“Swabian League,” formed in 1488 by the lords and cities of South Germany to keep the public peace, gave further offence, as well as their fresh alliances with France. Hence a struggle was inevitable, and the occa­sion by reason of which it broke out was the seizure by the Tyrolese authorities in 1499 of the Münsterthal, which belonged to the “ Gotteshausbund,” one of the three leagues which had gradually arisen in Rhætia. These were the “Gotteshausbund” in 1367 (taking in all the dependents of the cathedral church at Chur living in the Oberhalbstein and Engadine), the “ Oberer or Grauer Bund ” in 1395 and 1424 (taking in the abbey of Dissentis and many counts and lords in the Vorder Rhein valley, though its name is not derived, as often stated, from the “grey coats” of the first members, but from “ grawen ” or “grafen,” as so many counts formed part of it), and the “League of the Ten Jurisdictions” (Zehngerichtenbund), which arose in the Prättigau and Davos valley (1436) on the death of Count Frederick of Toggenburg, but which, owing to certain Austrian claims in it, was not quite so free as its neighbours. The first and third of these became allied in 1450, but the formal union of the three dates only from 1524, as documentary proof is want­ing of the alleged meeting at Vazerol in 1471, though practically before 1524 they had very much in common. In 1497 the Oberer Bund, in 1498 the Gotteshausbund, made a treaty of alliance with the Everlasting League or Swiss Confederation, the Ten Jurisdictions being un­able to do more than show sympathy, owing to Austrian influence, which was not bought up till 1649-52. Hence this attack on the Münsterthal was an attack on an “ associate ” member of the Swiss Confederation, Maxi­milian being supported by the Swabian League ; but its real historical importance is the influence it had on the relations of the Swiss to the empire. The struggle lasted several months, the chief fight being that “ an der Calven ” or “auf der Malserheide ” (May 22, 1499), in which Benedict Fontana, a leader of the Gotteshausbund men, performed many heroic deeds before his death. But, both sides being exhausted, peace was made at Basel on September 22, 1499. By this the matters in dispute were referred to arbitration, and the emperor annulled all the decisions of the imperial chamber against the Con­federation ; but nothing was laid down as to its future relations with the empire. No further real attempt, how­ever, was made to enforce the rights of the emperor, and the Confederation became a state allied with the empire, enjoying practical independence, though not formally freed till 1648. Thus, 208 years after the origin of the Con­federation, it had got rid of all Austrian claims (1394 and (1474), as well as all practical subjection to the emperor. But its further advance towards the position of an inde­pendent state was long checked by religious divisions within, and by the enormous influence of the French king on its foreign relations.

With the object of strengthening the northern border of the Confederation, two more full members were admitted in 1501—Basel and Schaffhausen—on the same terms as Freiburg and Solothurn. The city of Basel had originally been ruled by its bishop, but in the 14th century it became a free imperial city; before 1501 it had made no permanent alliance with the Confederation, though in con­tinual relations with it. Schaffhausen had grown up round the Benedictine monastery of All Saints, and became in the 13th century a free imperial city, but was pledged to Austria from 1330 to 1415, in which last year the emperor Sigismund declared all Duke Frederick’s rights forfeited in consequence of his abetting the flight of Pope John XXII. It had become an “associate” of the Con­federation in 1454.

A few years later, in 1513, Appenzell, which in 1411 had become a “protected” district, and in 1452 an “ associate ” member of the Confederation, was admitted as the thirteenth full member ; and this remained the number till the fall of the old Confederation in 1798. Round the three original members had gathered first five others, united with the three, but not necessarily with each other ; and then gradually there grew up an outer circle, consisting of five more, allied with all the eight old members, but tied down by certain stringent conditions. Constance, which seemed called by nature to enter the League, kept aloof, owing to a quarrel as to the criminal jurisdiction in the Thurgau, which had been pledged to it before the district was conquered by the Confederates. Neuchâtel in 1495-98 became permanently allied with several members of the Confederation.

In the first years of the 16th century the influence of the Confederates south of the Alps was largely extended. The system of giving pensions, in order to secure the right of enlisting men within the Confederation, and of capitula­tions, by which the different members supplied troops, was originated by Louis XI. in 1474, and later followed by many other princes. Though a tribute to Swiss valour and courage, this practice had very evil results, of which the first fruits were seen in the Milanese (1500-1516). Both Charles VIII. (1484) and Louis XII. (1499 for ten years) renewed Louis XI.’s treaty. The French attempts to gain Milan were largely carried on by the help of Swiss mercenaries, some of whom were on the opposite side; and, as brotherly feeling was still too strong to make it possible for them to fight against one another, Ludovico Sforza’s Swiss troops shamefully betrayed him to the French at Novara (1500). In 1500, too, the three Forest districts occupied Bellinzona at the request of its inhabitants, and in 1503 Louis XII. was forced to cede it to them. He, however, often held back the pay of his Swiss troops, and treated them as mere hirelings, so that when the ten years’ treaty came to an end Matthew Schinner, bishop of Sitten (or Sion), induced them to join (1510) the pope, Julius II., then engaged in forming the Holy League to expel the French from Italy. But when, after the battle of Ravenna, Louis XII. became all-powerful in Lombardy, 20,000 Swiss poured down into the Milanese and occupied it, Schmid, the burgomaster of Zurich, naming Maximilian (Ludovico’s son) duke of Milan, in return for which he ceded to the Confederates Locarno, Val Maggia, Mendrisio, and Lugano (1512), while the Rhætian leagues received Chiavenna, Bormio, and the Valtelline. (The former districts, with Bellinzona and the Val Leventina, were in 1803 made into the canton of Ticino, the latter were held by Rhætia till 1797.) In 1513 the Swiss completely defeated the French at Novara, and in 1514 Pace was sent by Henry VIII. of England to give pensions and get soldiers. Francis I. at once on his accession (1515) began to prepare to win back the Milanese, and, successfully evading the Swiss awaiting his descent from the Alps, beat them in a pitched battle at Marignano near Milan (September 13, 1515), which broke the Swiss power in North Italy, so that in 1516 a peace was made with France,—Wallis, the Rhætian leagues, and St Gall being included on the side of the Confederates. Provisions were made for the neutrality of either party in case the other became involved in war, and large pensions were promised. This treaty was extended by another in 1521 (to which Zurich, then under Zwingli’s influence, would not agree, holding aloof from the French alliance till 1614), by which the French king might, with the consent of the Confederation, enlist any number of men between 6000 and 16,000, paying them fit wages, and the pensions were raised to 3000 francs annually to each member of the Confederation. These two treaties were