support among the ecclesiastical electors but were grounded by the opposition of the secular electors of Saxony, Brandenburg, and Bohemia who were at the center of a political gravity in the empire which had shifted, by the eve of the Reformation, from the scattered electorates on the Rhine in the West to the large territorial states in the East.
Luther's condemnation by Germany's highest secular forum, a condemnation coupled with punitive measures which were shortly to go into effect against him, is known in history as the Edict of Worms. Authored, in all probability, by Charles and the papal nuncio Aleander, this legislative provision was actually passed by a rump diet as three of the seven electors abstained from voting in order to register their disapproval.

For an exhaustive account of the Habsburg-Valois conflict written from a French viewpoint which is relatively objective, see François A. Mignet, *Rivalité de François Ier et de Charles-Quint* (Paris: Furne et Cie., 1875).

Herberstein's subsequent biography is indeed noteworthy. In his capacity as a Habsburg envoy, he was, in all likelihood, the first western diplomat to be assigned to the embryonic Muscovite state; and with his *Rerum Moscoviticarum Commentarii* (Basel, 1551), he was the first western author on Russia.


Hajo Holborn's *Ulrich von Hutten and the German Reformation* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965) is the foremost critical biography on this controversial German humanist and intellectual protagonist of the Knights' War.

*Korrespondenz*, I, p. 57.

*DR-A/*, III, pp. 220-222.


13 *DR-A*., IV, pp. 211-212.


18 This incident is related by Hannart to Margaret of Austria in *DR-A*., IV, p. 576.


21 Baumgarten, II, p. 197. Since the deposition of Duke Ulrich in 1519, the Duchy of Württemberg has been under Habsburg administration.
22 Ibid., p. 182.

23 HHSA., Belgica MSS, Hannart's original report to the emperor, PA 5, fols. 25-26.


25 Ibid., I, p. 124.

26 Korrespondenz, I, p. 162.

27 Ibid., I, pp. 168-169. Overtures of Ferdinand to his brother about his elevation to German kingship commence as early as November, 1522.

28 The Flemish nobleman, Charles de Bredam, was Ferdinand's agent at the Madrid court of his brother. Some of his instructions to Bredam are in Korrespondenz, I, pp. 164-165, 167-169.

29 Ibid., I, pp. 174-175.

30 Although there exists no full-length biography on Faber, the following monograph sheds sufficient light on the first ten years of his activities, from the time of his appointment to the bishopric of Vienna to the religious conference at Ratisbon: Adalbert Horawitz, "Johann Heigerlin (genannt Faber), Bischof von Wien, bis zum Regensburger Convent," Sitzungsberichte der philologisch-historischen Klasse der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaft Wien, CVII (1884), pp. 83-220.

31 There is no direct documentary evidence from Ferdinand's correspondence regarding his attempt to come to terms clandestinely with the Lutheran princes of the empire. Since
concrete results never issued from these semi-secret negoti­
atations, posterity only knows of them by second-hand reports. 
See DR-A., III, pp. 296-297, for Johann von der Leiter's 
report to Duke William of Bavaria.

32 Korrespondenz, I, pp. 210-211.

CHAPTER III: YEARS OF ASCENDANCY, 1524-1526

1 For the full text of Ferdinand's letter, see Hofmann, 
pp. 32-33.

2 Ibid., pp. 34-35.

3 Korrespondenz, I, pp. 199-201.

4 The correspondence between Cardinal Campeggio and 
Pope Clement VII which laid the groundwork for the Ratisbon 
Union is cited in Pastor, II, pp. 129-155.

5 Vienna: Erzbischöfliches Diozesenarchiv /hereafter 
cited as EDA/, Acta Ratisbona MSS, original copy of The 
Thirty-Six Articles of Reform deposited with the Archiepis­
copal Archives of Vienna, AR 1, fols. 1-3.

6 Walter Friedensburg, Der regensburger Convent von 1524 
("Historische Aufsätze an Georg Waltz Gewidmet," Hannover: 
Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1886), pp. 507-510.

7 Ibid., p. 531.

8 Korrespondenz, I, pp. 171-172.

9 Ibid., I, p. 232.
The Duke of Bourbon's letter to the emperor, acknowledging that he had taken command of Ferdinand's Innsbruck contingent and had transferred them safely to Italy, is quoted in full in Bucholtz, Regierung, IX (Urkundenband), p. 120.

Korrespondenz, I, p. 278.

Ibid., I, p. 287; also p. 372.

Ibid., I, p. 277.

Ibid., I, p. 295.

Baumgarten, II, p. 551. The constitutional origins of the term "King of the Romans" are traceable to an imperial diet of 1388 when the German estates, at the conclusion of a drawn-out political struggle with the Papacy, passed the law Licet juris which declared that the person chosen by the electors as King of the Romans was the de jure ruler of the empire. An obvious anti-clerical measure, it made the customary papal coronation at Rome with its corollary title of "emperor" a superfluous ritual which only a few German rulers then attempted to gain for themselves. Later, by the next century, the "King of the Romans" title was conferred upon the oldest son of an ailing or elderly ruler, making him heir apparent to the throne. Considering the fact that Charles was already King of the Romans (by the virtue of his 1519 Aachen election) and in youthful good health, Ferdinand's chances at this particular point rested upon constitutional quicksand.

Korrespondenz, I, p. 324; also Bauer, Anfänge, pp. 230-231.

Korrespondenz, I, pp. 324-326. Ferdinand, of course, was completely unaware of Charles's discreet matrimonial designs with Mary of England, the daughter of Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII. These plans fell through as Charles refused to follow the overambitious schemes of Cardinal
Wolsey which called for a joint Anglo-Habsburg invasion and partition of a prostrate and militarily-defeated France.

18 Ibid., I, p. 308.

19 Willy Andreas's Deutschland vor der Reformation (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1932) is one of the best summaries of the political, economic, religious, and artistic aspects of a pre-Reformation Germany. Chapter VII in particular is devoted to the agrarian conditions.

20 While scholarship analyzing the inherent causes and general course of the German Peasants' War is immense and its spectrum varies from reactionary to outright Marxist interpretations, Günther Franz's Der deutsche Bauernkrieg (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1933) is one of the most successful attempts to offer a balanced treatment. The viewpoint in my study that ascribes an all-European character to these German domestic uprisings is endorsed by this author.

21 The history of the Anabaptists and other independent religious sects of the sixteenth century -- often labeled the "Left Wing of the Reformation" -- has been examined by R. H. Bainton, and other competent scholars. The basis of the millenarian and apocalyptic radicalism of these confessional minority groups is adequately synthesized in Norman Cohn's The Pursuit of the Millenium (London: Macmillan, 1957).

22 Korrespondenz, I, P. 277.

23 Bauer, Anfänge, pp. 95-99. According to Bauer's account, Archduchess Margaret, Regent of the Low Countries, and Maximilian von Zevenberger, a cabinet member of the Tyrolian provincial government, were the two chief architects of the Habsburg appropriation of Württemberg.

24 Franz, pp. 351-360.
25 Although Ferdinand's letter to the emperor -- in which he offered a blueprint for the forthcoming Habsburg-Valois peace settlement -- called for the immediate abandonment of clandestine French assistance to the deposed Duke of Württemberg, there is no documentary evidence to corroborate the German regent's contention. Nevertheless, his recommendation became one of the stipulations of the Madrid treaty.

26 Franz, pp. 358-60.

27 Ibid.


30 Bucholtz, Regierung, IX (Urkundenband), pp. 640-41.

31 Korrespondenz, I, p. 272.

CHAPTER IV: REACHING THE APEX, 1524-1526

1 Baumgartner, II, p. 404.

2 For the complete text of the Augsburg recess, see DR-A., IV, pp. 168-169.

3 During the time of Ferdinand's German regency, Saxony was not a homogeneous unit but divided politically into an electoral and a ducal part and split along confessional lines. Ruled by the House of Wettin, Saxony was partitioned
in 1485 between two brothers of this dynasty. Ernest, founder of the Ernestine line, received lands along the middle Elbe, most of Thuringia, and the electoral title; Albert, founder of the Albertine line, received the larger part of Saxony (which included the cities of Dresden and Leipzig) along with the ducal title. During the period when Luther was challenging ecclesiastical authority, the Saxon Elector, Frederick the Wise, although too prudent to flaunt his advanced confessional views in the face of a hostile world, became at heart a convinced disciple of the new teaching. His brother and successor, John the Steadfast, became an open devotee of the Evangelical faith. However, the ruler of ducal Saxony, Duke George the Bearded, was from the outset to his death in 1539 a staunch champion of confessional orthodoxy and hence a frequent target of Luther's criticism.

4 See particularly volume II of Felician Gess's Akten und Briefe zur Kirchenpolitik Herzog Georgs von Sachsen (Leipzig: Manz, 1905), which is the best compendium for primary source material pertaining to the Dessau League.

5 For the complete text of the Dessau League's Ratschlag to the emperor, see Michael Ignaz Schmidt's Geschichte der Deutschen (Ulm: Hertz, 1824-1830), III, pp. 184-186.

6 Luther's acrimonious criticism of December 21, 1525, directed against the Dessau League's alleged political schemes and, in the main, against Duke George of Saxony, is included in the collected works of the Wittenberg reformer. Among the many publications available, the Weimar Edition was consulted: Martin Luther, D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe /hereafter cited as WA./ (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883—.), XXXIII, pp. 242-245.


8 Ranke, II, p. 129.

Friedrich Gontard, The Chair of Peter: A History of the Papacy (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964), is the most recent attempt in German scholarship to analyze, from a non-sectarian viewpoint, the controversial political conduct of Pope Clement VII.


"The word of the Lord endures forever" is the English translation of the above Latin sentence. During the entire Reformation era, the phrase "Word of the Lord" was an expressly Protestant slogan which clearly referred to one of Luther's four major religious tenets -- the sole authority and infallibility of Holy Scripture.

Cyprian, pp. 580-600.

Ranke, III, pp. 128-129.

Walter Friedensburg, Der Reichstag zu Speyer 1526 im Zusammenhang der politischen und kirchlichen Entwicklung Deutschlands im Reformationszeitalter /hereafter cited as Der Reichstag/ (Berlin: Schwetschke, 1887), pp. 234-236.


19 Ibid., IV, pp. 240-242.

20 Friedensburg, Der Reichstag, pp. 460-461. According to this author, these two Lutheran princes accepted the invitation of the Elector of the Palatinate for a weekend hunting party at Heidelberg, and therefore the willful intention of forcing the Speyer Diet into a premature adjournment by their withdrawal cannot be sustained.

21 "Recess" is the accepted translation of the German word Abschied, a concluding decree which governed official conduct between the adjournment of a diet and the reconvening of a new one.

22 For the full text of this confidential imperial directive, see Bucholtz, Regierung, IX (Urkundenband), p. 162.


24 Kluckhohn, Historische Zeitschrift, LVI (1886), pp. 210-218. The author is of the opinion that the rapid and practically unopposed approval of these two bills by the Speyer estates represents the exercise of "an unmistakable political expediency" on behalf of the diet's Protestant and anti-Habsburg elements.


26 Gévay, p. 92. It has been customary for historical scholarship to cite the Battle of Mohács as one of the political factors responsible for the permissive tone of the Speyer recess. When the chronological information in this chapter is considered, this assumption cannot be maintained. The decisive encounter between the Hungarians and the Turks was fought on August 29, while the recess itself was already promulgated on the 27th; the diet adjourned on the 31st of August. Therefore, the Speyer Diet could only have been aware, at best, of an initial advance of the Turks into Hungary.
CHAPTER V: WINNING OF THE CROWNS OF BOHEMIA AND HUNGARY, 1526-1527

1 Situated at the foot of mountainous slopes that surround the western bank of the Danube, founded by the Romans in the first century A.D., named by them Aquincum and serving as the administrative seat of their province of Lower Pannonia, the city of Buda became the capital of the Hungarian state in the fourteenth century. In the interim, a settlement, directly across from it on the broad plains of the eastern bank and known as Pest, began gradually to develop, but because of its strategic demerits, it played no significant role in the nation's history until the nineteenth century. Prompted by the spread of the industrial revolution and expedited by changes in warfare, Pest's growing importance was finally realized in 1873 when, through the administrative unification of the two cities, modern Budapest came into existence.

2 A leading expert on the Ottoman state is of the viewpoint that the 1526 western campaign of Suleiman I had no further objective beyond that of a short-lived raid on Hungary. Despite an army of well over 150,000 men, several hundred cannons, and a stunning victory to boast of, the Turks were purportedly in no position to keep that country occupied in a satisfactory manner. See Sidney N. Fisher, The Middle East (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 222.

3 Korrespondenz, I, p. 483.

4 Ibid., I, pp. 489-490.

5 Even Professor Karl Brandi of Göttingen, the foremost authority on Charles V, admits Archduchess Margaret's superior qualities over those of the emperor.

6 HHSA., Belgica MSS, Archduchess Margaret's original instructions to Ferdinand, PA 7, fols. 10-12. Her cunning forewarning with regard to the deployment of Spanish diplomats is an obvious reference to Gabriel Salamanca, a much-trusted personal official of her nephew, whose ostentatious
conduct and zealous ambitions already provoked widespread resentment.


8 Though these concessions were not publicized during or after the negotiations, they were later incorporated into Ferdinand's coronation oath. In the main, he agreed to honor the following stipulations: to uphold and protect the liberties of the Utraquist Church in Bohemia, an ecclesiastical network doctrinally conservative and slightly deviant in ceremony whose basis for its lawful existence was secured through an agreement, or Compacta, with the Papacy at the Council of Basel (1431-1439) following a decade of struggle between the Church and the disciples of John Huss; to avoid the appointment of foreigners in staffing the royal and provincial governments and ecclesiastical offices of the nation; to preserve the integrity of the Bohemian crown, maintain the privileges of the nobility, and levy taxes only with the approval of the national diet.

9 For a particularly exhaustive treatment of the Bohemian designs of the Wittelsbachs, see Ludwig Edlbacher, "Die Politik der Herzoge von Baiern gegen Karl V und Ferdinand I," Jahresberichte des kais.-königlichen Staats-Gymnasiums zu Linz, XVIII (1869), pp. 3-33.


11 Despite the failure in the objectives of the Franco-Bavarian alliance, Ferdinand's acquisition of the Bohemian throne in 1526 provided the basis for and marked the beginning of a centuries-long bitter rivalry between the Wittelsbachs and the Habsburgs. The most spectacular episodes of this feud occurred when Bavaria, following French political orientation again, attacked Maria Theresa in the Wars of the Austrian Succession and when she readily came to
Napoleon's assistance in subduing Austria. This animosity was finally extinguished by a nuptial pact, contracted between Francis Joseph of Austria and Elizabeth of Bavaria, in the mid-nineteenth century.

12 Stephen Nemeskőrty, Ez történt Mohács után (What Transpired after Mohacs) (Budapest: Terra, 1968), pp. 18-19. This is the most recent product of Hungarian scholarship, surveying the events nationally from 1526 to the death of John Zapolya in 1541, and is relatively immune from both anti-Habsburg sentiments and historical interpretations along Marxist lines.

13 Ibid., p. 23.


16 There is an extensive description of both the London and Olmütz negotiations in Bucholtz, Regierung, III, pp. 210-218. In the author's opinion, one of the reasons that might have prompted Ferdinand to dispatch Salamanca to the Tudor court was his membership in the Order of St. George, an honor that was conferred upon him in August of 1523. Therefore, he expected an adjudication favorable in his behalf from Henry VIII, his knightly superior.

17 Korrespondenz, II, p. 26; also pp. 49-50.

18 Ibid., II, pp. 66-67.

19 The deplorable events in connection with Sacco di Roma have customarily received undue publicity from scholarship inclined to an anti-imperialist bias and whose aim, by singling out a culprit personally blameable for the atrocities and dwelling upon the material losses suffered by the inhabitants, was to discredit the Habsburgs. However, the reckless deportment of General Lautrec and his troops at
Pavia a few months later, plundering that city first and then putting its residents to the sword for no other purpose than to avenge its resistance to the French two years previously, has been allowed to pass virtually unnoticed. Benvenuto Cellini's Autobiography, a detailed eyewitness report, is still the most objective and reliable account of those dreadful days that befell the Eternal City in May, 1527.


21 Ibid., II, p. 86. His subsequent involvement in the affairs of Bohemia and Hungary and the emperor's repeated rebuffs finally compelled Ferdinand, at this point, to abandon his cravings for the Duchy of Milan. According to Karl Brandl, it was the influential imperial chancellor, Mercurio Gattinara, who continuously blocked Ferdinand's Italian ambitions at the Madrid court of his brother. Though no personal enemy of Ferdinand, Gattinara, as a born Piedmontese, purportedly felt that an outright absorption of the Duchy of Milan by the Habsburgs in the form of a hereditary land headed by Ferdinand would instigate further political unrest in the Apennine peninsula. Therefore, Milan was to retain its ancient status as a fief of the empire with its government entrusted to Italian or other princes of pro-Habsburg sentiment but without any blood ties to the imperial family.


23 Ibid., pp. 137-141.

CHAPTER VI: YEARS OF CATHOLIC REACTION, 1526-1529

1 For a highly detailed discussion of the geographical expansion of Evangelicalism into all sections of Germany in the late 1520's, see Ranke, II, pp. 322-354.
Luther, WA., LIII, pp. 386-388. Actually, the first attempt to establish a territorial church was undertaken in Hesse. At the instigation of Francis Lambert, a former Franciscan monk from Avignon, Landgrave Philip convoked a synod to Homberg in October 1526 -- a month prior to Luther's appeal to Elector John -- which recommended, in anticipation of the Presbyterian form of organization, self-government for each congregation which would elect its own pastor and board of elders and conceive its church in terms of a religious association founded on the Word of God, independent and yet allied with secular authorities. Luther, who had once entertained the advisability of such organizational pattern himself, counseled against this plan, and as a result of his objection, it was not adopted in Hesse or in other Evangelical principalities.

Carl Burkhardt, Geschichte der Sächsischen Kirchen- und Schulvisitationen (Leipzig: Preger, 1887), offers one of the best treatments on the organization and growth of the Evangelical church in Saxony. It is also a valuable compendium for all primary source materials in connection with this ecclesiastical transition.

One of the foremost present-day German scholars of the Reformation era, Franz Lau, in his Luther (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1959), maintains that the Wittenberg reformer's opposition to the Zwinglian sacramentarian viewpoint was primarily engendered by political rather than doctrinal considerations. The simplified interpretation of the Eucharist so adamantly upheld by the Helvetic congregations was once already embraced and promulgated by one of Luther's former academic colleagues, Andreas von Karlstadt, who was later, after the German Peasants' War, incorrectly branded as a radical and fanatic along with Müntzer and others for having taken up the "sword of Gideon" against the establishment. Always anxious to enlist the good will and the support of the secular authorities for his religious movement, Luther could hardly afford to be associated with the tenets of Zwinglianism.

Korrespondenz, II, p. 82.

Grete Mecenseffy, the best authority on the Reformation movement in Austria and author of Geschichte des Protestantismus in Österreich (Graz/Cologne: H.
Bohlaus, 1956), proposes in her work that Evangelicalism in
the late 1520's in Austria became somewhat of a "status
religion," adhered to by the landed aristocracy and urban
middle class. Resembling the apostles of the eighteenth-
century Enlightenment who had intentionally kept the masses
away from the tenets of deism, the Austrian proponents of
Lutheranism, instead of promulgating it among the populace,
withheld the new teaching from others by practicing it se-
cretly within the confines of their homes.

7 The Zwinglian religious doctrines found the Habsburg
domains of the East -- Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary -- to
be an infertile soil in the 1520's. Only by the mid-
sixteenth century and with the emergence of the organizing
genius of a Calvin did the Swiss version of the Reformation
attain moderate foothold there.

8 EDA., Acta Hungarica MSS, which is an original copy
of Ferdinand's 1527 Buda mandate deposited with the Archi-
episcopal Diocesan Archives of Vienna, AH 3, fols. 1-6.

9 Korrespondenz, II, p. 59.


11 Ibid., II, pp. 268-270.

12 Georg Mentz, "Zur Geschichte der Packschen Händel,"
Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte, I (1903-1904), pp. 172-
91.

13 For a detailed and scholarly survey of Landgrave
Philip's involvement in the Pack affair with special empha-
sis on his efforts to expand the bilateral Weimar Treaty
into a multilateral and inter-European, anti-Habsburg al-
liance and which also supplies most of the pertinent docu-
ments, see Hilar Schwarz, Landgraf Philipp von Hessen und
die Packschen Händel (Leipzig: Veit, 1884).
The full text of Ferdinand's public dispatch, dated June 1, 1528, in which he repudiated his alleged participation in the Breslau Treaty, is preserved under the following heading: **Öffentliches Ausschreiben König Ferdinands wider das erdichtete Breslauer Bündniss**, and is to be found in Bucholtz, *Regierung, IX* (*Urkundenband*), pp. 218-220.

Even Ranke, who incidentally was a Protestant, has this to say about the Otto von Pack forgery: "a document so full of contradictions and brought forward by such an untrustworthy and deceitful man must be, without doubt, completely rejected." Ranke, III, pp. 32-33.

From the numerous letters that Charles directed to Ferdinand with the intention of securing German military and fiscal aid for his Italian campaign, only the following were considered: *Korrespondenz*, II, pp. 170-172; pp. 184-185; and pp. 188-189. Charles's desire to have Germany be involved against the Valois and the Tudors was conveyed to Ferdinand via Guillaume de Monfort, one of his trusted diplomats. Imperial instructions to such an end are to be found in Lanz, *Staatspapiere*, II, pp. 188-189.

Ferdinand's nuptial designs for Mary in the form of instructions to Joseph von Lamberg, his representative at Buda, are available in Gévay, pp. 124-125.

Throughout his entire public career, Melanchthon carried out an inspired and extensive correspondence with Joachim Camerarius, a noted Leipzig classical scholar and later rector of the university there. Their epistolary
exchanges concerned themselves primarily with philological topics but a few, especially those Melanchthon penned in 1529 from Speyer, have slight political overtones. For their complete correspondence, see Adrian Haag, "Philipp Melanchthon an Joachim Camerarius," *Sitzungsberichte der phil.-historischen Klasse der kgl.-bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaft zu München*, III (1873), pp. 241-274.


25 Among the ranks of the leading Catholic secular lords of Germany, the Elector of Brandenburg and Duke George of Saxony, absented themselves from the 1529 Speyer proceedings because of temporary feelings of spite against the Habsburgs. The Lüneburg branch of the Welfs sent no representatives either, and several other Catholic deputies of the third estate, though their number did not exceed what was customary in non-attendance for previous gatherings, failed to honor this diet with their presence.


27 Kühn, pp. 128-132.


30 *DR-A.*., IV, pp. 572-577.

31 Kühn, pp. 146-147.
German Reformation scholarship has been long divided on the constitutional aspect of the appeal and protest made by the Evangelical estates at Speyer in 1529 in which they registered their opposition to the new recess. Ranke, for example, upheld its constitutional validity in Deutsche Geschichte, III, pp. 107-109. The Lutheran church itself was disunited over the issue and two of its articles, published in the same year, adopted contradictory interpretations. The one by Eugene Mayer, Geschichtliche Urteile über die Speierer Protestation, "Blätter für die Pfälzische Kirchengeschichte, V (1929), pp. 54-57., favored the argument that the Lutheran estates could make their protest on constitutional grounds while the other by Alfred Fischer, "Die Protestation von Speyer 1529 in ihrer geschichtlichen Bedeutung," Die Wartburg, XXVIII (1929), pp. 145-150., justified the right of the protest to exist on a conscientious basis alone.

CHAPTER VII: FINAL YEARS TO AMBITION'S-END, 1529-1531

1 Josef von Hammer-Purgstall, Wiens erste aufgehobene türkische Belagerung vom Jahre 1529 (Vienna: Hartleben, 1827), pp. 46-50. Serving as an Austrian diplomat attached to the Turkish Near East in the first half of the nineteenth century, Hammer-Purgstall became one of the foremost oriental philologists and indisputably the single most productive western author on the history of the Ottoman state. Hammer-Purgstall supports the assertion in the text by basing it on Ferdinand's own negligence in establishing, before mid-1530, a network of informers within the Turkish orbit and his oversight in not staffing the Habsburg chancery with linguistic efficiency in Turkish.

2 Nemeskürty, pp. 117-128.

3 Ferdinand's abortive Cracow and London negotiations are documented in Bucholtz, Regierung, IX (Urkundenband),
pp. 218-224. His letter seeking the help of Clement VII and dated August 17, 1529, is to be found in Pastor, II, pp. 228-230.

4 Korrespondenz, II, pp. 391-393; also pp. 400-401.

5 HHSA., Belgica MSS, Margaret's original letter to Ferdinand, PA 11, fols. 15-16.


7 Rezek, I, pp. 186-190.

8 Despite its early publication date, Hammer-Purgstall's Wiens erste aufgehobene Belagerung vom Jahre 1529 is the most comprehensive single work on the 1529 Turkish siege of the Austrian capital. Also helpful is Leopold Kuppelwieser, Die Kämpfe Österreichs mit den Osmanen vom Jahre 1526 bis 1537 (Vienna: Braumuller, 1899).


10 Nemeskürty, pp. 137-140.

11 Chapter VIII of Kuppelwieser's work renders a detailed discussion on Ferdinand's haphazard Hungarian campaign of late 1529 and early 1530 which followed the departure of the Turks from Central Europe.

12 Korrespondenz, II, p. 441.
Ibid., II, p. 465.

Lanz, Correspondenz, I, pp. 584-586.

For Ferdinand's instructions to Joseph von Lamberg and Nicholas von Jurischich, who together headed his mission to the Porte in 1530, see Appendix I, entitled "Gesandten König Ferdinands I. an Suleiman I.," in Gévay.


For an exhaustive treatment analyzing the emperor's conciliar approach, see August Korte, Die Konzilspolitik Karls V. in den Jahren 1538-1543 ("Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte," Halle: Niemayer, 1905). In his introductory chapter, the author argues that Charles was slow in coming to the conciliar viewpoint and it was not until 1526 that he felt that the matter of a council was beyond the exclusive jurisdiction of the emperor-papal syndrome; in 1526, however, he threatened Clement with an appeal to the cardinals over the pope's head, if the pontiff remained reluctant on convening a Church council, and in the Treaty of Barcelona he forced Clement to pledge himself to conciliar policy.

In regard to the 1529 Cambrai Treaty between the Habsburgs and the Valois, the concluding pages of François A. Mignet's Rivalité de François Ier et de Charles-Quint were consulted. Instead of tracing the events to the death of the French monarch, Mignet ends his account with this particular treaty asserting that the subsequent rivalry between these two antagonists, Francis and Charles, will be of an entirely different nature from that which has gone before.

Peter Rassow, in his Die Kaiser-Idee Karls V dargestellt an der Politik der Jahre 1528-1540 (Berlin: Ebering, 1932), is of the opinion that the emperor's propitiatory settlement territorially in Italy actually marks the initiation of a far-flung imperial policy for national unification of the Apennine peninsula under the aegis of his dynasty which he hoped to attain eventually through extensive matrimonial
ties between the petty sovereigns of Italy and members of his own family.

20 By far the best account which treats the German-speaking Protestants and their efforts to consolidate their ranks both doctrinally and politically in 1529 and 1530 before the Augsburg Diet is Hans von Schubert's Bekenntnisbildung und Religionspolitik 1529-1530 (Gotha: Perthes, 1910). According to the author, the German Protestant delegation appearing before the emperor at Piacenza was made up of the following three persons: Johann Ehinger, Mayor of Memmingen; Michael Caden, a deputy of the Nuernberg City Council; and Alexander Frauentrat, Secretary to the Margrave of Brandenburg. Before his impending arrest, Caden purportedly managed to have his thorough account on the imperial interview secretly dispatched to Nuernberg.

21 Lanz, Correspondenz, I, pp. 597.

22 Although there is no full-length biography about the Piedmont-born Mercurine Gattanira who stirred the broth of imperial policy between 1518 and 1530, Professor Karl Brandi of Göttingen authored an exhaustive article on his relationship with the emperor. See Karl Brandi, "Der Kaiser und sein Kanzler," Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, IX (1933), pp. 219-260.

23 Korte, pp. 36-38. The historian Leopold von Ranke, in his Deutsche Geschichte (Bohn's edition, 1847), I, p. 85, claims he personally found in the Vatican library a paper containing an outline of papal propositions on German religious disunity. Penned presumably by Cardinal Campeggio, Ranke's evidence shows that this prelate pleaded for the application of "fire and sword" against the Protestants who were referred to as the "cursed and venomous plant."

24 Lanz, Staatspapiere, II, pp. 204-205.

25 According to Professor Karl Brandi, Gattinara's death signalled a new epoch in the emperor's career as henceforward there would be in his employ no person who could exercise such decisive influence over him. The Burgundian noble,


29 Simmet, pp. 22-26.


31 Ibid., pp. 6-10.

32 Both the original Latin and German versions of the confessions have been lost. From extant manuscript copies made at their readings before the diet by some urban deputies, German scholarship has succeeded in capturing, by and large, the authentic spirit of those documents. A possible source for all the documents in connection with the 1530 Augsburg Diet is Karl Eduard Förstemann, Urkundenbuch zu der Geschichte des Reichstages zu Augsburg im Jahre 1530 nach originalen und nach gleichzeitigen Handschriften (Halle: Waisenhaus, 1833-1835). For references pertaining to the Lutheran statement of faith, see I, pp. 524-560. The most recent account available giving a thorough presentation of these documents in a style using the rhythms of German as it is written and spoken today may be found in Valentin von Tetleben (ed.), Protokoll des Ausburger Reichstages 1530 (Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte, Vols. 64-65: Munich: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1958).
Ibid., II, pp. 560-584.


Luther, WA, LIV, p. 192.

Stephan Ehses, "Kardinal Campeggio auf dem Reichstage von Augsburg 1530," Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und für Kirchengeschichte, XVII (1903), pp. 36-39. Although appearing in one of the journals now defunct and sponsored by the Holy See, the article admits Campeggio's responsibility for the negative decision reached by the consistory of cardinals. For those wishing to examine in detail the actual communication between the papal delegates attending the Augsburg Diet of 1530, nuncios Campeggio and Aleandro, and the Holy See, this source is essential: Gerhard Müller (ed.), Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland: Legation Lorenzo Campeggios, 1530-1531 und Nuntiatur Girolamo Aleandros, 1531 (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1963).

Förstemann, II, pp. 620-638.

Ibid., II, pp. 654-662.

For a brief but concise discussion of the 1530 Augsburg Diet, written with strong emphasis on the role played there by the urban representatives, see Friedrich Roth, "Der Reichstag zu Augsburg im Jahre 1530," Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte, XXV (1896), pp. 359-401. Representatives of the four German cities in the South -- Strassburg, Constance, Memmingen, and Lindau -- presented on July 11 a confessional declaration to their own liking, the Tetrapolitana, which was a theological amalgamation of Lutheranism and Zwinglianism. It was refuted and judged unacceptable by the diet on October 25. Zwingli's own religious statement, Fidel ratio ad Carolum imperatorem, which he submitted on July 3 and in which he openly denied the Real Presence, was deemed far too radical to be considered.

Branky, pp. 32-35.
41 Edelbacher, pp. 16-19.

42 Förstemann, II, pp. 782-784.

43 Bribes and favors parceled out among the electors are meticulously itemized in Ranke, III, p. 221.

44 HHSA., Belgica MSS, PA 13, fols. 33-35. Margaret dictated, signed with a mark her last letter to the members of her family for she was too weak to write.

45 Branky, pp. 47-51.

46 The Golden Bull of 1356 had no such stipulation, neither sanctioning nor interfering with the right of an emperor to have his brother elevated to the position of the German kingship during the former's lifetime.

47 Friedrich Noack, "Der Einzug Karls V. und Ferdinands I. in Aachen zur Krönung 11 Januar 1531," Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte, XXIII (1882), pp. 340-351. This article contains the complete text of Ferdinand's election oath.

48 Branky, pp. 52-54.
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