

the Pope and the Emperor, and civil strife reigned supreme for two centuries.

It is easily seen that during these long civil wars no conscious national feeling could be developed. North and south Germans were as foreign to each other as if they were people of different races. When Maximilian I came to the throne in 1493, an event of transcendent importance had just occurred. Europe had learned with amazement that when the sun disappeared in the Western Ocean, it passed on to shine on other lands,—lands teeming with life and riches. The magnet of boundless wealth was transferred from the east to the west, and a steam of adventurous men from all lands except Germany was moving towards the setting sun.

The period of Maximilian's reign was a bridge which spanned two colossal events, the discovery of America and the Reformation. When he died in 1519, the young King, Charles V of Spain and Naples, of the Netherlands and of America, obtained the throne of Germany. He had a German name, but a Spanish heart. At this critical time the fate of Europe was in the hands of three men, Charles V, Francis I of France, and Henry VII, King of England. It was a sort of triangular game, full of finesse and far reaching designs, with Charles and Francis each trying to enlist Henry on his side. Protestantism, with Luther as its guide, sprang full armed into existence. In 1552, Charles saw his ambitious plans for world-wide government failing at every point. Sick at heart and failing in health, in 1556 he resolved to lay down the heavy crown he had borne for thirty-six years. He died in 1558, thwarted in his great ambition of establishing the supremacy of his church, and the permanent union of Germany and Spain.

By the middle of the 16th century, the great majority of the German people had become Protestants. True to the traditions of the past, Bavaria was the one thoroughly zealous and obedient champion of the Pope in all Germany. For seven hundred years from the Treaty of Verdun to Charles V, Germany had held the leading position as head of the Holy Roman Empire. The reality had been gradually departing from this title, and with the Peace of Westphalia, 1648, which put an end to the Thirty Years' War, it was gone. The Holy Roman Empire was now the German Empire. In very fact it was no Empire at all, but a loose confederacy of miniature kingdoms, each in a great measure independent of Imperial authority.

Under such conditions as the Peace of Westphalia had brought