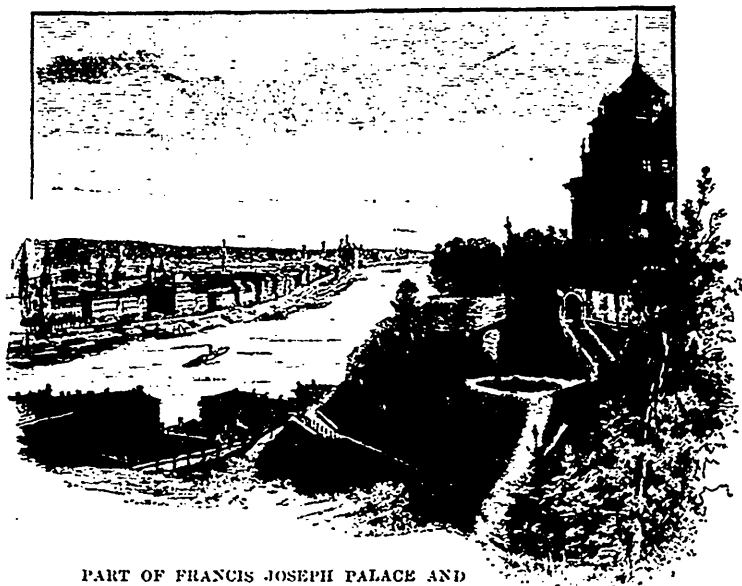


from a paper which he held in his hand : " For very weighty reasons we have decided irrevocably to lay down the Imperial crown in favour of our beloved nephew, the most serene Archduke Francis Joseph, whom we hereby declare to be of age."

The weightiest reason of all was his own utter incapacity to govern in so turbulent and perilous times. The astute Archduchess Sophie, mother of Francis Joseph, saw no

a protection against the Turks, stipulating that their old rights of self-government should be preserved to them.

" The Hapsburgs accepted the crowns, but neglected to observe the other provisions of the compact. Bohemia they treated as a conquered province, quartering upon its northern borders a large German colony, under orders to stamp out the very idea of Czech nationality. Hungary, they



PART OF FRANCIS JOSEPH PALACE AND
GARDENS, BUDA-PESTH.

hope for Austria, but in the immediate accession of her bright and resolute son, then in his nineteenth year.

It was no bed of roses on which the young Emperor sat down. Troubles as numerous as the polyglot tongues of his subjects, and centuries old, stared him in the face.

" The Magyar kingdom of St. Stephen and the Czech kingdom of St. Vacsav, had offered their crowns early in the sixteenth century to the House of Hapsburg as

allowed the Turks to ravage at pleasure, and disregarded the appeals of the Magyars for assistance." Absolutism on the throne, and German domination in the empire, have been the fruitful sources of Austrian troubles ever since.

The wave of revolution which in 1848 rolled over Europe, swept violently over every part of Austria. The Lombardo-Venetian provinces were in revolt. The Magyars of Hungary—a chivalrous, intellectual, and lofty-