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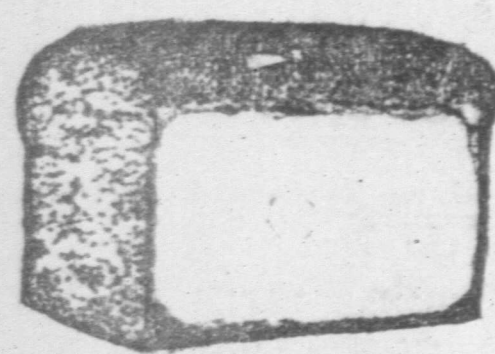
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## THE CURSE OF THE HOUSE OF HAPSBURG.

How Misfortune Has Dogged the Steps of the Aged Emperor of Austria.

(Continued from page 2)

rule over that restless land. He was urged to do this by his wife, the Empress Charlotte, and his mother, the Archduchess Sophie, the latter being most insistent in her demands—declaring that she wanted to be known as the mother of two Emperors. But the Curse of the Hapsburgs fell once more, for Maximilian was executed by the ungrateful Mexicans and his wife, the beautiful Empress Charlotte, ended her days in a mad house.

### Death of the Crown Prince

The hopes of the Emperor now became centered on the Crown Prince, who grew to manhood universally beloved by all his subjects. Always of a shy and retiring disposition, the young prince spent much of his time in shooting and became a taxidermist of no mean ability, mounting up the results of his shooting expeditions for the National Museum.

He married the Princess Stephanie, the second daughter of King Leopold II, of Belgium. There seems to have been very little love in the matter for the Crown Prince seemed to have been infatuated with the Baroness Marie Vesteria.

In 1889 the Curse fell once more on the Hapsburgs, for the heir to the throne was found dead at his hunting lodge at Meyerling not very far from Vienna. Beside him was the dead body of the Baroness.

### Called It Suicide

All sorts of rumors were afloat as to how the couple met death, and it was finally given out as suicide, but as suicide was so abhorrent to the Catholic Church the Empress refused to believe that her son had taken his life. However, no effort was made to find the murderer and the case is still known in Austria as "the Meyerling mystery."

The death of the Crown Prince had an alarming effect on the Empress, who was devoted to her son. She never appeared at Court after his death, but wandered from place to place in her sorrow. The Emperor, who was always devoted to his wife, did all in his power to lift the veil of melancholy which seemed to envelop her, but without avail, and to use the language of a noted Hungarian writer: "The sorrowing woman in black wandered from country to country as though a dread shadow pursued her."

### Empress Assassinated.

The curse of the Hapsburgs was destined to claim her in its clutches, and this occurred while she was in Switzerland trying to recover health and strength to be present at the Emperor's Jubilee in 1898. Walking on the Quai de Mont Blanc in Geneva, accompanied only by her lady-in-waiting, the Countess Sataray, she was stabbed by an Italian anarchist, who used a sharpened shoe awl as a weapon—driving it into the heart of his victim. By a strange coincidence, it was very like the knife used years before when Franz Joseph's life was attempted. The dress worn by the Empress at the time of her death is one of the relics preserved from the Elizabeth Museum in Budapest. Only a tiny blood stain appears upon the gown, the Empress having died of internal hemorrhage.

This seemed to be the crowning sorrow of the many which had fallen upon the Emperor, and those who knew his best declare that he has never been the same since the "Geneva tragedy." On the day of the funeral the Emperor instituted in memory of the Empress "The Order of Elizabeth" for women of all ranks who have devoted themselves to religious, humanitarian or charitable works or objects. The first Grand Cross was bestowed upon the Countess Sataray, who was with the Empress at the time of her death.

### Other Sorrows.

But the trial of the Emperor were not over, for a few years later his favorite sister-in-law, the Duchess d'Alencon, lost her life in the great fire which swept over a charity bazaar in Paris and only a short time afterward one of his nieces was burned to death, at the Palace of Schoenbrunn.

Then his granddaughter, the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of the dead Crown Prince fell in love with a young army officer of the House of Windesgratz, who was serving with a regiment quartered at Vienna. After a stormy scene with her grandfather she obtained his consent to marry the young man. The young man then became Prince Otto of Windesgratz, and on the day of the marriage the entire junior branch of the house to which the bridegroom belonged was given the rank of "Serene Highness."

### Also Brought Disgrace

But even this marriage was destined to bring disgrace, for only a short time after the wedding the Arch-

duchess fired a shot at an actress of whom she was jealous. Her mother, the Princess Stephanie, in the meantime had created a scandal at Court by marrying Count Louvay, and had caused the Emperor no little humiliation by her extraordinary behaviour at Court.

The Emperor's grandchild, Princess Louise, of Tuscany, astounded both Vienna and Paris by the life which she led and when reprimanded for it flaunted her escapades in the face of the royal family by publishing a sensational account of her mad career. Still another granddaughter was destined to bring sorrow to the venerable Head of the Hapsburgs when she eloped with an army officer and lived with him some time before her family forced her to marry him. The Archduchess Louise was the next to create a scandal, for she deserted her husband for a music teacher.

### Archdukes Cause Scandals.

The male members of the family, too, added grief to the declining years of the Emperor. The Archduke Leopold after a career of debauchery married a second rate actress and was deprived of his title and exiled. Archduke Louis Victor, another brother who was known as the greatest rogue in Europe, had to be confined in an insane asylum. Archduke Otto was dismissed from the army owing to a scandal which he had caused, and the Archduke Ladelas was killed while on a hunting expedition by a peasant in revenge for cruelty practised by him on his class.

### Marries Beneath Him

Even the man who up to a short time ago was the heir to the throne, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, caused the Emperor no little trouble. This young man paid a visit to the home of the Archduchess Isabella, who expected him to marry her daughter. Among her ladies-in-waiting was Sophie Chotek, a young Bohemian of good family. The Archduke was at once smitten by the charms of the beautiful girl and he determined to make her his wife. When the Archduchess Isabella learned of the turn of affairs she at once dismissed the girl and sent her home to Bohemia. The Archduke returned to Vienna and announced his intention of marrying the pretty Bohemian, to his uncle, the Emperor. There was a long stormy scene at the palace, but in the end Archduke won, but only after he had made an oath that children by this marriage should not inherit the throne. The wedding took place very

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quietly—not even the bridegroom's brother being present. However, it turned out happily, and three children were born to the couple. In the meantime, the daughter of the Archduchess Isabella—the young girl who had "set her cap" for the heir to the throne entered a convent much to the sorrow of her family. On learning this the old Emperor is said to have declared that although he ruled a mighty nation he was not master of his own house.

### Won His Heart

After a time, however, the charming manners of the wife of the heir apparent won the heart of the lonely ruler and he conferred upon her the title of the Duchess of Hohenberg. She had great influence with her husband and was gradually changing his policy, but before he was able to put her theories into practice the Curse of the House of Hapsburg fell—the husband and wife were shot to death in Bosnia, the little country which had fallen a prey to the Austrian land-grabbing propensities.

"Sophie, live for your children," were the Archduke's last words, as he sank back against the cushions of the carriage dying. But the Duchess never heard, for she became unconscious after the first shot.

The children had remained at Schoenbrunn with the Emperor while their parents were paying their official visit to Bosnia and were playing in the garden beside him when the news of the assassination reached the palace. The heart-broken old ruler is said to have gathered them in his arms and told them of the awful fate of their devoted father and mother.

### New Heir Popular

This makes the Archduke Charles Francis, the younger brother of Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the throne. This young man who is but twenty-seven years of age has always been a favorite with the Emperor and is immensely popular throughout Austria and Hungary. His tastes are democratic, and he is said to be as mild and ingratiating as his uncle is stern and forbidding. Then, too, he is happily married to the Princess Zita of Parma, and their children may inherit and thus the House of Hapsburg may be preserved.

The Emperor Franz Joseph in the course of nature cannot live much longer. Will the terrible Karolyi Curse, which has so relentlessly pursued the Hapsburgs, have spent its force at his death.

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