

years 1463, 1468, 1491, and 1515, between the Austrian princes and the last kings of Hungary. But though the Bohemian States were disposed to listen to the pretensions of Ferdinand, it was not so with those of Hungary, who transferred the crown to John de Zapolya, Count of Zips, and Palatine of Transylvania. That prince being hardly pressed by Ferdinand, at length determined to throw himself under the protection of the Turks. Soliman marched in person to his assistance, and laid siege to the city of Vienna (1529.) In this enterprise, however, he failed, after sacrificing the lives of nearly eighty thousand men.

In 1538, a treaty was agreed on between the two competitors, in virtue of which the whole kingdom of Hungary, on the death of John Zapolya, was to devolve on Ferdinand. This treaty was never carried into execution. John at his death having left a son named John Sigismund, then an infant in his cradle, Bishop George Martinuzzi, prime minister of the deceased king, proclaimed the young prince, and secured for him the protection of the Turks. Soliman undertook a new expedition into Hungary in his favour (1541;) but by a piece of signal perfidy, he took this occasion to seize the city of Buda, the capital of the kingdom, and several other places; and banished the prince with his mother the queen-dowager, to Transylvania, which he gave up to him, with several other districts in Hungary. The city of Buda with the greater part of Hungary and Sclavonia remained in the power of the Turks; and Ferdinand was obliged to pay an annual tribute for the protection of that kingdom, the possession of which was guaranteed to him by the truce which he concluded with them in 1562.

In the midst of these unfortunate events, the Austrian princes had again the imprudence to alienate the affections of the Hungarians, by the intolerant spirit they displayed, and the efforts which they incessantly made to extirpate the Protestant religion from that kingdom. The opinions of Luther and Calvin had already been propagated in Hungary during the reign of Louis, the predecessor of Ferdinand. They had even made great progress; especially in Transylvania, where the German language and literature were generally cultivated. The oppressions which the partisans of the new doctrines experienced, added to the attempts which the Austrian princes made, from time to time, to subvert the ancient constitution of the kingdom, excited fresh troubles, and favoured the designs of the discontented and ambitious, who were watching their opportunity to agitate the state, and make encroachments on the government. Stephen Botschkai, Bethlem Gabor, and George Ragoczi, princes of Transylvania, were successively the chiefs or leaders of these