

CHAPTER III

MY PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

WHEN my talk with General von Erlanger over the chess board took place, I had but recently decided to plunge into the maelstrom whose gloomy undercurrent depths concealed the proofs of my father's innocence and the dark secret of his cruel wrongs.

My motive in coming to Pesth was rather a desire to gauge for myself at first hand the possibility of success, should I undertake the task, than the definitely formed intention to attempt it.

I had studied all my father's papers closely, and in the light of them had pushed such inquiries as I could. I had at first taken a small house, and as a reason for my residence in the city had entered as a student of the university.

I was soon familiar with the surface position of matters. Duke Alexinatz was dead: his son's death was said to have broken his heart; and Duke Ladislav of Kremnitz was the acknowledged head of the Slavs. Major Katona was now Colonel Katona, and lived a life of seclusion in a house in a suburb of the city. Colonel von Erlanger had risen to be General, and was one of the chief Executive Min-