long been trying to throw off the rights exercised over them by the great abbey of St Gall, founded in the 7th century by the Irish monk of that name. The Appen- zellers in particular had offered a stubborn resistance, and the abbot’s troops had been beaten back by them in 1403 on the heights of Vögelinseck, and again in 1405 in the great fight on the pass of the Stoss@@1 (which led up into the highlands), in which the abbot was backed by the duke of Austria. Schwyz had given them some help, and in 1411 Appenzell was placed under the protection of the League (save Bern), with which in the next year the city of St Gall made a similar treaty to last ten years. So too in 1416-17 several of the “tithings” of the Upper Wallis or Valais *(i.e.,* the upper stretch of the Rhone valley), which in 1388 had beaten the bishop and the nobles in a great fight at Visp, became closely associated with Lucerne, Uri, and Unterwalden. It required aid in its final struggle against the great house of Raron, the count- bishop of Sitten (or Sion), and the house of Savoy, which held Lower Wallis,—the Forest districts, on the other hand, wishing to secure themselves against Raron and Savoy in their attempt to permanently conquer the Val d’Ossola on the south side of the Simplon pass. Bern, however, supported its burgher, the lord of Raron ; but, by a peace made in 1420, the powers of the bishop and the lord of Raron were greatly diminished; the latter house soon after sold all its lands and rights, and migrated to the district of Toggenburg. Such were the first links which bound these lands with the League ; but they did not become full members for a long time—Appenzell in 1513, St Gall in 1803, Wallis in 1815.

Space will not allow us to enumerate all the small con­quests made in the first half of the 15th century by every member of the League ; suffice it to say that each increased and rounded off its territory, but did not give the conquered lands any political rights, governing them as “subject lands,” often very harshly. The same phenomenon of lands which had won their own freedom playing the part of tyrant over other lands which joined them more or less by their voluntary action is seen on a larger scale in the case of the conquest of the Aargau, and in the first attempts to secure a footing south of the Alps.

In 1412 the treaty of 1394 between the League and the Hapsburgs had been renewed for fifty years ; but when in 1415 Duke Frederick of Austria helped Pope John XXII. to escape from Constance, where the great council was then sitting, and the emperor Sigismund placed the duke under the ban of the empire, summoning all members of the empire to arm against him, the League hesitated, because of their treaty of 1412, till the emperor declared that all the rights and lands of Austria in the League were forfeited, and that their compact did not release them from their obligations to the empire. In the name, therefore, of the emperor, and by his special command, the different members of the League overran the extensive Hapsburg possessions in the Aargau. The chief share fell to Bern, but certain districts (known as the *Freie Aemter)* were joined together and governed as bailiwicks held in common by all the members of the League (save Uri, busied in the south, and Bern, who had already secured the lion’s share of the spoil for herself). This is the first case in which the League as a whole took up the position of rulers over districts which, though guaranteed in the enjoyment of their old rights, were nevertheless politically unfree. As an encouragement and a reward, Sigismund had granted

in advance to the League the right of criminal jurisdiction (“ haute justice ” or “ Blutbann ”), which points to the fact that they were soon to become independent of the empire, as they were of Austria. But all through the 15th century it must be carefully borne in mind that the members of the League were constantly recognized as and acknowledged themselves to be members of the empire.

As the natural policy of Bern was to seek to enlarge its borders at the expense of Austria, and later of Savoy, so we find that Uri, shut off by physical causes from extension in other directions, as steadily turned its eyes towards the south. In 1410 the valley of Urseren was finally joined to Uri ; though communications were diffi­cult, and carried on only by means of the “stiebende Brücke,” a wooden bridge suspended by chains over the Reuss, along the side of a great rocky buttress (pierced in 1707 by the tunnel known as the Urnerloch), yet this enlargement of the territory of Uri gave it complete com­mand over the St Gotthard pass, long commercially import­ant, and now to serve for purposes of war and conquest. Already in 1403 Uri and Obwald had taken advantage of a quarrel with the duke of Milan as to custom dues at the market of Varese to occupy the long narrow valley on the south of the pass called the Val Leventina; in 1410 the men of the same two lands, exasperated by the insults of the local lords, called on the other members of the League, and all jointly (except Bern) occupied the Val d’Ossola, on the south side of the Simplon pass. But in 1414 they lost this to Savoy, and, with the object of getting it back, obtained in 1416-17 the alliance of the men of Upper Wallis, then fighting for freedom, and thus regained the valley, despite the exertions of the great Milanese general Carmagnola. In 1419 Uri and Obwald bought from its lord the town and district of Bellinzona. This rapid advance, however, did not approve itself to the duke of Milan, and Carmagnola reoccupied both valleys ; the Con­federates were not at one with regard to these southern conquests ; a small body pressed on in front of the rest, but was cut to pieces at Arbedo near Bellinzona in 1422. A bold attempt in 1425 by a Schwyzer, Peter Rissi by name, to recover the Val d’Ossola caused the Confederates to send a force to rescue these adventurers ; but the duke of Milan intrigued with the divided Confederates, and finally in 1426, by a payment of a large sum of money and the grant of certain commercial privileges, the Val Leventina, the Val d’Ossola, and Bellinzona were restored to him. Thus the first attempt of Uri to acquire a footing south of the Alps had failed, but the wish to recover its lost conquests still continued, and a later attempt was more successful, leading to the inclusion in the Confederation of what has been called “ Italian Switzerland.”

The original contrasts between the social condition of the different members of the League became more marked when the period of conquest began, and led to quarrels and ill-feeling in the matter of the Aargau and the Italian conquests which a few years later ripened into a civil war, brought about by the dispute as to the succession to the lands of Frederick, count of Toggenburg, the last male representative of his house. Count Frederick’s prede­cessors had greatly extended their domains, so that they took in not only the Toggenburg or upper valley of the Thur, but Uznach, Sargans, the Rhine valley between Feldkirch and Sargans, the Prättigau, and the Davos valley. He himself, the last great feudal lord on the left bank of the Rhine, had managed to secure his vast posses­sions by making treaties with several members of the League, particularly Zurich (1402) and Schwyz (1417),— from 1428 inclining more and more to Schwyz (then ruled by Ital Reding), being disgusted with the arrogant behaviour of Stüssi, the burgomaster of Zurich. His

@@@1 The tales of the heroic defence of Uli Rottach of Appenzell, and of the appearance of a company of Appenzell women disguised as warriors which turned the battle, are told in connexion with this fight, but do not appear till the 17th and 18th centuries, being thus quite unhistorical, so far as our genuine evidence goes.