

some extent secured. The Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel—to their shame be it said—by assuming a hostile attitude towards the Evangelical Union supported the Catholic League, and to some extent identified themselves with this organization. The Elector of Saxony seems to have hoped to secure for himself the Duchy of Julich, Cleves and Berg, by his co-operation with the League.

Almost contemporary with the troubles at Donauworth and the organization of the Union and the League was the attempt of the Emperor Rudolph II. to suppress the Protestants in Bohemia, Silesia, etc., followed by a great uprising of the Protestants, and the granting of the Royal Charter (1609) guaranteeing full religious liberty, providing for a Protestant Parliament or body of Defensors, and placing at the disposal of Protestants the old and famous University of Prague.

Perhaps no circumstance did more to precipitate the struggle than the dispute over the succession to the Duchy of Julich, Cleves, and Berg. These are all small territories bordering on the Protestant Netherlands, and though insignificant in themselves, their situation was such as to make the succession a matter of the utmost importance to the Netherlands, to France, to Spain and Austria, and to the Lutheran and Calvinistic princes of Germany. Early in 1609 the Duke of Cleves died without issue. Among the nine or more claimants to succession, the Elector of Brandenburg and the son of the Duke of Neuberg had the advantage of all others. Each tried to secure the support of the leading powers interested, and when the Emperor Rudolf sent the Archduke Leopold to take possession of the territory in the name of the Emperor, and commanded all subjects of the Empire to recognize his authority, the two Lutheran claimants were induced to join hands in opposition to the common enemy. War broke out, in which several Catholic and several Protestant powers had some part. Henry IV. of France had decided to send a large army, and hoped to be able to strike a decisive blow at the growing pretensions of the house of Austria. His assassination by a Jesuit prevented his active intervention, although his successor sent 12,000 infantry and a contingent of cavalry to the assistance of the Lutheran claimants. The breaking out of war in Hungary and Bohemia prevented the Emperor from maintaining his position in Julich-Cleves. He