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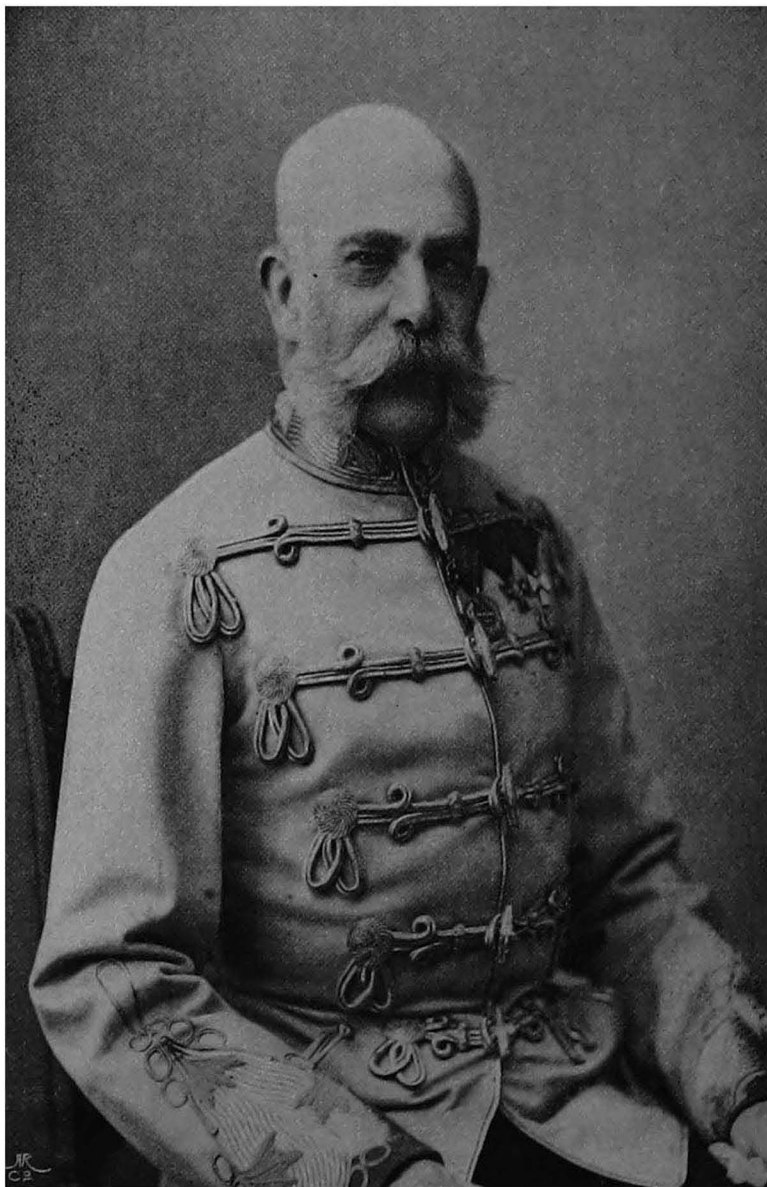
AUSTRIA



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K. Koller,

THE EMPEROR FRANCIS JOSEPH.

[Budapest]



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AUSTRIA

BY

SIDNEY WHITMAN

AUTHOR OF "IMPERIAL GERMANY," "THE REALM OF THE
HABSBURGS," ETC.

WITH THE COLLABORATION OF

J. R. M^cILRAITH

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PREFACE

ACCORDING to the plan followed by the publishers of this eminently instructive series, the "Story of Austria" is restricted to the record of that particular portion of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire which from time immemorial has, to a great extent, been German in race and character; and thus forms a product and part of German history and civilisation. Austria is to-day joined to the German Empire only by bonds of friendly alliance, but its "Story," bound up as it is with the history of the great ruling dynasty of Habsburg from which have sprung sovereigns for so long a series, overlaps a wide and heterogeneous historical area. In view of the shifting political configuration of the subject, the writer has regarded the "Story of Austria" as in the main the story of the dominant House, with its centre of interest based upon the events of those particular provinces of the Austrian Empire which (with Bohemia) now compose the Cisleithanic Empire, and which at all times have formed the home provinces of Habsburg Austria. It is these provinces which in the present day form

the south-eastward wedge of Teuton blood and civilisation against the extension of which the Slavonic Bohemian and the Magyar Hungarian are waging a passive but determined opposition. Thus, from the point of view of the politician, Austria Proper presents in our time one of the most interesting fields for studying those endless problems of race and nationality which confront modern men more or less all over the world: the struggle of the survival of the fittest or strongest.¹

This by way of reflection on the present. The past speaks for itself in the following pages. In dealing with my theme I had two alternatives before me—either to treat of the principal historical events in proportion to their relative importance, or to give a succinct but unbroken record of the history of Austria as connected with the Imperial House. The former would have been a far more grateful task. On the other hand, the partly didactic character of this series and the almost incredible fact that no consecutive history of Austria such as this is exists in any language led me to forego the idea. Those who may desire to inform themselves more fully on such epoch-making phases of Austrian history as the struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism or the Seven Years' War, I would refer to existing works of a more special character, of which the number is legion.

¹ For more detailed treatment of these features of political Austria I venture to refer the reader to my earlier work, "The Realm of the Habsburgs." London: W. Heinemann. Leipzig: Tauchnitz Edition of British Authors.

It will be observed that in the spelling of place names in general the local custom has been followed, but the better known localities have been indicated by the English equivalents.

I am indebted to the authorities of the Imperial Hofbibliothek of Vienna, who have kindly granted me an unprecedented privilege by allowing me to select a number of beautiful illustrations from the late Archduke Rudolf's monumental work, "*Die Oesterreichisch-Ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild*," for reproduction in the present volume.

SIDNEY WHITMAN.





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early years of the Christian era. The chief localities were Salzburg, Upper Styria, and Carinthia. There again the Germanic inhabitants obtained the best results. Already in the second half of the fourteenth century there were in the hills of Gastein as many as fifty different works. So rich too did some of the families engaged in these industries become that they could vie in splendour with the archbishops. All classes combined to further these trades. In 1500, the Archbishop of Salzburg even held a conclave of all the labourers in his district with a view to the discovery of any defects in the then existing system of mining. To the salt works of Austria we have also already referred. These were known as far back as the time of the Celts and Romans, and were taken over by the Germans on their settling in the country. Lastly the weaving industry has long been an extensive one. The systems adopted have not been very different from those in other countries. In older times hand looms were used, to be replaced by machines in the present century. As early as 1802 English machines were in use at Pottendorf and Schwadorf.

Art, like science, also found its early home in the monasteries, and it was from these sources that it spread among the people. These monasteries being German, it follows that the early advances in art are likewise due to the German element in Austria. In the days of the Carolingian dynasty, however, the art that prevailed was of a very rude order. At the same time its objects were uniformly confined to the service of the Church, and it was beneath the