

Dalmatia, Croatia, Sclavonia, and many other places.

The Emperor was twenty-three, his cousin twenty-one. Francis-Joseph had arrived that morning at Possenhofen, the home of Duke Maximilian, who, through his marriage with the sister of the Princess Sophia of Bavaria, wife of the Archduke Francis-Charles of Austria, had become the uncle of the Emperor, Francis-Charles's son. Up to the present uncle and nephew, it must be admitted, had had but little to do with one another. The cares of empire had fallen upon the young Sovereign at the age of eighteen, and plunged him, at a time of life when a man thinks much more about the gratification of his desires than of the destiny of nations, into the midst of a difficult and complicated political situation, leaving him little leisure. Moreover, as his character was one which led him readily enough in the direction of amusements close at hand, he did not waste the moments snatched from the affairs of State in family visits. Rumour already put to his credit a number of affairs of the heart, dexterously managed by him; and the young monarch was constantly dreaming of adding to the list of his sentimental victims.

Duke Maximilian, for his part, seldom thought of leaving the neighbourhood of Munich, the banks of the Lake of Starnberg, and the woods of Possenhofen, to go to Vienna, where the rigid etiquette accorded ill with his liking for a simple country existence. A noted horseman and a veteran sportsman, he lived with his wife, his four daughters and his three sons, in the rather modest state which the not over-magnificent establishment of Possenhofen allowed him to keep up, without leaving much margin. A good husband and a good father, the head of the ducal branch of the Wittelsbachs took delight in long hunting excursions about the wood and mountain