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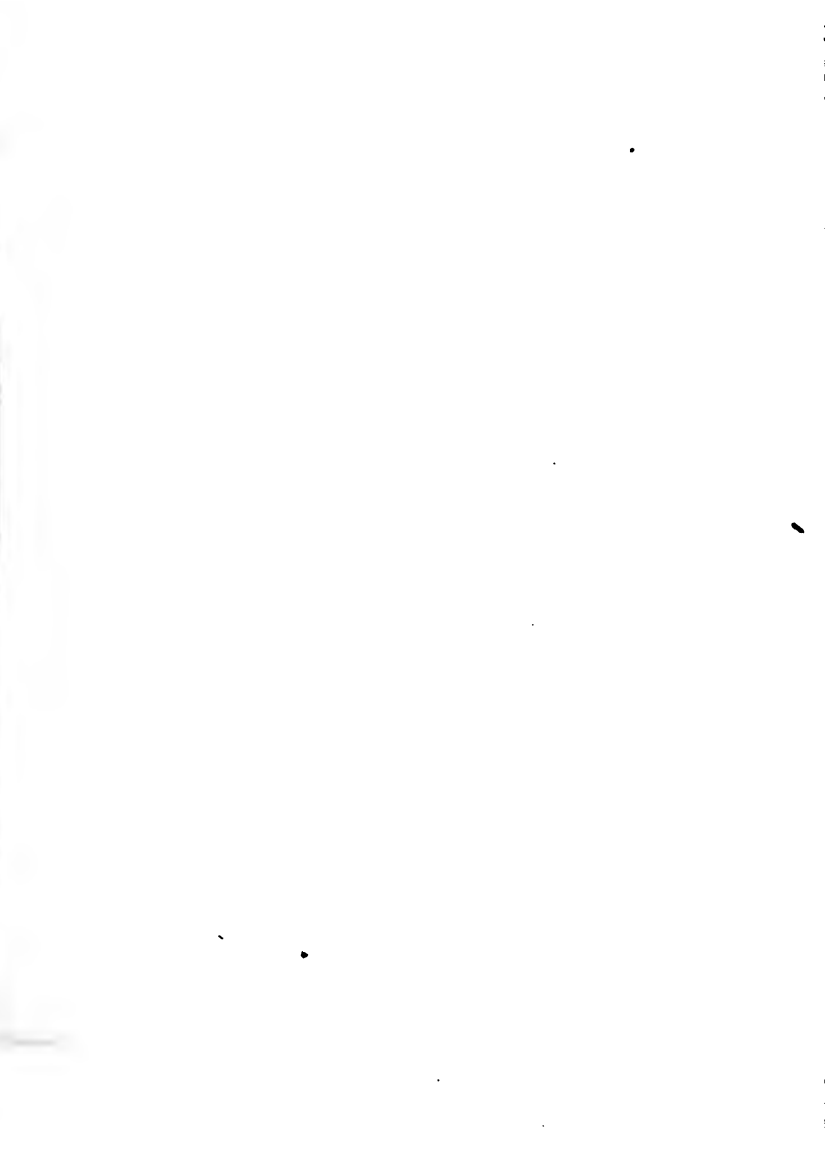
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**Cambridge Historical Series.**

EDITED BY G. W. PROTHERO, LITT.D.

HONORARY FELLOW OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

**SCANDINAVIA**

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# SCANDINAVIA

A POLITICAL HISTORY OF DENMARK,  
NORWAY AND SWEDEN

FROM 1513 TO 1900

BY

R. NISBET BAIN

Author of "The Daughter of Peter the Great," "Charles XII and  
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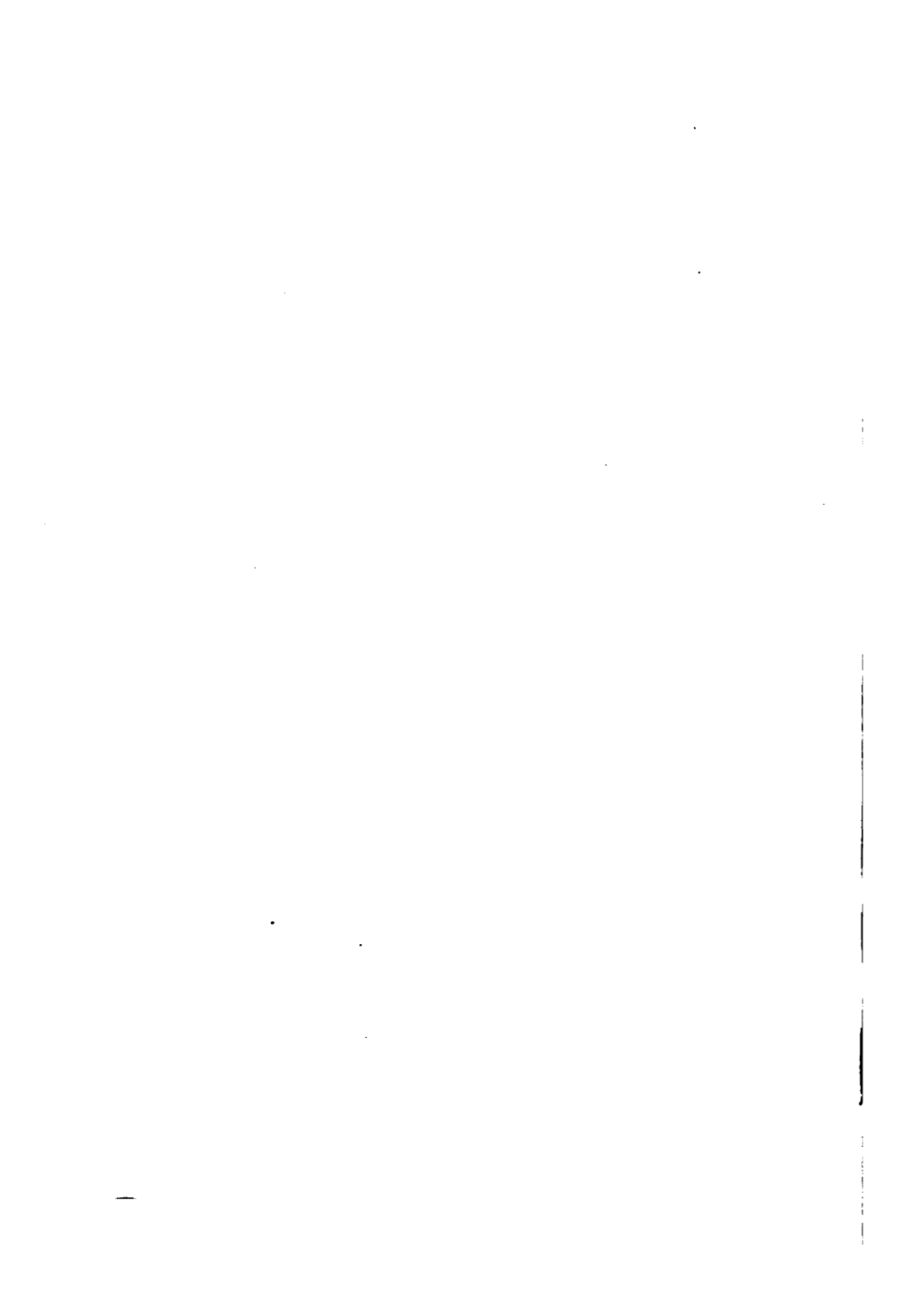
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TO  
MY FATHER



## GENERAL PREFACE.

*The aim of this series is to sketch the history of Modern Europe, with that of its chief colonies and conquests, from about the end of the fifteenth century down to the present time. In one or two cases the story commences at an earlier date: in the case of the colonies it generally begins later. The histories of the different countries are described, as a rule, separately; for it is believed that, except in epochs like that of the French Revolution and Napoleon I, the connection of events will thus be better understood and the continuity of historical development more clearly displayed.*

*The series is intended for the use of all persons anxious to understand the nature of existing political conditions. "The roots of the present lie deep in the past"; and the real significance of contemporary events cannot be grasped unless the historical causes which have led to them are known. The plan adopted makes it possible to treat the history of the last four centuries in considerable detail, and to embody the most important results of modern research. It is hoped therefore that the series will be useful not only to beginners but to students who have already acquired some general knowledge of European History. For those who wish to carry their studies further, the bibliography appended to each volume will act as a guide to original sources of information and works more detailed and authoritative.*

*Considerable attention is paid to political geography; and each volume is furnished with such maps and plans as may be requisite for the illustration of the text.*

G. W. PROTHERO.

## PREFACE.

THE political history of Scandinavia is the history of the frustration of a great Baltic Empire. That process of concentration and amalgamation which, in the course of the fifteenth century, resulted in the formation of national monarchies throughout Europe, was anticipated, nearly a hundred years earlier, in the North, by the union of the three northern kingdoms beneath the sceptre of Margaret of Denmark. The Union of Kalmar, imperfect and unstable enough while it lasted, had its best chance of permanency at the very moment when it was about to break up for ever. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Denmark and Norway were, practically, one state; and the differences between Denmark and Sweden seemed in a fair way of being amicably adjusted, when a great crime, "The Stockholm Massacre," converted what had hitherto only been political divergence into national hatred. Henceforward Denmark and Sweden drifted hopelessly apart. From the beginning of the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century this hatred manifested itself in no fewer than eleven fierce wars, which diverted the best energies of both nations from their natural channels with enormous resultant waste; and this, too, at the very time when

the hegemony of a united Scandinavia might, with comparative ease, have been extended over all the Baltic lands from the Weser to the Vistula. No insuperable obstacle stood in the way of such a hegemony. The collapse of two great mediæval organisations, the Hansa and the Teutonic Order, opened to any compact, homogeneous, modern state with a predominant sea-power more than one door of entrance into headless Germany, anarchic Poland, and barbarous Moscovy. Sweden was such a state. What might not have been effected by Sweden and Denmark together, two sister kingdoms with the same religion, similar institutions, and practically the same language, when, notwithstanding their mutually obstructive and destructive rivalry, one of them, Sweden, actually succeeded in establishing, for a time, an Empire of the first rank, an Empire only destroyed by the banded might of Eastern and Central Europe after a twenty years' struggle?

The present volume is, mainly, an attempt to describe the rise of the Scandinavian Kingdoms to political eminence, and their corresponding influence on European politics generally. But the whole story has also its own peculiar dramatic interest, for it is the chronicle of the ambitions and the achievements of a long series of exceptionally great men, master-magicians of statecraft, who wrought marvels with the feeblest material resources. The history of Sweden in particular, from the middle of the sixteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth century, is a record of surpassing individual genius which seems almost to turn aside, or, at least, suspend for a time, the operation of natural laws. Unfortunately, this heroic process of empire-building on flimsy foundations, if it elicited, most certainly

also exhausted the vital forces of Scandinavia. This fact, I think, explains the tardy development of the unusually manifold and brilliant Scandinavian literature. The national energy and intellect were wholly absorbed by urgent material necessities; there was no leisure in that period of storm and stress for "the amusement of letters."

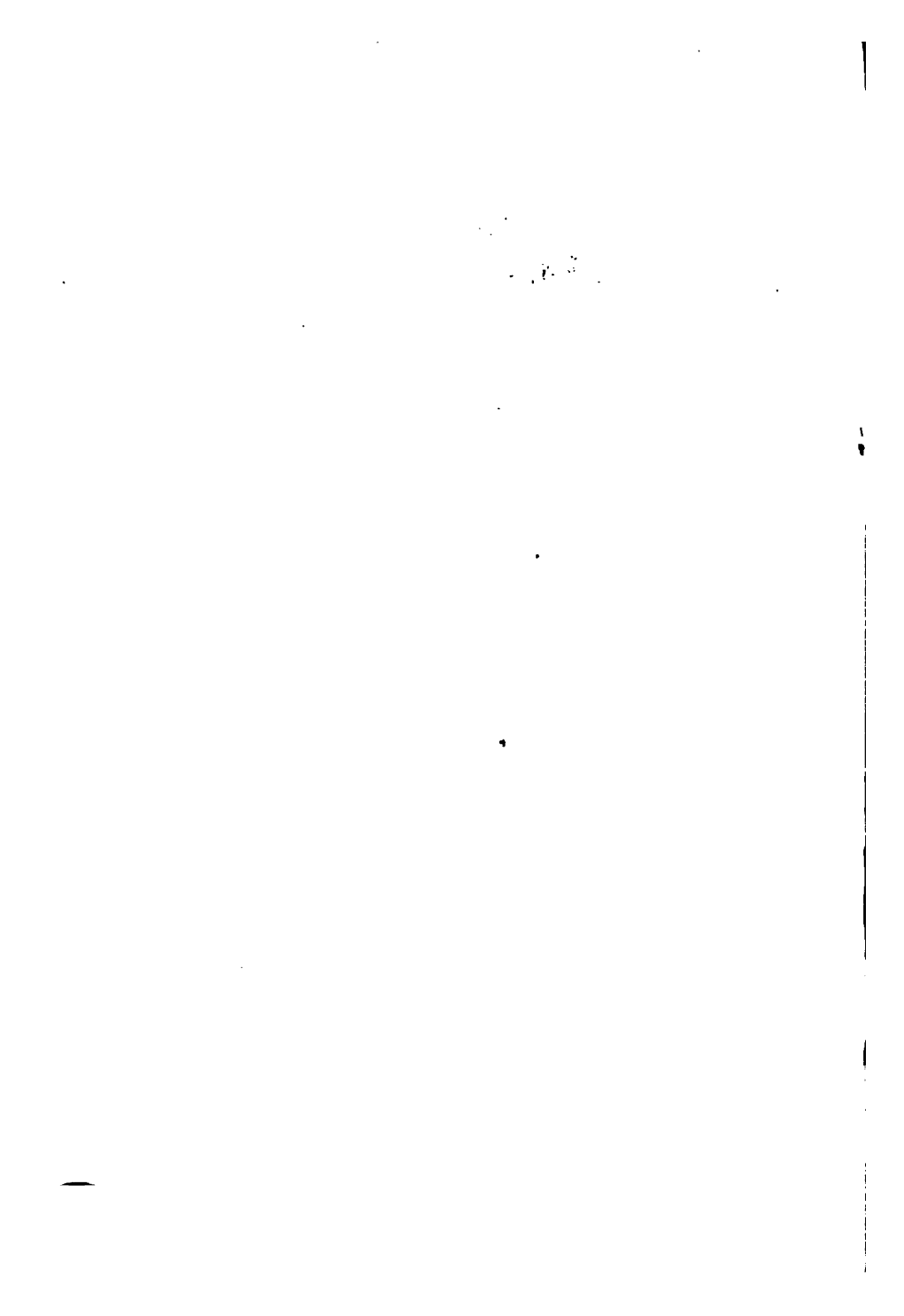
Naturally, in writing a history of Scandinavia, I have drawn, for the most part, from native sources. But, occasionally, I have found it necessary to resort to Slavonic authorities to bridge over gaps or to reconcile contradictions. Thus the Polish Wars of Gustavus II and Charles X have been studied from the Polish as well as from the Swedish point of view; and for the proper understanding of the Great Northern War I am not a little indebted to the later volumes of Solovev's great "Istoriya Rossii." Swedish and Danish documents are, of course, mutually supplementary and corrective.

R. NISBET BAIN.

*September, 1904.*

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

THE salient features of early northern history first emerge dimly from the mists of antiquity about the middle of the eighth century. The southernmost branch of the Scandinavian family, the Danes, referred to by Alfred a century later (circa 890), as occupying Jutland, the islands and Scania, was, in 777, strong enough to defy the Frankish empire by harbouring its fugitives. North of Scania we find, about the same time, the two closely connected nations of the Swedes and Goths, the former inhabiting the region round Lake Mälare, and the latter extending south of Lakes Wener and Wetter to Scania and the sea; while, westward of the Goths, the numerous "Fylker," or clans of the Norröner or Nordmænd, had long since expelled the aboriginal Finns from the fjords and valleys of southern Norway. Favourable circumstances gave the Danes the lead in Scandinavia. They held the richest and therefore the most populous lands, and geographically they were nearer than their neighbours to western civilisation. Christianity was first preached in Denmark by Ebo of Rheims (822) and by Ansgar (826-865); but it was not till after the subsidence of the Viking raids (which, beginning with the ravaging of Lindisfarne in 793, virtually terminated with the establishment of Rollo in Normandy, 911, using up the best energies of Scandinavia for 120 years), that Adaldag, archbishop of Hamburg, could open a new and successful mission.

This resulted in the erection of the bishoprics of Sleswick, Ribe, and Aarhus (circa 948), though the real conversion of the country must be dated from the baptism of King Harold Bluetooth (960). Forty years later King Olaf I Trygvesson established Christianity in Norway by force of arms (circa 1000), though it was not till half-a-century after that date that King Sverker I (1134-1155) gave militant paganism its death-blow in Sweden.

Meanwhile, the Danish monarchy was attempting to aggrandise itself at the expense of the Germans, the Wends, who then occupied the Baltic littoral as far as the Vistula, and the other Scandinavian kingdoms. Harold Bluetooth (940-986) subdued German territory south of the Eider, extended the *Danevirke*, Denmark's great line of defensive fortifications, first erected by his father Gorm, to the south of Sleswick, and planted the military colony of Jomsborg at the mouth of the Oder. Part of Norway was first seized after the united Danes and Swedes had defeated and slain King Olaf Trygvesson at the great battle of Svolde (1000); and, between 1028 and 1035, Canute the Great added the whole kingdom to his own; but the union did not long survive him. Equally short-lived was the Danish dominion in England, which originated in a great Viking expedition of King Sweyn I to replenish his depleted exchequer, and had important social consequences for Denmark, inasmuch as Canute the Great, impressed by the superior civilisation of the West, promoted Christian culture in his Scandinavian dominions by introducing foreign clerics. He was also the first to found monasteries in Denmark. Canute moreover greatly strengthened the monarchy by establishing the *Vederlag*, or *Danehof*, originally an assembly of magnates, lay and clerical, bound to the king by oath, who, in return for certain privileges, engaged to render him military service. Gradually the *Vederlag* came to include all the great landed proprietors, and so grew into a *Rigsforsamling*, or National Assembly.

The period between the death of Canute the Great and the accession of Valdemar I (1035-1157) was a troublous time for Denmark. The kingdom was harassed almost incessantly, and more than once partitioned by pretenders to the throne, who did not scruple to invoke the interference of the neighbouring monarchs, and even of the heathen Wends, who established themselves for a time on the southern islands. Yet, throughout this chaos one thing made for future stability, and that was the growth and consolidation of a national Church, which culminated in the erection of the archbishopric of Lund (circa 1104) and the consequent ecclesiastical independence of Denmark. The third archbishop of Lund, Absalon (1128-1201), was Denmark's first great statesman. His genius materially assisted Valdemar I (1157-1181) and Canute VI (1182-1202) to reestablish the Danish monarchy. The most pressing danger came from the Wends, who, after long years of strife, were utterly routed by Absalon on the isle of Rügen (1184), which was added to Denmark. The policy of Absalon was continued on a still vaster scale by Canute VI's younger brother and ultimate successor, Valdemar II (1202-1241), who, already, as duke of Sleswick, had valiantly defended the southern boundaries of the realm against the Germans, and, by the conquest of Holstein, extended the limits of Denmark to the Elbe. As king, Valdemar II, taking advantage of German anarchy, raised Denmark to the rank of a great power, subduing all the German and Wendish territories on the shores of the Baltic; whilst by the famous crusade of 1219 he even conquered Esthonia, a useless and costly possession to distant Denmark. And then this vast empire suddenly collapsed. Valdemar's vassal, Count Henry of Schwerin, surprised his master at Lyö (1223) and carried him captive to Germany, whence he emerged only by the surrender of all his German conquests and the payment of a heavy ransom. An attempt to recover his empire was frustrated by the crushing defeat of Bornhöved (1227); and henceforth

Valdemar, no longer "the Victorious," devoted himself exclusively to internal administration and judicial reforms, well deserving the epithet "Legislator" bestowed upon him by his grateful subjects.

The period of the Valdemars marks a turning-point in Danish history. The ancient patriarchal system was merging into a more complicated development of separate estates. The monarchy, now dominant, and far wealthier than before, rested upon the support of the great nobles, many of whom held their lands by feudal tenure, and constituted the royal *Raad* or Council. The clergy, fortified by royal privileges, had also risen to influence; but celibacy and independence of the civil courts tended to make them more and more of a separate caste. Education was spreading. Numerous Danes, lay as well as clerical, regularly frequented the University of Paris, with beneficial results. There were signs too of the rise of a vigorous *Bourgeoisie*, due to the development of the natural resources (chiefly fisheries and cattle-rearing) and the foundation of guilds, the oldest of which, the *Edslag* of Sleswick, dates from the middle of the twelfth century. The *Bonder*, or yeomen, were prosperous and independent, with well-defined rights. Danish territory extended over 68,000 sq. kilms., or nearly double its present area; the population was about 700,000; and 160,000 men and 1400 ships were available for national defence.

Sweden and Norway also were beginning to feel the benefit of a centralised monarchical government. In the former country the Swedes and Goths were united under Sverker I (1134); and for the next hundred years each of the two nations supplied the common king alternately. Eric IX (1150-60) organised the Swedish Church on the model prevalent elsewhere, and undertook a crusade against the heathen Finlanders, which marks the beginning of Sweden's over-sea dominion. Under Charles VII, the archbishopric of Upsala was founded (1164); but the greatest medieval statesman of

Sweden was Earl Birger, who practically ruled the land from 1248 to 1266. To him is attributed the foundation of Stockholm; but he is best known as a legislator, and his wise reforms prepared the way for the abolition of serfdom.

After the death, at the battle of Stiklastad (1030), of Olaf II, who completed the Christianising of Norway begun by Olaf I, that kingdom passed for a time under the Danish sceptre, but, in 1035, Olaf's exiled son, Magnus the Good, was summoned from Russia to ascend his father's throne. He was succeeded by his son Harold Haardraade, whose family reigned till 1130. Then ensued a long period of civil discord, resulting for a time in absolute anarchy, till order was restored by King Haco IV, who was crowned by a papal legate in 1246, and did much for the Church during his long reign (1217-63). Under him Iceland and Greenland were incorporated with Norway. Haco's son, Magnus, was obliged to retrocede the Hebrides and Man to Scotland; but his wise internal administration did much to heal the wounds of the kingdom, and as a legislator (hence his epithet *Lagaböte*) he was not inferior to Valdemar II or Earl Birger.

Denmark, meanwhile, had sunk low indeed. On the death of Valdemar II a period of disintegration ensued. Valdemar's son, Eric Plovpenning, succeeded him as king; but his brother and near kinsfolk also received huge appanages, and family discords led to civil wars. Through the whole of the 13th and part of the 14th century the struggle raged between the Danish kings and the Sleswick dukes; and of six monarchs no fewer than three died violent deaths. Superadded to these troubles was a prolonged, if intermittent, struggle for supremacy between the Popes and the Crown, and, still more serious, the beginning of a breach between the kings and the nobles, which had important constitutional consequences. The prevalent disorder had led to general lawlessness, in consequence of which the royal authority had been widely extended; and a strong opposition gradually arose which protested against the

abuses of this authority. In 1282 the nobles extorted from King Eric Glipping the first *Haandfestung* or charter, which made the *Danehof*, or Great Council, a regular and legitimate branch of the administration, and gave guarantees against further usurpations. Christopher II (1319-1332) was constrained to grant another charter considerably reducing the prerogative, increasing the privileges of the upper classes, and at the same time reducing the burden of taxation. But aristocratic license proved as mischievous as royal incompetence; and on the death of Christopher II the whole kingdom was on the verge of dissolution. Eastern Denmark was in the hands of one magnate; another magnate held Jutland and Fünen in pawn; the dukes of Sleswick were practically independent of the Danish Crown; the Scanian provinces had (1332) surrendered themselves to Sweden.

It was reserved for another Valdemar to reunite and consolidate the scattered members of his ancestral heritage. This prince, the youngest son of Christopher II, chosen king in 1340, possessed, on his accession, little more than north Jutland as the dower of his wife Helvig, daughter of Duke Valdemar of Sleswick; yet on this slender foundation his genius and statecraft gradually raised the most powerful state in Scandinavia. Before the end of 1346 he had recovered Zealand, and, by 1348, the greater part of Fünen and Jutland. In 1360 the anarchical condition of Sweden enabled him to win back the Scanian provinces; and he had already (1346) advantageously sold Esthonia to the German Order. All his efforts aimed at the establishment of a strong monarchy; and the pacification sworn at the *Danehof* held at Kalundborg in 1360 was the keystone of the newly-erected kingdom. The last fifteen years of the reign of Valdemar IV were devoted to a policy of conquest. In 1361 he subdued the rich island of Gothland, and thus came into collision with the powerful Hanse League. In the middle of the 13th century, the privileges which had been conceded to Lübeck alone were likewise

extended to the so-called Wendish towns<sup>1</sup>, whose unscrupulous competition had hampered Danish trade and prevented the development of an energetic merchant class, which might have proved a counterpoise to the nobility. The League naturally regarded the conquest of Gothland as an act of war. At a Hansetag held at Cologne in 1367, seventy of the towns concerted to attack Denmark, and succeeded in extorting, by the Treaty of Stralsund, 1370, humiliating conditions of peace from Valdemar, though ultimately he contrived to render illusory many of the advantages so gained. He was also able, shortly before his death in 1375, to recover the greater part of Holstein.

With Valdemar IV the male line of Sweyn Estridsson became extinct; but it was reserved for Valdemar's daughter, Margaret, queen of Haco VI, of Norway, to bring about a union of the three northern kingdoms, temporary indeed, but pregnant with consequences which were profoundly to influence the history of Scandinavia for centuries. The way had already been prepared for such a confederation by the first union between Sweden and Norway in 1319, when the three-year-old Magnus, son of the Swedish royal duke Eric and of the Norwegian princess Ingeborg, who had inherited the throne of Norway from his grandfather Haco V, son of Magnus Lagaböte, was in the same year elected king of Sweden likewise. This arrangement was known as the Convention of Oslo. A long minority weakened the royal influence in both countries; and Magnus lost his kingdoms before his death. Norway he was forced to surrender to his son, Haco VI, in 1343; and the Swedes, irritated by his misrule, superseded him by his own nephew, Albert of Mecklenburg, in 1365, but not before he had carried through the unpopular marriage of his son Haco with Margaret, the Danish king's daughter (1363). In Sweden, moreover, the feeble monarch's partialities and

<sup>1</sup> Rostock, Greifswald, Wismar, and Stralsund.

necessities led directly to the rise of a powerful landed aristocracy enriched by his indiscriminate favours, and indirectly to the growth of popular liberties. Forced by the unruliness of the magnates in his latter days to lean upon the middle classes, he summoned, in 1359, the first Swedish *Riksdag*, or Parliament, on which occasion representatives from the towns were invited to appear before the king along with the nobles and clergy. His successor, Albert, was compelled to go a step further, and, in 1371, to give the first Swedish *Konungaförsäkran*, or, as we should say, take the first coronation oath.

Margaret's first act after her father's death was to procure the election as king of Denmark, under her own regency, of her infant son Olaf, who had already (1380) succeeded his father, Haco VI, as king of Norway. Olaf himself died, however, in 1387; and in the following year (1388) Margaret, who had ruled both kingdoms in his name, was chosen regent of Norway and Denmark. In 1388, responding to the invitation of the Swedes, she defeated their king, Albert of Mecklenburg, at the battle of Falköping, and drove him into exile. Thereupon, at a convention of the representatives of the three northern kingdoms, held at Kalmar, Margaret's great nephew, Eric of Pomerania, a youth of fifteen, was elected the common king, although Margaret continued to hold the reins of government till her death. Simultaneously an agreement, the so-called Union of Kalmar, was arrived at for the closer union in future, under a common monarch, of the three realms, each of which was, nevertheless, to retain its independence<sup>1</sup>.

In any case Denmark was bound to be the gainer, and the only gainer, by the Union of Kalmar. Her population was double that of the two other kingdoms combined, besides being far less scattered; and her adventurous nobility welcomed a political compact which led the way to fat benefices and rich emoluments. Neither Margaret nor her successors observed

<sup>1</sup> The actual deed embodying the terms of union never got beyond the stage of an unratified draft.



the stipulation that in each country only natives should hold land and high office; and it is remarkable that, while many Danish and even German nobles received fiefs and sinecures in Sweden and Norway, the converse very seldom occurred. Nevertheless during Margaret's lifetime the system worked fairly well. The great queen inherited her father's genius, and was an ideal despot. The *Danehoffer*, or national assemblies, fell into abeyance; membership of the *Rigsraad*, or Senate, became a mere state decoration; and court officials, acting as superior clerks, superseded the ancient dignitaries. On the other hand, law and order were well maintained; the license of the nobility was sternly repressed; and many of the alienated royal domains were recovered by the Crown. Margaret also succeeded in regaining the greater part of Sleswick by barter or purchase. Her pupil and successor, Eric of Pomerania, was unequal to the burden of empire. He was violent where she had been strong, and speedily embroiled himself not only with his neighbours but with his own subjects. The Hanse League, whose political ascendancy had been shaken by the Union, though it still retained its commercial privileges, enraged by Eric's efforts to bring in the Dutch as rivals, as well as by the establishment of the Sound tolls, materially assisted the Holsteiners in their twenty-five years' war with Denmark (1410-1435); but they were twice repulsed from Copenhagen. Meanwhile Eric himself was deposed (1439) in favour of his cousin, Christopher of Bavaria, who terminated the long Sleswick struggle by conferring the Duchies upon Count Adolphus of Holstein and his heirs.

The deposition of Eric of Pomerania marks another turning-point in Danish history. It was the act not of the people but of the *Rigsraad*, or Council of State, which had inherited the authority of the ancient *Danehof*, and after the death of Margaret grew steadily in power at the expense of the Crown. As the government thus grew more and more aristocratic, the position of the peasantry steadily deteriorated.

It is under Christopher that we first hear, for instance, of the *Vornedskab*, or patriarchal control of the landlords in the Danish islands over their tenants, a system which degenerated into rank slavery. In Jutland also, after the repression, in 1441, of a *jacquerie*, caused by the intolerable oppression of the landowners, something very like serfdom was introduced.

On the death of Christopher without heirs, the Rigsraad, after conferring with Duke Adolphus of Sleswick, elected his nephew, Count Christian of Oldenburg, king; but Sweden preferred Karl Knutsson, who reigned as Charles VIII, while Norway finally combined with Denmark at the Conference of Halmstad, 1450. This double election practically terminated the Union, though an agreement was come to that the survivor of the two kings should reign over all three kingdoms. Norway subsequently threw in her lot definitively with Denmark; and indeed by this time that ancient kingdom was incapable of standing alone. Dissension resulting in interminable civil wars had, even before the Union, exhausted the limited resources of the poorest of the three northern realms; and her ruin was completed by the ravages of the Black Death, which wiped out two-thirds of her population. The Hanse League, moreover, powerful everywhere, was absolutely dominant in Norway; and its great emporium at Bergen had become, ever since the middle of the fourteenth century, the principal centre for the export trade of Scandinavia. Unfortunately, too, for Norway's independence, the native gentry had gradually died out, and were succeeded by immigrant Danish fortune-hunters; native burgesses there were none, and the peasantry were mostly thralls; so that, if we except the clergy, headed by the archbishop, there was no patriotic class to stand up for the national liberties, especially as the first unional kings were Germans whose interests lay elsewhere and who had nothing in common with the people.

Far otherwise was it with the wealthier kingdom of Sweden. Here the Church and part of the nobility were favourable to the

Union; but the vast majority of the people hated it as a foreign usurpation. The national party was represented by the three great *Riksföreståndere*, or governors, of the Sture family, Sten, Svante, and Sten the younger, who successively defended the independence of Sweden against the Danish kings, and kept the national spirit alive. Matters were still further complicated by the continued interference of the Hanse League in the struggle; and both Christian I (1448-1481) and his successor Hans (1481-1513), whose chief merit it is to have founded the Danish fleet, were, during the greater part of their reigns, only nominally kings of Sweden. On the other hand Sleswick-Holstein now became a component part of the Danish realm; for, on the death of Duke Adolphus of Holstein in 1460, the nobility of the Duchies elected Christian I as their lord, on condition that the two Duchies should remain eternally united. Hans, Christian I's successor, also received in fief the territory of Ditmarsch from the Emperor, but, in attempting to subdue his new possession, suffered a crushing defeat (1500), which led to a successful rebellion in Sweden, and a long and ruinous war with Lübeck, terminated by the Peace of Malmö, 1512, on terms advantageous to Denmark. It was during this war that a strong Danish fleet dominated the Baltic, for the first time since the age of the Valdemars. In the following year (1513) Hans died, and was succeeded by his son Christian II, with whose epoch-making reign the modern period of Scandinavian history may be said to begin.

## CHAPTER II.

### CHRISTIAN II OF DENMARK, 1513-1532.

IMMEDIATELY after the death of King Hans at Aalborgshus, his son Christian demanded a formal oath of homage and fealty from the Rigsraad assembled there. The demand was just and reasonable. When Christian was still six years old (1487) the Rigsraad had solemnly promised him the succession to the throne, and this promise had been confirmed in 1497; he had received a similar assurance from the Norwegian Raad two years later; while in Sweden, in 1499, allegiance had been sworn to him personally at Stockholm, and he had made his royal circuit through the land. The union of the three northern kingdoms seemed therefore about to be revived in his person.

The new king was no ordinary mortal. As viceroy of Norway (1506-1512) he had already displayed a singular capacity for ruling under exceptionally difficult circumstances. He had vigorously upheld the royal authority, substituted trustworthy Danish for shifty Norse dignitaries, and repressed rebellion with pitiless severity; but he had also curtailed the extravagant privileges of the Hanse League at Bergen and other places, to the distinct benefit of his Norwegian subjects. Patriotism, insight, courage, statesmanship, energy—these great qualities were indisputably his; but unfortunately they were vitiated by obstinacy, suspicion, and a sulky craftiness beneath

which simmered a very volcano of revengeful cruelty. Another peculiarity, more fatal to him in that aristocratic age than any other, was his fondness for the common people. A curious accident which befell the young prince in 1507 or 1509 made this peculiarity predominant.

One day the king's Norwegian chancellor, Archbishop Eric Valkendorf, strolling through Bergen, was attracted by two women in a baker's booth, one of them a sprightly matron, and the other a young girl of extraordinary loveliness. He stopped and spoke to the matron, who struck him as more than usually intelligent. She was a Dutchwoman, Sigbrit by name; and the daughter was called Dyveke<sup>1</sup>. The chancellor, knowing that "the king was in the highest degree an admirer of beauty," informed Christian of his adventure; and Dyveke was invited to a ball which the king gave to the burgesses of the town. Christian fell in love with the Dutch beauty at first sight, and danced with her all the evening; "but in that dance," caustically remarks the old chronicler, Arild Hvitfeld, "he danced away the three kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden." The same night Dyveke became the king's mistress. He thereupon established both mother and daughter in a commodious stone house at Oslo<sup>2</sup>, and, on the death of his father, took them both with him to Copenhagen.

Such then was the prince who, in July 1513, met the brilliant assembly which had been summoned to Copenhagen to confirm his succession and receive his royal pledges in exchange. The gathering was numerous and splendid. It comprised the Danish Rigsraad and nobility, the greater part of the Norwegian Rigsraad headed by Archbishop Valkendorf, nine members of the Swedish Riksråd, and deputies from the Wendish towns and the cities of Holland, Zealand, and Friesland. An uneasy feeling prevailed at this Herredag. Everyone felt that a new era had begun, that a vigorous personality had seized

<sup>1</sup> Little dove.

<sup>2</sup> Christiania now covers the site of Oslo.

the reins of power, that they had to do with a ruler who had already shown in Norway that he was not afraid of enforcing his authority to the uttermost. Every class had its own especial misgivings. The clergy resented his violation of their privileges in Norway, where, disregarding the remonstrances of the archbishop, the Pope, and his own father, he had long kept Karl, bishop of Hamar, confined in a dungeon: for this offence he had to receive absolution before he could be crowned. The nobility dreaded a closer connexion between the sovereign and the non-noble classes; while the lower estates looked up to the "eagle from the Norse mountains," who was their natural protector against the violence of the lesser birds of prey, the flocks of noble hawks, who, in the words of the famous old "eagle song" composed some ten years later:

"Would drive the wee birdies from out of the wood,  
And tear out their feathers and down."

No wonder then if the Herredag of 1513 met in an atmosphere of suspicion; no wonder if its resolutions were for the more part protective and provisional. To begin with, the Swedish delegates could not be prevailed upon to accept Christian as king. "We have," they said, "the choice between peace at home and strife here, or peace here and civil war at home, and we prefer the former." A decision as to the Swedish succession was therefore postponed. For the sake of peace it was also agreed that both the Hanse and the Dutch towns should enjoy free trade with Sweden. But the fiercest debates turned upon the joint charter to be granted by the king to his Danish and Norwegian subjects. Christian finally agreed to increase the authority of the Danish gentry over their peasants, and to exclude the mercantile classes from the higher offices of state, except in Norway, where Danes of all classes, and even aliens like Sigbrit's brother Herman, then commandant of the fortress of Bergenhus, held some of the principal vitiate. Moreover the two Rigsraads insisted that the Crowns

of both kingdoms were elective, not hereditary, expressly reserving to themselves a free choice of Christian's successor after his death. The concluding paragraph of the charter declared that the document was a contract between king and people, and provided explicitly that if the king transgressed the charter and subsequently refused to listen to the "remonstrances<sup>1</sup>" of the Rigsraads, they should be at liberty to adopt preventive measures accordingly.

Thus at last Christian II was acknowledged as sovereign, if with somewhat restricted powers, in all the northern lands except Sweden. As yet the eagle had not swept down upon the hawks. On the contrary, during the vexatious negotiations with the Raads, Christian had shown singular self-restraint. But he had already formed vast plans for the future, including the subjection of Sweden, the humiliation of the Hansa, and the establishment of Copenhagen as the chief emporium of the Baltic. But in the background was the cardinal question of the succession, which was to be the keystone of the whole future edifice. Lest his uncle, Duke Frederick of Holstein (whose homage Christian had received on October 18, 1513, on very onerous conditions), should inherit the throne, the new king must marry. Dyveke was enough for his happiness, but not enough for his ambition.

Shortly after his accession Christian II had successfully negotiated a marriage with a princess of the House of Habsburg. It was the proudest match that any Scandinavian king had hitherto contracted. The bride was Isabella of Burgundy, the granddaughter of the Emperor Maximilian, now in her thirteenth year. Such a union would necessarily strengthen the king's position; and its very conception points to far-reaching aims on his part. The marriage contract was drawn up at Linz by the Emperor and the king's representative, Godske Ahlefeld, bishop of Sleswick. The bride's dowry was fixed at

<sup>1</sup> Lit. "Instructions" (*Undervisning*).

250,000 gulden, a large sum for those times. On Sunday, June 11, 1514, the same day as that on which Christian II was crowned at Copenhagen, he was married by proxy to the princess at Brussels; but, in view of the bride's youth, her journey to Denmark was postponed till the following year, and in 1515 Archbishop Valkendorf was sent with a fleet to the Netherlands to bring her home. Meanwhile, however, tidings of the king's *liaison* with Dyveke had reached the court of Brussels; and there were some painful negotiations on the subject between the archbishop and the chancellor of the Netherlands, Queen Isabella's old tutor, who subsequently ascended the papal throne as Adrian VI. Only with difficulty could Christian be induced even to make believe to put Dyveke away. On August 9, after a tempest-tossed voyage, Isabella landed on Danish soil; and the royal wedding took place three days later.

The girl-queen was no beauty, but her gentleness and amiability quickly won all hearts. At first, she did not please a consort old enough to be her father. The *liaison* with Dyveke continued, and caused much ill-feeling both in Denmark and the Netherlands. In the spring of 1516 arrived ambassadors both from the Emperor and from Brussels, insisting upon Dyveke's summary expulsion from the realm; whereupon Christian, in sheer defiance, dismissed and sent home the young queen's Dutch waiting-women, and placed his mistress and her mother in a mansion at Copenhagen, close at hand. A year later (1517) Dyveke died at Elsinore under suspicious circumstances which point to foul play. She is supposed to have eaten some poisoned cherries sent to her by Torben Oxe, governor of Copenhagen, a man of shady antecedents, whose advances she seems to have rejected. At the end of the same year Christian took his revenge. Oxe was arrested by his order, and, after a form of trial so irregular that it can hardly be called a trial at all, was condemned to be beheaded. That the king should thus dare to lay hands upon



a nobleman of bad character was resented by Oxe's peers as a deliberate outrage. Every effort was made to save him. The whole Rigsraad, with the bishops, the papal legate, and the queen herself at its head, pleaded on their knees for the privileged prisoner; but Christian was inexorable, and the same day Oxe was decapitated. The mountain eagle had at last caused his sharp talons to be felt. The execution of Torben Oxe, well deserved if illegally brought about, marks a significant change in Christian's policy. Hitherto he had favoured the nobles: from henceforth his chief counsellor in affairs of State was Dyveke's mother, Sigbrit. This extraordinary woman, of whom we know only that her father's name was Villom and that she came from Amsterdam, must have been a born administrator and a commercial genius of the first order. Christian II had recognised her ability from the outset. He first appointed her controller of the Sound tolls, and ultimately committed to her the whole charge of the finances. In this position she displayed inexhaustible energy and absolute probity; but her hatred of the nobility, to whom she attributed the death of her daughter, induced her to endeavour by all means to supplant the king's ordinary advisers by *protégés* of her own. Nearly every unpopular measure was attributed to the influence of Sigbrit, "the foul-mouthed Dutch sorceress who hath bewitched the king." Moreover, a *bourgeoise* herself, it was Sigbrit's constant policy to elevate the middle classes and extend their influence at the expense of the aristocracy. She soon became the soul of a middle-class inner council which competed with the Rigsraad itself. Kings and princes corresponded with her on state affairs; and, when the queen, a year after Dyveke's death, bore her first son, Sigbrit, who acted as midwife on the occasion, was made Mistress of the Robes.

Meanwhile Christian was preparing for the inevitable war with Sweden. Since 1513 great events had taken place in that country. Jacob Ulfsson, the aged archbishop of Upsala, had

resigned in favour of Gustavus Trolle, who was duly elected by the cathedral chapter and recommended to the Pope by the governor of Sweden, Sten Sture, on condition that the new archbishop first did him homage. Unfortunately these two masterful young men (Trolle was twenty-seven, Sture only twenty-three), who represented respectively the highest ecclesiastical and the highest civil authority in Sweden, had inherited a bitter family feud. To do him justice, the governor was ready to be reconciled with his adversary for the sake of their common country; but the archbishop loved power above all things, and to obtain it he had already entered into secret correspondence with Christian II. The old quarrel between them broke out afresh on the return of Trolle from Rome. He refused to do homage till all his enemies had been punished; whereupon the governor, who in the meantime was soliciting the Crown from the Pope with some prospect of success, besieged him (1516) in his stronghold at Ståke. Christian II, who had already taken measures to isolate Sweden politically by a catenâ of alliances with England, Scotland, Russia, and the Baltic free towns, now hastened to the relief of the beleaguered archbishop with 4000 mercenaries, but was defeated by Sture and his peasant levies at Vedla, and forced to return to Denmark. By the end of the year Ståke was taken and razed to the ground; and Sture ordered the archbishop to be imprisoned in a monastery at Vesterås. A Riksmöte, or National Assembly, held at Stockholm in 1517 had already declared unanimously that Sweden would never recognise Trolle as archbishop because he had defied the governor and brought the enemy into the land. The war with Denmark was now vigorously renewed. On Midsummer Day, 1518, Christian II appeared before Stockholm and landed an army, but was <sup>again</sup> defeated by Sten Sture at Brännkyrka, on which occasion the Swedish standard was borne by the governor's young kinsman, Gustavus Vasa. A fruitless six weeks' blockade of the capital ensued, but was terminated by a two years' truce.

Thus Christian had failed a second time. He now had recourse to a characteristically sinister expedient. First he invited the Swedish governor to meet him on board his ship; but Sture, yielding to the entreaties of the magistrates of Stockholm, refused to trust himself in the king's hands. Christian rightly regarded this open distrust as a gross insult, and, had he at once denounced the truce, he would have been well within his rights. Instead of that he offered to meet the governor on land (and consequently under Sture's own protection), on condition that Gustavus Vasa and some other Swedish nobles were delivered up to him as hostages till he returned. The hostages were duly sent: the governor hastened to the appointed tryst and waited two days in vain. Then he learnt that Christian had set sail for Denmark with the hostages as his prisoners, after declaring the truce to be at an end. Full of the shame of a second defeat Christian returned to Copenhagen.

An attempt of the papal legate, Arcimboldus—then on a tour through Scandinavia selling indulgences for the building of St Peter's at Rome—to mediate between the two countries at a Riksdag held at Arboga in December 1518, completely failed, the whole assembly declaring that they would never negotiate with a man who had falsely broken solemn compacts which the very heathen respected. At the same meeting Arcimboldus formally deposed Archbishop Trolle in favour of himself, and induced the chapter of Upsala to petition the Pope to confirm his own election. The legate then set out for Denmark, but was met on the way by the unpleasant intelligence that King Christian had confiscated all his property, including the rich harvest of indulgence-money he had reaped, and issued an order for his arrest. The discomfited legate contrived to escape to Lübeck, where he found a papal bull against Sten Sture and his adherents nailed up on all the church doors. His own secretary, Didrik Slagheck, had revealed all his doings in Sweden to Sigbrit, and thereupon

entered the king's service. Christian himself sent a strong accusation against Arcimboldus to the Pope; but the legate ultimately emerged triumphant from these complications, and died in high honour as archbishop of Milan, his native place.

Christian II had never for a moment abandoned the intention of subduing Sweden. He was making ready for a winter campaign both by sea and land with forces sufficient to overcome all resistance. Both Denmark and Norway were heavily taxed to pay for the large army of mercenaries which the king had collected from every quarter. German landsknechts made up the bulk of the infantry, which also included 2000 Scots and 2000 Frenchmen. At Epiphany, 1520, the main army broke up from Helsingborg. It carried with it a papal bull excommunicating Sten Sture, and laying Sweden under an interdict for the outrages inflicted on Archbishop Trolle. This bull, which the temporal power was called upon to execute, was duly fastened on all the church doors on their way. In the border province of Västergötland Sten Sture had taken up a strong position near Börgerund on Lake Aasunden; and there, on January 19, the two armies clashed. At the very first onset Sture was placed *hors de combat* by a bullet, which killed his horse and wounded him in the thigh. His peasant levies thereupon fled to the wild, mountainous region of Tiveden, where they made another stand but were routed and dispersed (Feb. 1). The mortally wounded governor took to his sledge and posted towards Stockholm, but expired on the ice of Lake Mälare, two days later, in his twenty-seventh year. His sudden death threw everything into confusion. None durst step into his place. A few of the most loyal partisans of his family rallied, indeed, round his young widow, Christina Gyllenstjerna, who held the fortress of Stockholm and would not hear of surrender; but even the stoutest friend of the Stures, Sten's chancellor Matthias, bishop of Strengnäs, regarded further resistance as hopeless and began to negotiate

with the Danish commanders, while Archbishop Trolle, now released from prison, worked indefatigably for Christian II.

Meanwhile, ravaging and burning in its progress through the heart of Sweden, the Danish army, unopposed, was approaching Upsala, where the members of the Swedish Riksråd, or Council of State, had already assembled. The ten senators, in the name of their country and countrymen, consented to render homage to Christian II on condition that the Danish generals, who had full powers to act for the king, promised a full indemnity for the past and guaranteed that Christian should rule Sweden according to Swedish law and custom. This convention was confirmed by the king and the Danish Rigsraad on March 31; but it should be observed that the promised indemnity was only in general terms, and made no reference to the offences against the Church and Archbishop Trolle. Christina Gyllenstjerna, however, refused to recognise it, and exhorted the peasantry to rise in defence of the national liberties which the gentry and the clergy had thus betrayed. The Swedish yeomen accordingly flew to arms; and the Danish victors were suddenly confronted by a formidable popular rising. At Balundsås (March 29) the royal troops suffered a severe defeat; whilst on Good Friday (April 6) a strong rustic host, assisted by a force of burgesses from Stockholm, attacked the main Danish army near Upsala. The battle which ensued was the bloodiest of the whole war. Three of the four Danish generals were wounded; the Danebrog, or Danish standard, was more than once in danger; and only by a supreme effort were the valiant yeomen at length beaten off, leaving on the field thousands of dead, whom their own countryman, Archbishop Trolle, allowed to rot without burial because they had heretically assisted his enemies. Christian himself, at the beginning of May, had arrived with the Danish fleet and invested Stockholm by land and sea; but Christina Gyllenstjerna resisted stoutly for more than four months. Not till September 7 would the spirited lady consent to negotiate;

and even then, well aware of the character of Christian and apprehensive of the malign influence of her deadly foe Archbishop Trolle, she took care to exact beforehand an amnesty of the most explicit and absolute character, which was, moreover, to be retrospective and cover all the acts of hostility committed by her husband and herself and their partisans. As it was of even more importance to the king to get possession of Stockholm than for the besieged to surrender it, Christian agreed without reservation to the lady's terms.

On the same day the burgomaster surrendered the keys to Christian II, whereupon he made his state entry into the city. The surrender of the capital paralysed all further resistance. Christian, after a brief visit to Denmark, returned to Stockholm in October, bringing with him his new favourite, Dr Didrik Slagheck ; and the whole Råd, the nobility and deputies from all the towns and country places, were summoned to Stockholm to attend his coronation and do him homage. On November 1 the representatives of the nation swore fealty to Christian as hereditary sovereign, notwithstanding that the law of the land distinctly provided that the Swedish Crown should be elective. But Christian's mercenaries, armed to the teeth, stood round the hill of Brunkeberg, where the act of homage took place ; and none durst plead the ancient law. And now at last the long desired goal was reached. In Sweden, at any rate, Christian was absolute. On Sunday, November 4, he was anointed by Gustavus Trolle in Stockholm cathedral, and took the usual coronation oath, by which he swore, with his hand on the Bible, to defend the Church and her privileges, love truth and justice, rule the realm through native-born Swedes alone, and abide by the laws of the land. After the coronation numerous Danes and Germans were knighted, the king causing a herald to proclaim that, on this occasion, the Swedes could not be considered because they had fought against him. Then, to impress them still more with his might and majesty, he allowed himself to be invested, before the

High Altar, with the Order of the Golden Fleece by Johan Sacket, the Emperor's special envoy. The next three days were given up to banqueting and other festivities; but on Wednesday, November 7, "an entertainment of another sort began."

On that day all the senators in Stockholm, and a goodly company of all classes, including Christina Gyllenstjerna and some other ladies, were summoned to the great hall of the palace. At 1 o'clock the king entered and sat down on the judgment seat, whereupon Archbishop Trolle advanced, and, reminding Christian of his coronation oath whereby he had sworn to defend the Church and her privileges, demanded the summary punishment of all his personal enemies of the Sture family and their adherents as heretics, inasmuch as they had laid violent hands upon himself and sundry of his fellow bishops, destroyed his stronghold of Stäke, and allowed mass to be sung in Sweden during his imprisonment, contrary to canonical prescription. Dame Christina instantly stepped forward and protested that the alleged acts of violence against the archbishop could not be imputed to her late husband and his friends, inasmuch as they were publicly sanctioned by a national assembly, all of whose members had declared themselves responsible therefor; and, in proof of her statement, she produced the mandate of the Riksmöte of 1517. Neither the king nor the archbishop seems to have had the least idea of the existence of this mandate, which was now read aloud and found to be signed by no fewer than five bishops and almost all the senators present, and to be issued in the name of the Swedish nation. It was as if a bomb-shell had fallen in the midst of the assembly. Exclamations, excuses, protests and explanations broke forth on every side.

Christian thereupon discreetly withdrew to his private room, whither he presently summoned his captains to a secret conference. The result of this conference was quickly apparent. At dusk a band of Danish soldiers, with lanterns and torches, broke into the great hall, and carried off several carefully selected

persons; by 10 o'clock the same evening the remainder of the guests were safely under lock and key in separate apartments: all these persons had been marked down on the archbishop's proscription list. On the following day (Nov. 8) a council of ecclesiastics, held at the palace, under the presidency of Trolle himself, who thus acted as judge in his own cause, solemnly pronounced the proscribed to be manifest heretics for resisting the archbishop's interdict. At 12 o'clock that night the bishops of Strängnäs and Skara, who were not even named in Trolle's list, though they had signed the mandate of 1517, were led out by Didrik Slagheck into the great square and beheaded without even being allowed to see a priest. "He would slay their souls as well as their bodies," cried the indignant crowd. Fourteen noblemen, three burgomasters, fourteen town-councillors, and about twenty common citizens of Stockholm were then drowned or decapitated with similar expedition. The executions continued throughout the following day. In all, about eighty-two people are said to have been thus murdered. The bodies were left in the square till the following Saturday, when they were all thrown in a heap and burnt. Among the slain was Gustavus Vasa's father, Eric Johansson. Christian revenged himself upon the dead as well as upon the living, for Sten Sture's body was dug up and burnt, as well as the body of his little child, who had been born during the interdict. Dame Christina and many other Swedish noble ladies were sent prisoners to Denmark.

It has well been said that the manner of this atrocious deed was even more detestable than the deed itself. Even if the Stockholm massacre had been "the sudden impulse of a tyrant savagely impatient of the constitutional obstacles thrown in his way by a free people," it might find some sort of psychological excuse. It is the dishonesty of the deed which makes it so hideous. Christian suppressed his political opponents under the pretence of defending an ecclesiastical system which in his heart he despised. Even when it became necessary to



make excuses for his crime, we see the same doublemindedness. Thus, while in a proclamation to the Swedish people he represented the massacre as a measure necessary to avoid another papal interdict, in his apology to the Pope for the decapitation of the two innocent bishops he described it as an unauthorised act of vengeance on the part of his own people. Yet Christian does not deserve the whole burden of blame. Archbishop Trolle undoubtedly seized this opportunity unscrupulously to gratify his private vengeance; while Didrik Slagheck had never ceased urging his new master to proceed with the utmost rigour against traitors who were at the same time heretics. Slagheck was immediately rewarded with the vacant see of Skara, and, on the king's departure to Denmark in December, was left behind as stadtholder of Sweden with a council in which Archbishop Trolle held a prominent place. The king's return through Sweden was marked by fresh massacres, Christian's last victims being the abbot and monks of Nydala.

It was with his brain teeming with great designs that Christian II returned to his native kingdom. "One of the gates of Lübeck is now taken," he cried, after the surrender of Stockholm. "Soon shall my dogs bark before Gottorp." That the welfare of his dominions was dear to him there can be no doubt. Inhuman as he could be in his wrath, in principle he was as much a humanist as any of his most enlightened contemporaries. But he would do things his own way, and, deeply distrusting the Danish nobles with whom he shared his power, he sought helpers from among the wealthy and practical middle classes of Flanders. In June, 1521, he paid a sudden visit to the Netherlands. He had already had tidings of the Swedish popular rising under Gustavus Vasa, but thought that such a petty affair might safely be left to his lieutenants. Holstein and Lübeck, however, were still to be dealt with. To bring them also beneath the yoke was now the chief aim of his policy. Christian's arrival in the Netherlands caused a great sensation. He was welcomed as one of the

greatest of European princes. In Italy it was whispered that the mighty king had concluded a league with the Emperor against France; and, out of consideration for Charles V, the papal court was disposed to look indulgently upon recent events at Stockholm. Christian himself persuaded his young kinsman to surrender to him Holstein, including Ditmarsch and Hamburg, as a fief, and to recognise his claims upon Lübeck and other German towns. The king remained in the Low Countries for some months. He visited most of the large cities and was much impressed by their superior culture. He took into his service many Flemish artisans, and made the personal acquaintance of Quentin Matsys and Albrecht Dürer, the latter of whom was frequently the king's guest and painted his portrait. Christian also entertained Erasmus, with whom he discussed the Reformation. It was in a conversation with Erasmus that Christian let fall this characteristic expression: "Mild measures are of no use; the remedies that give the whole body a good shaking are the best and surest."

Never had King Christian seemed so powerful as on his return to Denmark on September 5, 1521; and, with the confidence of strength, he at once proceeded recklessly to inaugurate the most sweeping reforms. Soon after his return home Christian issued his great *Landelove*, or Code of Law, for the most part founded on Dutch models, which testifies in a high degree to the king's sense of enlightenment and progress, and in some respects, notably in the extension of state control, anticipates some late nineteenth century theories. Some of these statutes, notably the provisions for the better education of the lower and the restriction of the political influence of the higher clergy, and the stern prohibitions against wreckers and "the evil and unchristian practice of selling peasants as if they were brute beasts," testify to the influence of humanism; but, on the whole, the new code visibly favoured the aggrandisement of the royal authority. The jurisdiction of the bishops was as good as abolished; and the union with Rome was

considerably relaxed. In the towns, too, the election of the burgomasters and council was virtually placed in the hands of the royal bailiffs. The old trade-guilds were retained, but the rules of admittance thereto made easier; and trade combinations of the richer burghers for the purpose of buying up all wares, to the detriment of the smaller tradesmen, were sternly forbidden.

These reforms were, on the whole, excellent, but unfortunately they suggested the standpoint not of an elected ruler, but of a monarch by right divine. Some were even in direct contravention of the charter. The privileged classes regarded the new code with consternation; and the conservative instincts of many of the burgesses and peasants were revolted by its novelty. In some places the peasants, misunderstanding the ordinance which, in case of gross tyranny, permitted them to change their masters, deserted their parishes in scores; while in other places they clamoured to have the old laws back again. Christian's attempt (in 1521) to promote market-gardening by leasing the whole of the isle of Amager, near Copenhagen, to 184 Dutch families, was also deeply resented; and in general the old Scandinavian feeling of independence was deeply wounded by this meddling with both the habits and prejudices of his subjects. Sweden too was now in open revolt; and both Norway and Denmark were taxed to their utmost limits to raise an army for the subjection of the sister kingdom. Under the pretence of a free-will offering an income-tax of 33 per cent. was now imposed on the clergy; and a similar charge was levied on personal property generally.

Foreign complications were now superadded to these domestic troubles. With the laudable and patriotic object of releasing Danish trade from the grinding yoke imposed upon it by the Hansa, and making Copenhagen the great emporium of the north, Christian had arbitrarily raised the Sound tolls, and seized a number of Dutch ships which presumed to evade the tax. Thus his relations with the Netherlands were at least

unfriendly, while with Lübeck and her allies he was now openly at war. The king's commercial policy must in any case have led to a rupture sooner or later; but it was no secret in Lübeck that Christian II meant not only to exclude her from the Baltic trade, but also claimed the suzerainty exercised over her by the Valdemars two centuries before. In August 1522 a large Lübeck fleet, reinforced by ten ships fitted out by Gustavus Vasa, plundered Bornholm, burnt Elsinore, and entered into negotiations with Duke Frederick of Holstein, who had naturally been incensed by Christian's endeavours to seize his Duchy.

Finally, Christian's own subjects rose against him. On December 21, 1522, a number of the Jutland bishops and senators met in conference at Viborg. They posed as the defenders of the old constitution, yet they began with a flagrant breach of it by neglecting to advise or confer with the king before defying his authority, as expressly provided by the charter of July 22, 1513; and, when Christian attempted conciliation by inviting them to attend a Rigsdag at Aarhus, where all complaints were to be considered and all abuses redressed, they, fearful and suspicious, renounced their allegiance and offered the crown to Duke Frederick (Jan. 20, 1523). They were encouraged to persevere in this act of rebellion by their knowledge of the king's overwhelming difficulties, but they were unprepared for his sudden and complete collapse. Christian could still depend on the capital, on the great commercial town of Malmö, and on the people of Sjælland; and his great admiral, Sören Norby, held Finland and Gothland at his disposal; but at the crisis of his fate a strange paralysis seemed to fall upon him. It was as if he had exhausted in ten years the store of energy which was to have served him for a lifetime. Instead of rallying all his resources for a determined struggle, he first lost valuable time in useless negotiations, and then, accompanied by his queen, his three little children, mother Sigbrit (who had to be carried on board in a chest)

and a few devoted adherents, he took ship to seek help abroad instead of trusting in the fidelity of his own subjects. On May 1, 1523, he landed at Veere in Zealand.

Meanwhile the duke of Holstein (March 26) had received the homage of all Jutland at Viborg as Frederick I, and that of the Duchies on April 14. By that time Fünen was already won, and a Lübeck fleet conveyed the new king's chief general, Johan Rantzau, and his young son Duke Christian, to Sjælland. Henrik Gjö, whom Christian had left in command of Copenhagen, unable to prevent the landing, retired within the fortress, which Rantzau invested from the land side, while the Lübeck fleet blockaded it. Malmö, across the Sound, was the only other place which held out for Christian long after the rest of the kingdom had sworn fealty to Frederick I at Roskilde (Aug. 3, 1523). The charter, which Frederick signed on this occasion, made the Rigsraad about equal to the king in power; indeed, as Frederick generally resided at Gottorp, the Council of State became practically his co-regent. In return for the new sovereign's concessions, the Rigsraad promised to elect one of his sons king after his death.

Frederick I was an easy-going, somewhat parsimonious prince of simple tastes and homely habits; but he had the good sense to surround himself with capable men of action, chief among whom were Rantzau and his adroit and supple chancellor Wulfgang von Utenhof. His position being, from the first, a delicate one, his policy was necessarily a policy of cautious and, on the whole, successful compromise. All immediate danger was removed by the surrender of Copenhagen and Malmö in the earlier part of 1524, and by Frederick's recognition as king in Norway (Nov. 24, 1524), on which occasion he granted the Norwegians a special charter acknowledging the kingdom to be elective. Abroad Christian II continued to be a perpetual menace; and thus Frederick was compelled to seek the support of Lübeck and Sweden, both of them, at best, uncertain allies whom only the fear of Christian

kept together. Moreover his dependence on the upper classes, who had raised him to the throne, speedily made this German king unpopular with the lower classes in Denmark, who now began to regret Christian II, and to regard him as their natural protector. In 1525 there was a dangerous rising of the peasants and burgesses in Scania, stimulated by Christian's admiral, the indefatigable Sören Norby, who for many years dominated the Baltic from the island of Gothland, and made himself equally formidable to Denmark and Sweden by his piracies. This rebellion was suppressed by Johan Rantzau; but, in 1531, a far more serious peril threatened King Frederick's throne. Christian II suddenly appeared in Norway in person.

The earlier years of Christian II's exile had been a period of unrelieved misery. He was coldly received in the Netherlands, could not obtain the payment of the arrears of his wife's dowry, 150,000 gulden, which would have relieved him from his more pressing difficulties, and lived for a time at Lier, in Brabant, the place assigned to him as his residence, in such poverty that he was obliged to sell his wife's jewels and his children's playthings to buy them bread. He amused his enforced leisure by translating the Old Testament into Danish from the version of Luther, whose acquaintance he had made at Wittenberg in 1524. Then his faithful wife died; and his three children were taken from him to be educated in the Roman faith. Only after the Peace of Cambray (1529) did his prospects brighten. It was well known in Germany that the common people both in Jutland and the Danish islands had had enough of aristocratic rule during the last six years, and that their hearts were turning once more towards the old king, who, at any rate, had been good to *them*. Moreover Frederick I's conversion to Lutheranism had alienated from him the Danish burgesses and the Norwegians generally; and when Christian, in 1530, after negotiating with the Catholic hierarchy in Norway, had solemnly undertaken, in two interviews with Charles V, to restore the Catholic faith in Scandinavia, his Imperial kinsman advanced

him the funds for a fresh enterprise. Christian was thereupon absolved from his past offences by a papal legate, and proceeded, with something of his former energy, to collect an army of 10,000 men.

On October 24, 1531, he sailed with his army from Medemblik in Holland; but henceforth misfortune persistently dogged his footsteps. A tempest scattered his fleet; and it was with only some five thousand men that he reached Hestnæs. Yet the situation in Norway was, at first sight, not unfavourable. Many of the leading Norwegian prelates, including the archbishop, Olaf Ingebregtsson, openly declared for him; and he was also joined by Archbishop Gustavus Trolle, Senator Ture Jönsson, and other eminent Swedish refugees. On January 5, 1532, the senators of southern Norway issued a manifesto in his favour, recognising him as king and his eldest son as his successor. But he failed to secure the important fortresses of Akershus and Bohus; and his invasion of Sweden was frustrated by the vigorous defensive measures of Gustavus Vasa. Surprised and vexed at such an unexpected display of force, Christian turned fiercely upon Senator Ture, who had represented Sweden to be friendly and defenceless. "You have betrayed me all along, Herr Ture," cried he. "You told me, for certain, there were no men at arms in Sweden. What be these then? Old women, eh?" "But however that may have been," adds an old chronicler, "it is certain that a few days later Herr Ture was found lying headless one morning in the street of Kungshäll." This characteristic piece of ferocity was Christian's last act of power. On July 1, 1532, at Oslo, he was forced to surrender to Frederick's plenipotentiary, Bishop Knud Gyldenstjerne, who had been sent to Norway with a large Dano-Hanseatic fleet and army. By the Convention of Oslo it was stipulated that Christian, under a safe-conduct, should be conveyed to Copenhagen, there to negotiate personally with his uncle. Under the pretext that Gyldenstjerne had exceeded his instructions, the solemn compact was broken:

and Christian, on his arrival in Denmark, was imprisoned at Sønderborg Castle. Four Danish noblemen were appointed his guardians.

At first the king was entertained liberally in light and spacious apartments in the Blue Tower; but, after he had succeeded in opening communications with the outer world through his favourite dwarf, his confinement became more rigorous. On the death of Frederick I and the outbreak of the "Count's War" in 1533, he was literally "immured" in his room, and orders were given to cut him down if the castle were attacked. An old soldier was now his sole comrade; and the deep dints still visible in the stone floor show how the unhappy king used to take exercise by walking for hours round and round his table. For seven long years this solitary confinement lasted. Even after the Peace of Speyer (1544), whereby Charles V had stipulated that his kinsman should at least have liberty to hunt and fish, these necessary diversions were barbarously denied him for ten years longer, because the pride of his daughters, all three of them actually reigning princesses, would not allow them to relinquish their "hereditary rights." In the beginning of 1549 Christian was transferred to the castle of Kalundborg, and here he was allowed a chaplain and a small sum of money to dispense in alms. He died in January, 1559, aged seventy-seven years, nearly twenty-seven of which were spent in solitary confinement. Indisputably a man of genius, the melancholy failure of Christian II was due rather to moral deficiencies than to overweening ambition. Want of self-restraint, the cardinal vice of his character, speedily isolated him in the midst of capable counsellors and a loyal people. Yet, when all is said, he remains one of the most imposing and pathetic figures in Scandinavian history; and his very crimes are forgotten in the severity of his punishment.



## CHAPTER III.

### GUSTAVUS VASA OF SWEDEN, 1523-1560.

WE have seen that the fortunes of Christian II foundered, in 1531, on the vigorous resistance opposed to him by Gustavus Vasa on the Norwegian frontier; yet, only eight years before, when young Gustavus, solely supported by the Swedish peasantry, first took up arms against the mighty ruler of three kingdoms, a miracle alone seemed capable of making the adventure a success.

Gustavus Eriksson, the greatest constructive statesman of a dynasty of empire-makers, was born at his mother's estate of Lindholm, on Ascension Day, 1496. He came of a family which had shone conspicuously in fifteenth century politics, though it generally took the anti-national side. His father, Erik Johansson of Rydboholm, "a merry and jocose gentleman," given to boisterous practical joking, but, like all the Vasas, liable to sudden fierce gusts of temper, was an honourable exception to the family tradition, supporting as he did Sten Sture; and he was also one of the senators who voted for the deposition of Archbishop Trolle at the Riksdag of 1517, for which act of patriotism he lost his head in the Stockholm massacre. Gustavus's mother, Cecilia Månsdotter, was closely connected with the Stures by marriage; and the heroic dame, Christina Gyllenstjerna, was her half-sister.

Gustavus's youthful experiences impressed him with a lifelong distrust of everything Danish. In his eighteenth year he

was sent to the court of his cousin, Sten Sture, to complete his education. He had there the opportunity not only of exercising himself in deeds of chivalry, but also of learning the first principles of statesmanship in daily intercourse with the most eminent Swedes of the day. We have already seen how, together with five other noble youths, he was delivered as a hostage to King Christian, who treacherously carried him prisoner to Denmark. Yet here the royal trickster overreached himself: this very act of precaution saved Gustavus from the fate of his kinsmen. Gustavus was detained for twelve months in the island fortress of Kalö on the east coast of Jutland, but contrived to escape to Lübeck, in September, 1519. There he found an asylum till May, 1520, when, the magistrates conniving at his escape, he chartered a sloop to Kalmar, one of the few Swedish fortresses which held out against Christian II. It was while hunting in the neighbourhood of Råfsnäs, on Lake Mälare, one of his father's estates, that the news of the Stockholm massacre was brought to him by a peasant fresh from the capital, who told him, at the same time, that a price had been set upon his own head. In his extremity Gustavus saw only one way of deliverance: he resolved to appeal for help to the sturdy yeomen of the Dales.

Dalarna, or "the Dales," is the name given to that portion of central Sweden which lies in the basin of the Dal, and round about the chain of lakes formed by that river and its confluent. It is a rugged, mountainous, sylvan region, rich in minerals; and its inhabitants, *Dalkarlarne*, or "the Dalesmen," are to this day the sturdiest and most capable race in the kingdom. From the earliest times they had played a leading part in Swedish history, always ready at a day's notice to rise in defence of their own and the national liberties, under leaders fortunate enough to win their confidence. Moreover they had steadily supported the governors of the Sture family, and were the protagonists in all the battles fought against the Danish invaders. It was in this nursery of patriotism that

young Gustavus Eriksson now hoped to find an asylum and an army.

On St Catherine's Day, November 25, 1520, he rode forth from Råfsnäs on his hazardous quest. Dismounting at the first farm-house he came to, he donned a peasant costume and a round Dale-hat, and set off on foot with an axe over his shoulder. Feeling his way along, he took service with an old college friend, Anders Persson of Rankhytta, who, for all his sympathy, durst not assist him, but sent him on to Squire Arendt Persson of Arnflykt, who, eager to win King Christian's favour and the advertised reward, betrayed his guest to the nearest Danish bailiff. Gustavus was saved from capture only by the prompt assistance of Arendt's wife, Barbara, who sent him off in a sledge. But the alarm had already been given; and the fugitive was hunted like a wild beast, sometimes hiding in trusses of hay, at other times sleeping under forest trees. Wearied out and half starved, he came at length to Rättvik on Lake Siljan, in the very heart of the Dales, and here, amidst a patriotic population, he imagined he could come forward boldly. But neither here nor in the adjacent mining centre of Mora could he rouse the peasantry to arms. They protected him, indeed, against his pursuers, but refused to follow him. They had no confidence in the solitary young fugitive. They were weary of the long war; and the terrible overthrow at Upsala (p. 21) was still fresh in their memories. Not even the tidings of the Stockholm massacre could overcome their apathy. All Gustavus's eloquence was in vain: his mission seemed to be an utter failure.

Then it was that Christian himself unwittingly helped his rival. During his return journey to Denmark through Sweden, in 1520-21, he did two things which touched the Swedish yeomanry to the quick. At Nyköping, on December 10, 1520, an order was issued that all the peasants should deliver up their bows and \*cross-bows; and at the same time a fresh tax was imposed on agricultural produce, to be levied in kind.

The same month in which the first of these ordinances was proclaimed the farmers of East Småland rose in revolt. The tidings spread rapidly to the Dales; and with it came the rumour that King Christian meant to ride his Eriksgatta<sup>1</sup> through Sweden, and had ordered a gallows to be erected at every manor-house beforehand. Alarmed by these reports, the Dalesmen sent several swift runners through the forests after Gustavus to bring him back. Travelling day and night they overtook him and easily persuaded him to return to Mora. Thither the chief men of the surrounding districts assembled, in the beginning of January, 1521, elected Gustavus "Lord and Captain of the Dales and the Commonwealth of Sweden," and swore fealty and obedience to him. The rising was popular; and, by Lent, Gustavus had four hundred armed men about him. The necessary funds for fresh operations were obtained by plundering the German chapmen of Koffarberget; and his forces soon swelled to fifteen hundred men. All the southern Dales now joined him; and the inhabitants of the neighbouring province of Helsingland were invited to cooperate. The men of Helsingland, however, would give no definite answer, but preferred to bide their own time and await events; whereas the men of Gestrikland, the coast province of the Dales, joyfully acceded to Gustavus, who thereby obtained possession of Gefle, the chief port of the district. It was shortly after this that companies of gentlemen, who had escaped from the Danes, began to come to him; and their numbers increased daily.

Hitherto the Danish government at Stockholm had thought it sufficient to admonish the Dalesmen to return to their obedience, but severer measures now seemed necessary; and in April a force of six thousand men, consisting of Danes, Germans, Scotch, and French mercenaries, set out from the neighbouring fortress of Vesterås to quell the rising. Arch-

<sup>1</sup> Lit. "the circuit through the land." The old custom of the Swedish kings to ride through the land to administer summary justice.

bishop Trolle and Didrik Slagheck were two of the leaders. They encamped south of the river Dal, at Brunbäck ferry; while from the other side advanced a numerous peasant host under Peder Svensson. On perceiving the superiority of the enemy, Bishop Beldenak, the most astute of the Danish prelates, asked the Swedish lords how such a large number of men could find sustenance. He was told that the common people of Sweden were not used to delicacies. "They drink little but water, and, when hard put to it, are quite content with bark bread" "Well," replied Beldenak, "they who can eat wood and drink water, will not yield to the Devil himself, much less to mere men. My brethren, let us be off at once." The retreat began; but the Dalesmen followed hot upon the heels of the invaders, and compelled them to stand and fight. After a severe struggle, the Danes were defeated and fell back upon Vesterås. Encouraged by this success, Gustavus (April 29, 1521) advanced against Vesterås itself. It was not his intention to engage the enemy there; but Slagheck's impetuosity precipitated another contest. No sooner did the Swedes appear than he ordered his cavalry to charge; and they fell forthwith upon the peasant squadrons, hoping to trample them down. But the peasants stood firm and received the horsemen with outstretched pikes. Every attempt to break their serried ranks failed; and the Danish cavalry were finally driven back with the loss of four hundred men and all their artillery—a great gain for Gustavus, who had no guns. A few weeks later Christian's generals considered it safest to return to Stockholm.

By the end of April Gustavus was master of the Dales, Gestrikland, Vestmanland, and Nerike, in other words of all central Sweden except the province of Upland, doubly important from its proximity to the capital and its inclusion of the archiepiscopal city of Upsala. Upsala was captured by a peasant host, under Lars Eriksson and Lars Olsson, in the beginning of May; and three weeks later Gustavus presented

himself before the cathedral chapter, and asked the canons whether he was to regard them as Swedes or Danes. The canons thereupon craved leave to consult the archbishop; and Gustavus not only consented to this but himself wrote to the deadly enemy of his house, exhorting him to forget family feuds in the interest of their common country. Trolle's only reply to this eirenicon was an unsuccessful attempt to surprise Gustavus at Upsala. A few weeks later Gustavus himself was strong enough to undertake the siege of Stockholm. But it was now that his real difficulties began. In the open field he had carried everything before him, but nearly all the strong places were in the hands of the Danes; and, as Gustavus had no other means of reducing them except by famine, which, in the case of Stockholm and other sea-girt fortresses was an almost hopeless task for lack of a fleet, progress in this war of sieges was necessarily slow. It must also not be forgotten that Gustavus's forces were mostly undisciplined peasants, obliged from time to time to return home to till their fields and reap their crops, leaving still rawer recruits in their places. So poor indeed was he in regular troops that the accession of sixty landsknechts from Dantzic, in July, was considered a notable reinforcement.

Fortunately the dissensions of his enemies somewhat relieved his difficulties. It had become evident that the Danish stadtholder, Didrik Slagheck, was unequal to the situation; and his coadjutors, Archbishop Trolle and Bishop Beldenak, hated and despised the brutal blunderer. After the defeat of Vesterås, they complained of his incompetence to Christian II, and even induced their colleague, for form's sake, to go to prison for a short time, so that their government might be less unpopular. Trolle then proclaimed himself governor of Sweden, and summoned a so-called Riksdag of reconciliation to meet at Stockholm; but the scheme fell through. Much more effective was the "General Assembly of all classes," simultaneously convoked by Gustavus, which met at Vadstena

on August 21, and greatly strengthened his hands by encouraging "The Lord-Governor of the Swedish Commonwealth" to continue as he had begun, and promising him their utmost support. The war of liberation was now prosecuted with fresh energy. In the course of 1520 and 1521 nearly all the Swedish fortresses were recovered; but the siege of Stockholm, ably defended by Didrik Slagheck's capable brother, Henrik, and repeatedly reinforced and reprovisioned from the sea by Sören Norby, still dragged wearily on.

At length Gustavus, perceiving that his own resources were unequal to reducing the place, applied for aid to Lübeck, which was equally interested in opposing the Imperial policy of Christian II. He could not have chosen a more favourable time. Lübeck, well aware of Christian's intrigues against her during his secret visit to the Netherlands, was actually preparing for war; and her old rival, Dantzic, who had similar grievances against the Danish king, took the same side. On March 15, 1522, both cities agreed to assist Gustavus; and, on May 30, ten warships, with numerous German landsknechts and horsemen on board, left Travemünde and arrived at Söderköping on June 7. Stockholm was now completely blockaded; and, after the repulse of a determined attempt to relieve it, in November, by the indefatigable Sören Norby, the surrender of the city could be only a question of time.

Meanwhile Christian himself had quitted Denmark; and the news of his flight had no sooner reached Sweden than Gustavus, in the beginning of June, summoned a *Riksmöte*, or National Assembly, to Strengnäs, consisting not merely of senators, prelates, and nobles, but of representatives from the towns and country parishes. The first business of the assembly was to fill the places in the Råd, or Senate, rendered vacant by the Stockholm massacre. A couple of days later (June 6, 1523), Canon Knut of Vesterås delivered a Latin oration in which he demonstrated the necessity of electing a king, and, at the same time, declared that none was so worthy of that high office as

“the Governor Herr Gustavus Eriksson.” Knut’s proposition was received with unanimous applause; only Gustavus himself raised objections; and there can be no question that he was thoroughly sincere. He was weary, he said, of the heavy burden he had already taken upon himself, and begged to be relieved of it. Let them elect one of the older senators, and he would be the first to render him homage and obedience. But everyone recognised that Gustavus was indispensable, and they persisted in their entreaties till he yielded. Then, in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, Gustavus Eriksson was proclaimed “King of the Swedes and Goths.” The election was duly notified by the Senate “to all men who love and seek the truth.” In this document, a copy of which was sent to the principal European potentates, Christian II’s conduct in Sweden and the reason of his expulsion were set forth clearly and circumstantially. At the same time Archbishop Trolle was outlawed and forbidden to return to Sweden.

Yet, at the very assembly which elected him king, Gustavus learnt, as he himself expressed it, that the office of ruler “hath more gall than honey in it.” The deputies from Lübeck present at the Riksmöte demanded of the newly elected king the renewal and enlargement of their privileges in return for the assistance they had rendered to him against Christian II. The privileges thus claimed practically placed the whole trade of Sweden, toll-free, in the hands of the Hansa. Gustavus saw only too well the detriment which would thence ensue to the realm, but he was helpless. The sum he owed to Lübeck for ships and muniments of war was considerable; and he had no means of repaying it. Moreover, further help from Lübeck was required in order to take Stockholm; and the plenipotentiaries of that powerful city threatened that, if their demands were not promptly complied with, they would make their own terms with Gustavus’s competitor, Frederick I, the new king of Denmark, who had already offered them all their old privileges in the three



northern kingdoms. With an aching heart the young king felt compelled to agree to conditions so rigorous that some of his own councillors refused to sign the treaty. On June 10, 1523, a royal brief conceded all the demands of Lübeck.

The day after the close of the Riksmöte, June 20, 1523, Stockholm opened her gates to Gustavus. Twice in three years the Swedish capital had endured the privations of a long siege. Most of the houses were in ruins or tenantless; and the numbers of the taxpaying burgesses had sunk in four years from 1200 to 308. To repair the loss Gustavus resorted to an expedient not uncommon in those times. Burgesses selected from every town in Sweden were ordered forthwith to repair to Stockholm and reside permanently there, under heavy penalties in case of disobedience. The strong fortress of Kalmar had surrendered shortly before Stockholm; and, by the end of 1523, all Finland was also subdued by Gustavus's generals, Erik and Ivar Fleming. The war of liberation being now over, the foreign mercenaries were superfluous; but, as Gustavus had no money to pay them off, he was obliged to send them to Lübeck to be discharged there by the city authorities. In return for this service, however, the Lübeckers demanded such an enormous sum of money that Gustavus could pay off a first instalment of it only by selling the spare chalices, monstrances, and other treasures of the Swedish churches and monasteries.

This was only the beginning of those economical difficulties with which Gustavus had to contend from the beginning to the end of his reign, difficulties which frequently threatened completely to overwhelm even his strenuous energy and dogged perseverance. The financial position of the Crown was the most important of all the problems demanding solution, for upon that everything else depended. By releasing his country from the tyranny of Denmark Gustavus had made the free, independent development of Sweden a possibility. It was for him to realise that possibility. First of all, order had to be

evolved from the chaos in which Sweden had been plunged by the disruption of the Union; and the shortest, perhaps the only way thereto was to restore the royal authority, which had been in abeyance during ninety years. But an effective, reforming monarchy must stand upon a sound financial basis; and to establish such a basis was, under the circumstances, an herculean task. For the usual revenues of the Crown, always inadequate, were so diminished that they did not cover half the daily expenses of government, and left no surplus whatever for the payment of the grinding national debt—another heritage of the Union. New taxes could be imposed only with extreme caution while the country was still bleeding from the wounds of the long war; and, in any case, the limits of taxation, in so poor a country as Sweden, would very speedily be reached. It was clear that extraordinary expedients must, sooner or later, be adopted. Men were wanted even more than money. The lack of capable, trustworthy administrators in Sweden, just when they were most required, was grievous.

The whole burden of government weighed exclusively on the shoulders of the new king, a young man of seven-and-twenty. He had to see to everything personally, and act on information which he could trust none to collect but himself. Half his time was taken up in travelling from one end of the kingdom to the other, and doing purely clerical work for want of competent assistance. Gustavus was, in very deed, not merely Sweden's king, but Sweden's most overworked servant. His officers did literally nothing without first consulting him; and his care extended to everything, from the building of a smithy to the construction of a fleet, from the translation of the Scriptures to the reformation of the Church. We can form some idea of his difficulties when we learn that, in 1533, he could not send an ambassador to Lübeck because not a single man in his council knew German. On another occasion he was unable to write a letter in German to

Christian III because there was nobody at hand to whom he could dictate it. It was the lack of native talent which compelled Gustavus frequently to employ the services of foreign adventurers like Berent von Mehlen, John von Hoja, Konrad von Pyhy, and Georg Norman, not because they were the best, but because they were the only tools he could lay his hands upon. Under these circumstances a strong monarchy was indispensable to the development of liberty and independence in Sweden; and it was not the least anxious of Gustavus's many anxieties that he had constantly to be on the watch lest a formidable democratic rival should encroach on his prerogative. That rival was the Swedish peasantry as embodied in its most thoroughgoing representatives, the Dalesmen of central Sweden.

The position of the Swedish peasantry was absolutely unique. For the last hundred years they had been a leading factor in the political life of the country; and perhaps in no other contemporary European state could so self-reliant and self-respecting a class of yeomen have been found. Again and again, first under Engelbrekt and subsequently under the Stures, they had defended their own and the national liberties against foreign foes. But, if their services had been great, their pretensions were still greater. They were as obstinate and unruly in quiet times as they were brave and trustworthy in times of peril. They prided themselves on having "set King Gus in the high seat," but they were quite ready to unseat him if his rule were not to their liking; and there were many things with which the Dalesmen were by no means content. Naturally, after such a revolution, there were anomalies in Sweden which could not immediately be rectified, and should therefore have been borne with patience; but this the peasantry had not sense enough to see, and they freely blamed the king for not doing impossibilities. This state of things was responsible for the numerous peasant risings with which Gustavus had to contend.

The first of these rebellions occurred in the second year of his reign. On April 19, 1525, the Dalesmen met at Tuna to consider the causes of complaint they had against the king, and sent him a letter dated May 1, in which they frankly spoke their minds. They began, somewhat ungenerously, by reminding him of the time when he "wandered an outlaw in the woods," of how they had helped him to drive all his enemies out of the land, and placed him on the throne, "whereupon the king had made light of good Swedish men, and invited Germans and Danes into the land." And how had he kept his royal oath? After an unchristian sort he had taxed churches and monasteries, and taken away all the treasures which had been devoted to God's service. They had already "exhorted him with letters and humble reminders," at the same time begging him "to get them a better value for their wares; but the longer they waited the worse they came off." This they could put up with no longer. If the king would not listen to their complaints they would no longer keep the oath of allegiance they had sworn to him. "We perceive therefore," they concluded, "that you mean clean to destroy us poor Swedish men, which, with God's help, we will prevent; so take note hereof and act accordingly!"

Gustavus received this letter at Vesterås, whither he had summoned a national assembly in May, to receive his abdication if they were not satisfied with his rule. The prayers and promises of the Estates prevailed upon him to withdraw his abdication; and he sent a letter of remonstrance to the Dalesmen, declaring he could never believe that they seriously meant to withdraw their allegiance, and warning them not to provoke him too far. Gustavus would not use force against his own people if argument could prevail; besides, at that very time, he had need of every soldier he possessed, for the fortress of Kalmar, which he had entrusted to Berent von Mehlen, had rebelled against him, and it took him the whole summer to reduce it to obedience. Shortly after its surrender

the Dalesmen at last listened to reason; and, when the king, in October, came to Tuna, they confessed they had been misled by scoundrels and begged his forgiveness.

Thus the first *Daluppror*, as it is called, ended peaceably enough. Much more serious was the second *Daluppror* which broke out two years later. In the interval Gustavus had been obliged to seize more Church property to satisfy his financial needs, and had, at the same time, unmistakably favoured the "new teaching," which had already found its way into Sweden. The essentially Catholic peasantry were outraged by this policy; and they attributed the almost total failure of the crops in 1526 to the wrath of Providence against the ungodly king. The Dalesmen, as usual, had their own particular grievances, although, since the pacification of 1525, Gustavus had carried his policy of conciliation so far as even to consult them on sundry affairs of State before deliberating with his Council.

Nevertheless, when in March, 1527, an impostor, calling himself Nils Sture, the eldest son of Sten Sture and Christina Gyllenstjerna, appeared in the Dales, two-thirds of the population were ready to lay down their lives for him. They styled him "Daljunkar" or the Squire of the Dales. Their credulity went so far as to credit his statement that "King Gustavus had rejected the Christian faith, and become a Lutheran and a heathen"; and, in the twelve articles of complaint which the Dalesmen forthwith despatched to the king, the introduction of "Luthery" and the spoliation of churches and monasteries occupied a prominent place. Gustavus replied that he knew nothing about "Luthery." He had only commanded that God's Word and Gospel were to be preached so that the clergy should no longer deceive the simple folk; and said that it was only the priests and monks, "who did not wish their deceptions to be known," who had falsely spread the report that he wanted to introduce a new faith. "It amazes me," he continues, "that the good men of the Dales should trouble themselves about matters which they do not understand at all, and which do not

concern them"; and he invited them to send their deputies to Vesterås to take counsel with him and his Råd. This letter seems to have made some impression upon the Dalesmen; but their reply contained very little of the dutiful submission of subjects. They now categorically demanded that "no new faith or Luthery" should be introduced, that henceforth at court "there should not be so many foreign and outlandish customs with laced and brocaded clothes," and that the king "should burn alive, or otherwise do away with, all who ate flesh on Friday and Saturday." This was too much for even the patience of Gustavus. He was "not going to be lectured by them," he answered, "as to how he was to clothe his bodyguards and servants; he preferred to model himself upon other potentates, such as kings and emperors, so that they may see that we Swedes are no more swine and goats than they are."

The deputies from the Dales duly conferred with the king at Vesterås, in June, 1527; and the interview at least convinced them of the imposture of the Daljunker, for by the king's command a letter was read aloud to them from Dame Christina, in which she utterly repudiated the Daljunker. On their return home the Dalesmen confronted the Daljunker with a copy of this letter, and asked for an explanation. The impostor had the effrontery to reply that "his mother would not acknowledge him because he was born before her marriage." "Then it was," says a contemporary chronicler, "that a mist fell from the eyes of such of the Dalesmen as still had some sense left, so that they understood that such a saying was an insult to so noble and virtuous a lady." The Daljunker, perceiving that his cause was lost, fled to Norway. Yet the Dalesmen still remained stubborn and restless; and the king's officials reported that "they could scarce speak a couple of words to them without being threatened with a flogging." At last Gustavus was driven to give them a lesson: it was intolerable that a single class should dictate to the whole kingdom. So, after his long-delayed coronation had been celebrated, with the usual cere-

monies, at Upsala in January, 1528, he crossed the border of the Dales at the head of 14,000 men. Forty to fifty men from every parish had already been summoned to meet him, in a general assembly at Tuna, on February 26, to enquire into the cause of the recent disturbances. The ringleaders also had been persuaded to attend under a promise of a "free, sure and Christian safe-conduct to and from the Landsting." This promise was broken. When the people had assembled, the royal troops were marshalled around them, the guns were pointed at the throng, and the chief abettors and counsellors of the Daljunker were singled out and executed on the spot. "When the others saw that blood began to flow they had quite another song to sing. Fearing for their lives, they fell a howling and crying, dumped down on their knees, begged and prayed the king for God's sake to spare them, and promised amendment. And, after a very long consultation, they were assured of his pardon and forgiveness, and did him homage. So this time King Gustavus brought the Dalesmen back to meekness and obedience."

But it was not for long. In less than three years the Dalesmen were again in arms against the king, this time to protect the bells of their churches. We have already seen on what onerous terms Gustavus purchased the assistance of Lübeck. Swedish trade had become a monopoly of the Hansa. Nor was this all. In order to pay off the money subsequently borrowed from the wealthy city the unhappy king was driven to the most desperate expedients. In the beginning of 1529 Lübeck still claimed 68,681 Lübeck marks, which were to be paid off in four years, besides a separate item of 8689 marks. The balance seemed to Gustavus unusually high, but he acknowledged his liability; and at the end of 1529 a fourth part of it was discharged. In 1530, however, nothing could be paid; and at the end of that year an ambassador from Lübeck appeared at Stockholm with remonstrances and menaces. The king immediately summoned a

council at Örebo, which determined that a resolution, passed the year before, for taking a bell from every church, chapel, and monastery in the town, should be extended to the country: every parish church was now to surrender a bell, and, if it had but one, it must be redeemed at half its value. Royal commissioners were sent to all the country districts to levy the tax; and, so successful was it, that Gustavus was able to pay off no less than 30,318 marks in 1531, and 10,983 more in 1532. But the imposition caused disturbances in some parts of the country; and again it was the Dales which openly resisted the royal ordinance. The inhabitants of Leksand, Ål, and Gagnef beat the royal commissioners, and refused to part with their bells; while the men of Tuna not only took theirs back again, but, at the beginning of March, 1531, sent Gustavus a letter which Gustavus himself declared to be little better than an act of rebellion. Moreover, when he invited them to attend a general assembly, which he had summoned to Upsala, they had the presumption, on April 12, 1531, to send out writs of their own for a rival Riksmöte to meet at Arboga. But the time had gone when the Dalesmen could summon parliaments. Gustavus ordered his governors to suppress the writ from the Dales; and the Upsala Assembly authorised him to collect all the outstanding bills. The Dalesmen thereupon offered to pay 2000 marks in lieu of their bells; and this compromise was gratefully accepted by the king.

But by far the most formidable of the popular risings, during the reign of Gustavus, was the one known as *Dackefejden*<sup>1</sup>, which resulted in a regular civil war that shook the throne and was suppressed only with the utmost difficulty. Like the Bell-Rising, it was mainly due to the religious conservatism of the people. But it is remarkable that the Dalesmen, so far from taking part in Dacke's rebellion, sent 2000 men against him.

In the year 1539 Gustavus, who had now thoroughly com-

<sup>1</sup> *Dacke's War.*



mitted himself to the policy of spoiling the Church for the benefit of the State, sent his "visitors" through the provinces of Vestergötland, Vermland, Östergotland, and Småland, to carry out his ecclesiastical reforms<sup>1</sup>, and, at the same time, appropriate all the superfluous church vessels and furniture. The "visitors," interpreting their powers most liberally, swept no less than 142,000 oz. of silver plate into the royal treasury during the years 1539-1541. One can imagine with what feelings the peasantry beheld the consecrated plate and other treasures plucked out of the churches, the jewels torn off the rich vestments and altar-cloths flung into waggons and carried off. On the top of these spoliations came fresh decrees forbidding the export of cattle under pain of death, and ordering a house-to-house visitation of the taxable yeomen (April 1541). This was more than the people would endure; and in the beginning of 1542 they rose in rebellion under a yeoman of Bleking, Nils Dacke by name, who, unable to pay a heavy fine in commutation of the death penalty for murdering a royal bailiff, had joined a band of border freebooters.

In May, 1542, Dacke invaded the south-east part of Småland, besieged the lord-lieutenant of Vestergötland in the fortress of Bergqvara, and on July 24 compelled him to surrender and return to his own province. A first attempt of Gustavus to attack Dacke from three different quarters only led to an armistice for three years—a sufficiently humiliating confession of failure on the king's part. By this armistice the Smålanders undertook, on condition of free forgiveness, to remain quiet and present their grievances to Gustavus in the regular way. What they complained of most were the heavy taxes, the plundering of the churches, the abolition of the old church customs, and the oppressive measures of the royal governors. As usual, Gustavus carefully considered the complaints of the Smålanders, and in a long circular letter, issued on December 30, 1542, endeavoured, very astutely, to make them see things from his

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter vi.

own point of view. But Dacke was not disposed to submit so easily. His pride had been puffed up by a letter he had received in November, 1542, from Albert, duke of Mecklenburg, who claimed the Swedish throne as the nephew, by marriage, of Christian II, offering to assist the Smålanders to drive Gustavus out of Sweden. Dacke left this offer open for the present, shrewdly preferring to make terms with the king if possible; but at the beginning of 1543 he broke the truce with Gustavus by ravaging the central provinces of Sweden. Again the royal armies were sent out against him; and, on the shores of Lake Åsunden, after an hour's hard fight, in the course of which Dacke was seriously wounded, his forces were scattered. Småland was then reduced to obedience; and Dacke himself was caught and shot in Rödeby Wood in August, 1543. The Dackefejden was the last rebellion with which Gustavus had to cope. Henceforth he was strong enough to maintain what he had established, and finish what he had begun.

Gustavus's foreign policy for the first twelve years of his reign aimed at little more than self-preservation. Only by the aid of Lübeck had he been able to secure the independence of Sweden; and Lübeck, in return, exploited Sweden, as Spain, at a later day, was to exploit her American colonies. Till the Lübeck yoke was shaken off, Sweden's natural development was hampered in every direction; and Gustavus's private correspondence shows how he chafed beneath it. By the time the greater part of the Lübeck debt was paid off, in 1531, the relations between the former allies were strained to breaking point; but the fear of the common foe, "unkind King Christian," prevented an actual rupture, although the Lübeckers, irritated by the granting of privileges to their rivals, the Dutch towns, openly complained that King Gustavus had "begun as an angel, but ended as a devil." But the moment of deliverance was at hand. The imprisonment of Christian II (August 9, 1532), the death of King Frederick I eight months later (April 9, 1533), and the simultaneous triumph of the aggressive democratic

Lutheran faction at Lübeck, now brought about a revolution in Scandinavian politics which was distinctly to the advantage of Sweden.

The new burgomaster of Lübeck, Jürgen Wullenwever, an ambitious and capable statesman, was inspired with the audacious idea of dominating Scandinavia. Circumstances apparently favoured him. Sweden seemed to be entirely dependent on Lübeck, while in Denmark something very like anarchy prevailed. The strife between the old and the new doctrine had there divided the nations into two hostile camps; the throne was vacant; and the union with Norway and the Duchies was of the loosest description. In June, 1533, a Herredag had assembled at Copenhagen to elect a new monarch. The choice lay between Frederick I's two sons, Duke Christian, who was devoted to Protestantism, and Duke Hans, a boy of twelve, whom the Catholic majority wished to set upon the throne. As however neither party could agree, the election was postponed till the following summer, so that the Norwegian Rigsraad might also be consulted. It was at this juncture that Wullenwever intervened. He was in favour of Duke Hans; but, when the young prince refused the crown, and the Danish Rigsraad formed a defensive alliance with Prince Christian (who had, in June, been elected duke of Holstein and Sleswick) and invited the Dutch towns to accede thereto, Wullenwever, relying on the strong sympathy of the lower orders in Denmark for the captive Christian II, negotiated with Christian's young kinsman, Count Christopher of Oldenburg. A treaty was now signed (May, 1534) between the count and Lübeck, nominally for the purpose of restoring Christian II, though, as a matter of fact, his name was to serve only as a rallying cry for his numerous Danish supporters, chief among whom were Ambrosius Bogbinder, ex-burgomaster of Copenhagen, and Jörgen Kock, burgomaster of Malmö. Four months before the conclusion of this alliance Gustavus Vasa had been compelled, by the insolence of Lübeck, to form a defensive

alliance with the provisional Danish government (February 2, 1534). In March, 1533, ambassadors from Lübeck had come to Stockholm to propose an alliance against the Dutch; but the proposal was rejected. In the course of the summer the Lübeckians laid an embargo on the property of Gustavus at Lübeck, to enforce payment of the remainder of the debt; and Gustavus retaliated by confiscating all the ships and wares of Lübeck in Sweden, imprisoning the Lübeck merchants, and abolishing all her commercial privileges. A few months later began the war known in northern history as *Grevens Fejde*, "The Count's War," the count in question being Christopher of Oldenburg.

It was on June 22, 1534, that Count Christopher was conveyed, by a Lübeck fleet, to Skovshoved in Sjælland. Copenhagen willingly opened her gates to him; Sjælland followed suit; Malmö had been on his side from the first. In six weeks the count was the master of eastern Denmark, which he ruled as governor in the name of Christian II. In Jutland, on the other hand, a Herredag assembled at Ry, elected Duke Christian king in July, 1534; and, although Christopher's troops, supported by the peasants, took Aalborg and defeated the Jutish nobility at Svenstrup (Oct. 1534), the armies of Christian, who had, as duke of Holstein, made peace with Lübeck in November, ably led by Johan Rantzau, succeeded, by the end of the year, in reconquering all Jutland. Count Christopher was powerless to help his friends on the other side of the Belt, as Gustavus Vasa was attacking him vigorously in Scania; and, even with the assistance of his ally, Duke Albert of Mecklenburg, Christopher was no match for the Swedish king. In January, 1535, Gustavus routed the two princes at Helsingborg; and all Scania, with the exception of Malmö, Landscrona, and Varberg, submitted to Denmark. In March, 1535, Duke Christian was proclaimed king of Denmark at Viborg as Christian III; the count of Hoja, Christopher's best general, was defeated and slain at Öxnebjerg in Fünen, by Rantzau, in

June, 1535: while the combined Danish-Swedish-Prussian navy, under Peter Skram, drove one great Lübeck fleet to seek protection beneath the guns of Copenhagen, and annihilated another in Svendburg Sound. Fünen having been subdued and severely punished, Christian III crossed over to Sjælland and began the siege of Copenhagen (July, 1535). But the end of the war was now at hand. Such a harvest of disasters had made the policy of the war party in Lübeck exceedingly unpopular; the old patrician council regained its sway; and Wullenwever was forced to resign. In the winter of 1535 negotiations were opened with Denmark, which led to the Peace of Hamburg (Feb. 1536), whereby Lübeck recognised Christian III as king, in return for the confirmation of her privileges. By this time only Varberg and Copenhagen still held out against Christian III. Both cities expected help from the Count Palatine Frederick, who had married Christian II's daughter Dorothea, and whose claims upon Denmark were supported by Charles V. But the war with Francis I, in 1536, prevented the Emperor from actively helping his nephew; and on July 29, 1536, after a heroic resistance of twelve months, Copenhagen surrendered. Thereafter the war smouldered out.

"Grevens Fejde" was much more than a mere contest for the Danish throne. In the first place it marks the end of the hegemony of Lübeck in Scandinavia. The skilful diplomacy of the wealthy city had contrived to save appearances by the Peace of Hamburg; but her supremacy was gone for ever. Scandinavians were now to rule in their own waters. In the second place "Grevens Fejde" meant the political eclipse of the lower and middle classes in Denmark, who, for the most part, had taken the part of Count Christopher; and finally, as we shall see presently (cap. v), it was the ruin of the Catholic Church in Denmark-Norway. To Sweden the war was an unmixed benefit. It led at once to an armistice with Lübeck, mediated by Christian III, and ultimately (Aug. 28, 1537) to a five years' truce, Lübeck consenting to abandon her ancient

privileges and renounce her claims for arrears of debt in return for the right to trade toll-free with the four ports of Stockholm, Kalmar, Söderköping, and Åbo. To such meagre proportions had her ancient monopolies in Sweden now shrunk. Thus the external coercion which for centuries had fettered the free development of Swedish trade was at last and for ever removed.

Another immediate consequence of "Grevens Fejde" was to strengthen the friendly relations between Sweden and Denmark, which culminated in an offensive and defensive alliance (Peace of Brömsebro, Sept. 15, 1541). A common fear of Charles V brought about this miracle; and the alliance thus formed was consolidated by two separate defensive alliances between France and the northern kingdoms. The Franco-Swedish treaty, the first link in a long chain of alliances between the two countries, was signed at Sceaux on July 11, 1542, each of the high contracting parties agreeing, on this occasion, to help the other, in case of need, with 25,000 men and 50 war-ships. Gustavus's apprehensions with regard to Charles V were set at rest by the Peace of Brussels, 1550, concluded by the ablest of his foreign servants, Georg Norman; and simultaneously his old ineradicable suspicions of Denmark revived. He expresses his real sentiments towards the sister state in a letter to Sten Lejonhufvud, governor of Kalmar, in the middle of 1545. "We advise and exhort you to the utmost of our ability," writes the king, "to put no hope or trust in the Danes, or their sweet scribbling, inasmuch as they mean nothing at all by it except how best they may deceive and betray us Swedes." Such instructions were not calculated to promote confidence between Swedish and Danish negotiators in the future.

Denmark, too, had her own grievances against Sweden; chief among which was the settlement of the Swedish Crown upon the descendants of Gustavus, the old dream of a Scandinavian union under a Danish king still haunting the court

of Copenhagen. A fresh cause of dispute was generated in 1548, when King Christian III's daughter was wedded to Duke Augustus of Saxony. On that occasion, apparently by way of protest against the decree of the Riksdag of Vesterås (Jan. 15, 1544) declaring the Swedish throne hereditary in Gustavus's family, the Danish king caused to be quartered on his daughter's shield not only the three Danish lions and the Norwegian lion with the axe of St Olaf, but also "the three crowns" of Sweden. Gustavus, naturally suspicious, was much perturbed by the innovation, and warned all his border officials to be watchful and prepare for the worst. In 1557 he even wrote to the Danish king protesting against the placing of the three crowns in the royal Danish seal beneath the arms of Denmark, and not, as heretofore, alongside them; and he bitterly reminded Christian that he owed his actual possession of the three lions and the axe of St Olaf to the assistance recently rendered to him by the three Crowns. Christian III replied that the three crowns signified not Sweden in especial, but the three Scandinavian kingdoms, and that their insertion in the Danish shield was only a reminiscence of the Union, an explanation which Gustavus petulantly characterised as "en bloumeradt sken<sup>1</sup>." Nevertheless during the lives of Gustavus I and Christian III the relations between Denmark and Sweden continued to be pacific.

So much cannot be said of Gustavus's relations with his eastern neighbour Russia. Frontier disputes were here the cause of quarrel. Gustavus had avoided negotiation for fear lest the boundaries should be regulated on the basis of the ancient Peace of Nöteborg (1323), according to which Sweden should have relinquished a portion of her eastern frontier. This tergiversation on the part of the Swedes led to a war in Finland in 1556, limited to an ineffectual siege of Nöteborg by the Swedes, and an equally unsuccessful attack upon Viborg by the Russians. Gustavus's fear of Moscovy was very real,

<sup>1</sup> Lit. "a blooming fraud."

and contrasts oddly with the hearty contempt of the later Swedish kings for that power. He attributed to the Tsars the design of establishing a universal monarchy round the Baltic, similar to "the tyranny of the Turks in Asia and Africa"; and his letter to Ivan IV, conveyed by a private envoy, Canon Knut, of Åbo, who was sent on June 1, 1556, to Moscow to solicit peace, was almost abject in expression<sup>1</sup>. The manner of the Grand Duke of Moscovy's reply was offensive enough; but he declared his willingness for peace, and desired that Swedish plenipotentiaries should forthwith be sent to Moscow. In March, 1557, a treaty was signed there, extending the truce to March 25, 1597, and stipulating that commissioners should meet on July 20, 1559, to regulate the frontier according to the provisions of the Treaty of Nöteborg.

In the last year of Gustavus's life an event occurred which was to have far-reaching consequences and profoundly affect the political development of Sweden. The ancient military Order of the Sword, founded in 1202 for the purpose of converting Livonia, and amalgamated, since 1237, with the more powerful Order of the Teutonic Knights, had, by the secularisation of the latter Order into the Dukedom of Prussia (1525), become suddenly isolated in the midst of hostile Slavonians. It needed but a jolt to bring down the crazy anachronism; and the jolt came in 1558 when the long-threatened war with Russia burst forth, and a flood of savage Moscovites poured over the land, capturing Narva and Dorpat, and threatening the whole province with destruction. In his despair, the last Master of the Order, Gotthard von Kettler, applied in 1559 to the nearest friendly, civilised potentate, Duke John of Finland, Gustavus's second son, for a loan on the security of two or three castles. At first Gustavus was disinclined to intervene, but the ambitious competition of Denmark and Poland forced his hand. The latter power had already (Sept. 15, 1559) signed a convention with Kettler and the archbishop of Riga, engaging to assist the

<sup>1</sup> Sipovsky: *Rodnaya Starina*, II. 168.



Order in return for a cession of territory; while Denmark, by a treaty signed on September 26 in the same year, undertook to protect the diocese of Ösel and Wick, in return for the right to nominate the bishop. The first bishop so nominated was King Frederick II's brother, Duke Magnus, who took possession of the island in April, 1560. Gustavus was not blind to the dangers which might accrue therefrom to Sweden, and in the spring of 1560 he also opened negotiations with Kettler in order to mediate a peace with Russia.

With the outlying European powers Sweden had still but little intercourse. During the Russian war, indeed, an embassy had been sent to England to persuade Queen Mary to break off the recently formed (1553) commercial relations with Russia by way of Archangel; but, as Sweden had nothing sufficiently lucrative to offer in return, the attempt failed. On the other hand, a commercial treaty was made with Anne, governor of East-Friesland, in 1556, and with France in 1559.

The incessant labour, the constant anxiety, which were the daily portion of Gustavus Vasa during the seven-and-thirty years of his reign, told at last upon even his splendid energy and magnificent constitution. In his later years we frequently hear him complain that he is no longer the man he was. "God knows," he writes in 1556, "that personally we have done our utmost; and rest and quiet are what we now long for, inasmuch as we are getting weary and weak in head, eyes, and elsewhere, so that we are no longer able to bear such heavy work as we, for the good of the commonalty of Sweden, have had and borne these many years." In the spring of 1560, sensible of an ominous decline of his powers, Gustavus summoned his last Riksdag. It was in the midst of the people he loved so well that the dying king desired to express his last wishes, and give an account of his stewardship. On June 16, 1560, the Assembly, in which every class of the community was duly represented, met at Stockholm. Ten days later, supported by his sons, Gustavus greeted the Estates in the

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE HEGEMONY OF DENMARK, 1536-1588.

WHILE Gustavus Vasa was laying the foundations of the modern Swedish state, the Danish monarchy under Christian III and Frederick II had risen to the rank of a great power.

In the summer of 1536 the civil war which had devastated Denmark for the last two years was terminated by the convention of July 29, 1536, between Christian III and the gallant defenders of Copenhagen; and on August 6 the victorious king held his entry into the capital of his realm. "Grevens Fejde," now happily over, marked a turning-point in Danish history. The king and the nobility had triumphed over the burgesses and the common people; the new Church and the new Faith had prevailed over the old Church and its aristocratic patrons; and finally the monarchy had won the day at the expense of the Rigsraad, or Senate. It was clear to everyone that such a victory inevitably involved the fall of Romanism and the aggrandisement of the monarchy: the only question was whether this political transformation should be effected by legal or revolutionary means. Originally both the king had desired, and the people had expected, a compromise. A few days after the taking of Copenhagen, a Rigsdag was summoned to Copenhagen for October 15. On the same day "his Majesty's preachers and servants of the Word in Sjælland, Scania, and Jutland," presented to the king a petition in which they desired the appointment of superintendents in every diocese, with a sort of upper-superintendent who was to have

authority over the affairs of religion in general, and together with other learned men draw up regulations for Church ceremonies and discipline. But the strong pressure exercised upon the king by his German counsellors and the leaders of the army prevented anything like the gradual, moderate, and orderly reformation which was at first anticipated. The large army, assembled in and around Copenhagen, was clamouring for its arrears of pay; and there was no money in hand wherewith to meet the demand. The king was already heavily in debt to his Holsteiners; and the onerous taxes which had been imposed on the Danes in June and July had fallen far short of the royal requirements. Moreover it soon became evident that the bishops and senators assembled at Copenhagen either could not or would not assist the king with ready money.

In these circumstances the idea of making Christian master of the situation by a *coup d'état* rapidly gained ground. Once let the temporal power of the bishops be abolished—it was argued—and their immense estates seized, and the king would have ample means wherewith to satisfy all the claims upon him. Gustavus Vasa had already set the example in the sister kingdom; and Christian III, with a victorious army behind him, was in an infinitely stronger position than Gustavus Vasa had ever been in. With the utmost secrecy the preparations for the projected *coup d'état* were carried out. On the afternoon of August 11 the chiefs of the army assembled at the castle. Some of the most thoroughgoing captains proposed to imprison all the senators in town, and all the bishops in the country; but the king prudently refused to risk the incalculable consequences of such an extreme act of violence; and finally a compromise was arrived at. Archbishop Torben Bille, Bishop Joakim Rönnov, of Roskilde, and Olof Munk, coadjutor of Ribe, were to be arrested that same night; while the temporal senators were to be compelled to consent to the deposition of the bishops and the confiscation of

their goods by the Crown. The plan was quickly and energetically executed. The same night Bishops Bille and Munk were arrested; and Rönnov, who had hidden himself in a loft, was secured next day. The gates of the city were then closed; troops were concentrated round the castle; and the temporal senators, together with the venerated Ove Bille, bishop of Aarhus, were forced to appear at the castle at 8 o'clock next morning, and there compelled to sign a letter of surrender, which declared that, inasmuch as the realm of Denmark could not be ruled save by a sovereign and a temporal regimen, therefore the government should be in the hands of the king and the temporal Senate; and no bishop was henceforth to have any jurisdiction in any diocese of the realm without the sanction of an œcumenical Council, and the consent of the king, the Senate, the nobility, and the people. The Senate pledged itself, moreover, not to hinder the lawful preaching and promulgating of the holy Gospel and God's pure Word; and agents were despatched all over the kingdom to seize the remaining bishops and take possession of the episcopal castles. Obviously a man of action, a soldier, must have been the author of this swift and audacious act of authority; and Danish historians generally attribute it to the Holsteiner, Johan Rantzau, Christian III's chief general. Rantzau himself superintended the execution of the royal mandate in Jutland, before proceeding to Gottorp, from whence, as stadtholder, he was to administer the Duchies and guard the southern frontier. Whatever we may think of the morality of this *coup d'état*, it was, at any rate, a financial success; for in the month of September the king was able to pay off the greater part of the army.

In the middle of October the Rigsdag assembled at Copenhagen. It was the largest assembly which had ever been seen in Denmark, consisting of no fewer than 1,200 representatives of the nobility, burgesses, and peasantry. On the other hand, the Rigsraad had sadly shrunk. Before "Grevens Fejde" that

august body had numbered fifty members; now it was reduced to nineteen, the clergy, since the imprisonment of the prelates, being naturally unrepresented. Nevertheless, weakened and depleted though it was, the Rigsraad was still strong enough to maintain its political superiority, as is evident from the character of the royal *Haandfæstning*, or charter of October 30. That this document should bear the impress of the victorious party's interpretation of the new constitution was only natural. Thus, in contrast to the charters of the last three kings, the charter of 1536 emphasises the hereditary right of the reigning family to the throne. The realm of Denmark is indeed to remain a free elective monarchy; but, at the same time, the king's lieges are bound over, on the king's demise, to hold all their castles for his eldest son, or, in case of his dying before his father, for the king's second son or his guardians. If there were no sons, the king and the Rigsraad were jointly to elect a successor to the throne. Thus the Crown was now made hereditary, and the danger of an interregnum obviated. The royal authority was still further strengthened by the omission of those clauses in King Frederick I's charter which released subjects from their allegiance to the king in case he refused to listen to remonstrances from the Rigsraad against breaches of the charter, and empowered the Rigsraad, with the king's sanction, to amend the charter. On the other hand, we find in the charter of 1536 no limitation of the political power and influence of the Rigsraad and the nobility. Evidently the document was meant to be a compromise between the two highest authorities in the State, and, at the same time, a guarantee of the inviolability of both. The king was to rule the land conjointly with the Rigsraad and nobility; the members of the Rigsraad were to have the exclusive right to the fiefs of the Crown; no foreigner was to be admitted into the Raad, or receive grants of land from the Crown without the Raad's consent.

On the same day the Rigsdag adopted a recess, which,

after having been recited in public in the Gammel Torv, or old market-place, was signed and sealed by the king, the Raad, and representatives of the peasantry. This remarkable document vividly reflects the emotions of the times. It is no dry and formal piece of legal phraseology, but a passionate exposition of all the calamities which had afflicted the land during the recent civil war, and, at the same time, a suggestion of the means whereby peace and reconciliation might be restored. First, all the signatories to this document, the king, the Raad, the nobility, and the commonalty, solemnly engage for ever to renounce all envy, hatred, suspicion, and mistrust, and unite to defend the fatherland against the Emperor, King Christian II, and their adherents. The king, moreover, promises to dispense equal justice to all according to law and equity; and the people, in their turn, promise complete loyalty and obedience to the king. Then comes the real kernel of the recess, which was nothing more or less than the abolition of Catholicism, and the establishment of a national Protestant Church<sup>1</sup>. The recess also contained sundry administrative provisions, and acknowledged Christian III's infant son, Prince Frederick, heir to the throne.

King Christian's charter contained the following significant paragraph concerning Norway: "Inasmuch as the realm of Norway is so reduced both in power and wealth, and the inhabitants thereof are not able by themselves to maintain a sovereign and king, and the said realm is nevertheless for all time united to the Crown of Denmark, and the greatest part of the Raad of the realm of Norway, especially Archbishop Olaf, who is now the chief leader in that kingdom, hath twice within a short time fallen away from the kingdom of Denmark...now therefore we have promised the Rigsraad of Denmark that, if Almighty God should so dispose that the said realm of Norway shall return again to our dominion... then it shall hereafter be and become subject to the Crown

<sup>1</sup> For details see Chapter VI.

of Denmark like as are our other lands, to wit, Jutland, Fünen, Sjælland or Scania, and hereafter shall not be or be called a kingdom apart, but a dependency of the Danish realm and Crown for all time." This political annihilation was to be the punishment of the ancient kingdom of Norway for supporting, as it had every right to do, the cause of Christian II. It was not the king, but the Danish Rigsraad, which insisted on the insertion of this merciless clause in the new charter. Nevertheless this provision remained a dead letter. Norway never became "a dependency of the realm of Denmark." Its nobility did not sit in the Danish Rigsraad; its estates were not represented in the Danish Rigsdag; it retained its own laws and its own judicial administration; homage was done to the Danish kings at Oslo as heretofore; and, in all state documents, Norway was referred to as a kingdom apart. For the royal house would not surrender its hereditary right to Norway; and King Christian received the Norwegian crown not by election but as his lawful inheritance. On the other hand, Norway from henceforth became a milch-cow for the Danish nobility, who appropriated the most lucrative fiefs and monopolised the civil and ecclesiastical administration during the first century after the Reformation. The subjection of Norway was, however, not completed without a brief struggle. The archbishop of Oslo had attempted to introduce Christian II's son-in-law, the Count Palatine Frederick, into Norway; and it was therefore necessary, in September 1536, to despatch a small fleet and two hundred men to reinforce Eske Bille, the Danish commandant of the fortress of Bergenhus, till a larger and better armed fleet could be sent in the following spring. By the time it arrived all active opposition was already over. The archbishop had fled to the Netherlands with most of his adherents; and after a few weeks' siege his commandant surrendered the fortress of Stenvigsholm. All the Norwegian bishops thereupon did homage to Christian III, and resigned their benefices. Hans Reff, bishop of Oslo, went still further.

After a visit to Copenhagen he returned to Norway as the first evangelical superintendent of the dioceses of Oslo and Hamar. He was, however, the only renegade among the Danish-Norwegian Catholic prelates.

The danger which, in the summer of 1536, had threatened King Christian III from the Count Palatine and his cousin, Kaiser Charles V, was thus happily averted; and subsequent complications were provisionally obviated by a three years' truce concluded at Brussels, which nevertheless left open the claims of Christian II's family to the crowns of Denmark and Norway. Peace was also concluded with the cities of Rostock and Wismar, which had supported rebellious Copenhagen; and Christian III and his counsellors were now, at last, in a position to heal the ravages caused by the late war.

Although there is no extant record of the general condition of Denmark immediately after the civil war, indications are not wanting that the whole social fabric was out of joint and in a state bordering upon dissolution. For more than two years the land had been ravaged and plundered; with the exception of the East-Danish provinces across the Sound, where the peasantry had stayed at home, and only the chief fortresses had been the objects of attack, there was scarcely a place in the kingdom on which the war had not set its mark. More than sixty manor-houses had been burnt to the ground; every castle and fortress had been besieged; all the towns had been sucked dry by the unpaid soldiery quartered upon them; and this latter plague was to continue during the greater part of King Christian's reign. The *Halslösning* (or commutation of the death penalty), rigidly extorted from the peasantry of the forty-nine rebellious counties of Jutland and many other provinces, as the price of their lives, had crushed the flower of the Danish yeomanry to the ground. Last but not least, the heavy taxes imposed during the war for maintaining the mercenaries had well-nigh ruined the towns. Everywhere there was unspeakable misery, still further aggravated by



the prevailing lawlessness, another consequence of the war. Crimes of violence were of everyday occurrence; there were not labourers enough to till the soil; many landed proprietors had naught but the bare land left. In addition to these calamities, the civil war had produced a deep-rooted mutual hatred and jealousy between the various classes of society, which no number of charters or recesses could remove in a moment. A strong hand, an impartial and conciliatory temper, were needed to soften these animosities; and it is the imperishable merit of King Christian III that he was equal to the task. He was no party king. Raised high above all classes, he was ready to render equal justice to all.

Twelve months after the imprisonment of the bishops, Christian and his consort, the beautiful Dorothea of Saxe Lauenburg, were crowned at Vor Frue Church at Copenhagen, August 12, 1537. The coronation and anointing were performed by Johann Bugenhagen, who had arrived in Denmark shortly before to set the affairs of the Church in order. Simultaneously a Herredag, or Assembly of Notables, was summoned to the capital, to take in hand the needed work of legislation; and the result of its laudably prompt deliberation was a recess in twenty-eight chapters, which was to be the starting-point of a long series of statutes culminating in the great recess of 1558. One consequence of the ecclesiastical reforms, referred to below (cap. VI), was the foundation of the university of Copenhagen. Since 1531 Denmark had had no university. The few who felt the need of higher education went to Wittenberg, Basel, or Paris. But the triumph of the Reformation necessarily called for the establishment of a native high-school where the men of the new Faith might be trained for their high calling. There was abundance of native talent ready to hand; but the motive power in this, as in every other project of reform, was undoubtedly Johann Bugenhagen, whose vigorous initiative, enthusiasm, and energy quickly overcame all difficulties. On September 9, 1537, in Vor Frue

Church, in the presence of the Rigsraad and the magistracy of Copenhagen, Christian III declared the university to be reestablished.

The circumstances under which Christian III ascended the Danish throne naturally exposed Denmark to the danger of foreign domination. It was the nobility and estates of the Duchies which had placed at Christian's disposal almost unlimited means for the conquest of the land; it was German and Holstein noblemen, and especially those of the Rantzau family, who had led his armies and directed his diplomacy. No wonder that the young king felt bound to reward the men who had stood at his side in the hour of danger. It was equally natural that a mutual confidence between a king who had conquered his kingdom, and a people who had stood in arms against him, could not be attained in an instant; and consequently we find that the first six years of Christian III's reign saw a contest between opposing forces, represented respectively by the Danish Rigsraad and the German counsellors, both of whom sought to rule "the pious king" exclusively.

So early as the Rigsdag of 1536, however, the Danish party won a signal victory by obtaining the insertion in the charter of the provisions stipulating that only native-born Danes should fill the three great offices of high steward, chancellor, and lord high constable, and that no foreigner should have a place in the Rigsraad, or receive fiefs or castles without the consent of the Raad. Yet, during the earlier years of his reign, the king's German councillors continued paramount. Chief among them were the Saxon, Wolfgang von Utenhof, and the king's brother-in-law, Duke Albert of Prussia, who had been his mainstay during the critical time of "Grevens Fejde." Their policy was to confirm and increase the royal authority, both in the kingdom and the Duchies, by the formation of a purely royalist party independent alike of the Rigsraad and the Holsteiners. Other favourite councillors were Johan and Melchior Rantzau. They aimed at the in-

dependence of Sleswick-Holstein and its simply personal union with the monarchy. This strong German and Holstein influence was, however, more than counterpoised, in the long run, by the Rigsraad, whose most notable members were the chancellor, Johan Friis, a patriotic, highly gifted, prudent and moderate statesman; the able diplomatist, Eske Bille, whose devotion to Catholicism and the fallen bishops impaired neither his loyalty nor his usefulness, and the lord high constable, Erik Banner, a warm friend of the Reformation.

The ultimate triumph of the Danish party dates from 1539. Previously to this the king had given great offence to the patriotic by placing foreigners in positions of trust and importance, contrary to the law of the land; but when, in the beginning of 1539, the disputes between Gustavus Vasa and Christian III threatened to pass into actual hostilities, and Denmark's relations with the Emperor and the Count Palatine Frederick, Christian II's son-in-law, grew equally unsatisfactory, the king saw the necessity of removing the last trace of discontent in the land, not only by appointing Danish magnates, hitherto set aside, to the highest military positions in the kingdom, but also by readmitting into the Raad men long proscribed, like Anders Bille, Jakob Hardenberg, and Erik Bolle. The death of Melchior Rantzau in 1539, and of Wolfgang von Utenhof in 1542, still further benefited the Danish party. The banished partisans of Christian II were now also allowed to return to Denmark; and one of them, the Norwegian admiral Kristoffer Trondsen, was to render his new sovereign notable service. The complete identification of the Danish king with the Danish people was accomplished at the Herredag of Copenhagen, 1542, when the nobility and gentry of Denmark voted Christian a twentieth part of all their property to pay off his heavy debt to the Holsteiners and Germans.

It was in the most difficult circumstances that Christian III had fought his way to the full possession of the kingdom of Denmark; and, when at last he had reached his goal, fresh

difficulties sprang up in his path. His right to the realm was openly disputed by the children of Christian II, supported by the Emperor and the regent of the Netherlands; in North Germany those princes who had interfered in the affairs of Scandinavia were his bitterest enemies; he had secret opponents in Lübeck and the other Hanse towns; and in Sweden reigned a king who regarded every political combination of Denmark with suspicion. Yet, despite every obstacle, Christian III and his counsellors succeeded in carrying out a wise and reasonable policy, which aimed exclusively at the preservation of peace, the security of the dynasty, and the freedom of the Evangelical Church.

The great political antithesis, which in the first half of the sixteenth century divided Europe into two hostile camps, exercised a decisive influence upon Denmark's foreign policy during the earlier years of Christian III's reign. For the first time in her history, Denmark was forced actively to participate in European politics in consequence of the determination of Charles V to support the hereditary claims of his nieces to the Scandinavian kingdoms. This hostile policy naturally drew Christian III towards France and the German Protestant princes, and compelled him to preserve friendly relations with Gustavus of Sweden. The three years' truce with the Emperor and the Netherlands gave Denmark a welcome respite; but neither of the parties to it regarded it as anything but a truce. The surrender of Copenhagen had caused Charles V to postpone his plan of placing the Count Palatine Frederick and Dorothea, the daughter of Christian II, on the Danish throne by force of arms; but he had never abandoned it, and he steadily refused to allow Christian III any title but that of Duke of Holstein.

A compact with the German Evangelical princes was therefore the pivot of King Christian's policy. It was cemented by the Union of Brunswick, April 9, 1538, whereby it was stipulated that, if any one of the parties to the Union were

attacked by a power having the obvious intention of re-introducing Catholicism into its territories, the other parties should hasten to the assistance of the state so attacked with 3000 infantry or 1000 cavalry, or provide £40,000 in lieu thereof. The Union was to last for nine years; and the German princes expressly promised assistance to the Danish king in case of attack. Negotiations were also opened with Francis I; but nothing came of them. Meanwhile the three years' truce was drawing to an end; and negotiations for its prolongation were begun. But the political situation was now less favourable to Denmark. The Emperor's superior policy had succeeded in dividing the Schmalkaldic League. By the Convention of Frankfort, in March 1537, Charles had made some concessions to the Protestants, and had, at the same time, won over Landgrave Philip of Hesse. This was so far injurious to Christian III as it improved the prospects of the Count Elector Frederick and his wife Dorothea. In the spring of 1541 a Danish embassy, headed by Chancellor Utenhof, attended the Reichstag at Regensburg; but the utmost that King Christian could obtain was a prolongation of the truce with the Netherlands till November 1, 1541. This meagre result induced Christian III to conclude the Peace of Brömsebro with Gustavus Vasa (p. 54), and the Treaty of Fontainebleau (Nov. 29, 1541) with Francis I. Each of the high contracting parties to the latter treaty bound himself to help the other in time of war. Denmark further engaged, in case of necessity, to close the Sound and place 1000 men and six vessels at the disposal of France within three months, France promising 2000 men and twelve ships within four months.

King Christian now felt so secure that, in November, 1541, he could reject an offer on the part of the Emperor for the prolongation of the truce. In 1542 war was actually declared. A Danish contingent joined the Franco-Cleves army which invaded Brabant in July; the Sound was closed against Dutch vessels; and a fleet of twenty-six sail cruised in the North Sea.

After a fruitless attempt on the part of Hamburg to mediate between the belligerents, a Danish fleet of forty ships, with 10,000 men on board, set sail for the Netherlands to break the dykes and capture the Isle of Walcheren, but was scattered by a tempest and did nothing. On the other hand, the skilful dispositions of Johan Rantzau on the Holstein frontier prevented an invasion from Germany. But the greatest effect was produced by the closing of the Sound. This was, after all, the most effective weapon in King Christian's hand, for it excluded the Dutch towns from the Baltic, and thereby threatened them with ruin. On the other hand, all Christian's allies proved faithless or useless. The Protestant princes, in direct contravention of the Union of Brunswick, refused him assistance under the pretext that the war was not a religious war, and had been provoked by the king himself. Gustavus Vasa had need of all his forces to crush Dacke's rebellion (p. 49). Francis I, instead of sending the stipulated 100,000 gulden to pay the soldiers of Christian, mendaciously accused him of not fulfilling his obligations, and, when pressed, became abusive. The patent faithlessness of the French king strengthened the peace party in Denmark; and, as the Netherlands were equally desirous of peace, the Emperor invited Denmark to offer terms at the Reichstag to be held at Speier in February, 1544. Thither accordingly a Danish embassy was sent. Its great object was to obtain a definitive peace with the Emperor, based on his abandonment of the claims of the children of Christian II. It succeeded completely. By the treaty of May 23, 1544, it was agreed that Christian III should renounce the French alliance, and open the Sound. Both parties undertook not to assist each other's enemies. In a secret article, moreover, the Emperor promised never to begin another war for the sake of the Count Palatine and his wife. The conditions of peace must be regarded as a diplomatic victory for Denmark.

The Peace of Speier could not but increase the credit of the monarchy at home; but the still greater advantage of

financial stability accrued to it from the enormous increase of the royal revenue consequent upon the confiscation of the property of the Catholic Church. The recess of 1536 had decreed that all the property of the bishops should pass to the Crown for the support of the monarchy and the common weal. The total value of the bishops' property cannot be exactly determined. Only as regards the see of Odense do we know that, shortly before its confiscation, it had an annual income of 16,000 bushels of corn. But the property of the bishops was far less considerable than the property of the religious houses. Short work had been made of these even before 1536. All the monasteries of the Mendicant Friars had been seized by the towns; and of the fifty-four abbeys twenty-two were now governed by temporal superiors. The recess had determined that these, together with the cathedral chapters, should remain as they were "till the king and the Rigsraad, with the help of various wise and learned men, had otherwise disposed concerning them." Nevertheless their secularisation had continued rapidly without any special authority. By 1540 thirty-seven monasteries had already been granted away; and on the death of Christian III only ten still stood under clerical supervision.

The confiscation of monastic property benefited the Crown in two ways. The old Church had indeed frequently rendered the State considerable financial aid, but such voluntary assistance was, from the nature of the case, casual and arbitrary. Now, however, the State derived a fixed and certain revenue from the confiscated lands; and the possession of immense landed property at the same time enabled the Crown advantageously to conduct the administration. The gross revenue of the State is estimated to have risen threefold. Before the Reformation the revenue from land amounted to 400,000 bushels of corn; after the confiscations of Church property it rose to 1,200,000 bushels. And here we come to the strong point of Christian III's government. It was epoch-making in

the matter of administration. Order, method, consistency, and economy are discernible in every direction. A capable official class was also formed; and it proved its efficiency under the strictest supervision. Particular attention was paid to the navy. Ship-building was prosecuted with great energy during the first ten years of the king's reign. In 1550 the royal fleet numbered at least thirty vessels, and was largely employed as a maritime police in the Baltic and North Seas, where piracy still prevailed largely.

The most important domestic event during the latter part of the reign of Christian III was the partition of the Duchies between the king and his brothers, Duke Hans and Duke Adolphus, both of whom had been educated at the Prussian and Hessian courts. On the outbreak of the war with the Emperor in 1543, however, they had been summoned home to participate in the administration of Sleswick-Holstein. Subsequently, at the Landtag of Reusberg, 1544, Christian consented to divide the Duchies with them. The territory of the three princes lay scattered partly in North Sleswick, partly in Holstein, and were henceforth called the Gottorp, Sönderborg, and Haderslev divisions after their respective fortresses. As regards foreign affairs the dukes undertook to act in common with Denmark.

The foreign policy of Christian III's latter days was regulated by the Peace of Speier. He carefully avoided all foreign complications, for fear of financial embarrassment, and cultivated the amity of the Emperor. He steadily refused to assist the Protestant princes in the Schmalkaldic War of 1546, ostensibly because it was a purely political affair, really because he still resented their shameful desertion of him during his own recent war with the Emperor. Of great importance to the royal Danish house was the marriage of Christian's daughter, Anna, in 1548, to Duke Augustus of Saxony, the brother of the famous Elector Maurice. It also marked a change of policy. Christian's refusal to participate in the



Schmalkaldic War had produced a coolness between him and his brother-in-law, the duke of Prussia; henceforth Saxon influence was to predominate at Copenhagen. When the dignity of Elector, after the fall of Maurice at the battle of Sievershausen, 1553, fell to Duke Augustus, King Christian and the margrave of Brandenburg intervened as mediators in the contest between the Emperor and Saxony; and a Danish embassy, headed by Peter Okse, contributed essentially to the conclusion of peace. After 1554 German politics became more tranquil; and now it was that the Danish king began to reap the fruits of his wise and cautious policy. Everywhere he was respected and deferred to. In 1556 the Lower Saxon Circle would even have elected him their chief leader; but Christian declined the honour on the grounds of age and infirmity. He also continued on the best of terms with the new Emperor, Ferdinand I.

Both in his private and public life, Christian III found an energetic coadjutor in his ambitious and high-spirited consort, Dorothea. Like her husband she had warmly adopted the cause of the Reformation; her influence over the king was considerable; and it was mainly due to her that the royal house of Denmark now assumed an unprecedented magnificence and exclusiveness. She was also not without political capacity; but her haughty, overbearing disposition was resented not merely by the leading Danish statesmen, but also by her own son, Prince Frederick, the heir to the throne.

On New Year's Day, 1559, King Christian III expired. His calm and peaceful death was symbolical of his whole life. Though not perhaps a great, he was, in the fullest sense of the word, a good ruler. A strong sense of duty, a deep but unpretentious piety, and a cautious but by no means pusillanimous common-sense, had marked every action of his patient, laborious, and eventful life. But the work he left behind him is the best proof of his statesmanship. He found Denmark in ruins; he left her stronger and wealthier than she had ever been before.

The new king, Frederick II, was born at Haderslevhus on July 1, 1534. His mother, Dorothea of Saxe-Lauenburg, was the elder sister of Catherine, the first wife of Gustavus Vasa, and the mother of Eric XIV. The two little cousins, born the same year, were destined, always and everywhere, to be lifelong rivals: as young men they were to woo the same women; as young monarchs they were to begin the first of the ten fratricidal wars between two nations whom blood, religion, language, and common interests ought to have closely united.

When Christian III had conquered Denmark, Prince Frederick, at the age of two, was proclaimed successor to the throne at the Rigsdag of Copenhagen (Oct. 30, 1536); and homage was done to him at Oslo, for Norway, in 1548. The choice of his governor, the patriotic historiographer, Hans Svaning, was so far fortunate as it ensured the devotion of the future king of Denmark to everything Danish; but Svaning, if a good patriot, was a poor pedagogue, and the wild and wayward lad suffered all his life from the defects of his early training. In his eighteenth year the prince was committed to the care of a Hofmeister, Ejlev Hardenberg, at the fortress-castle of Malmöhus; and here he fell in love with the niece of his Hofmeister, Anna Hardenberg, an event not without influence on his future career. In April, 1558, he saw his father for the last time at Koldinghus. Immediately afterwards Christian III fell seriously ill; but, although well aware of the gravity of the king's condition, and repeatedly summoned to the sick man's bedside by his mother, Frederick delayed his departure from Malmöhus so long that he was little more than half way towards Copenhagen when the end came. In the funeral oration spoken over Frederick himself, thirty years later, his dilatoriness on this occasion was attributed to contrary winds; it was much more probably due to his deep resentment at the efforts of his parents to remove out of his reach, before he ascended the throne, the lady to whom he had already solemnly pledged his troth. This,

indeed, they failed to do; and his devotion to Anna Hardenberg was no doubt the cause of the failure of the numerous matrimonial negotiations made on his behalf during the first twelve years of his reign. After the hands of Elizabeth of England, Mary of Scotland, and Renata of Lorraine, granddaughter of Christian II, had successively been sought for him in vain, the royal family and the Rigsraad grew anxious about the succession. In November, 1571, Frederick received a visit, no doubt prearranged, from his aunt Elizabeth, duchess of Mecklenburg, who brought with her her daughter Sophia, a girl of fourteen; and to her the king was married on July 20, 1572. This union, despite the fact that the groom was three-and-twenty years older than the bride, was extremely felicitous. Frederick is one of the few kings of the house of Oldenburg who had no illicit *liaison*. From first to last he was absolutely loyal to his young wife, who bore him four daughters and three sons, of whom the eldest boy, Christian, succeeded him.

The reign of Frederick II falls into two well-defined divisions, (1) a period of war, 1559-1570, and (2) a period of peace, 1570-1588. The period of war began with the Ditmarsch expedition.

Ditmarsch is that district of western Holstein which lies between the Elbe and the Eider, and is bounded on the west by the North Sea. From the first half of the tenth century it had belonged to the counts of Stade, but passed under the suzerainty of the archbishops of Bremen, forming a sort of independent peasant-republic, ruled originally by an assembly of yeomen, but from 1447 by a popularly elected council of forty-eight members. The counts of Holstein made frequent fruitless attempts to conquer the valiant yeomen; and, even when the district was incorporated with the duchy of Holstein, and made a Danish fief by the Emperor Frederick III, the Ditmarschers still maintained their independence. Their most memorable exploit was in 1500, when a thousand Ditmarschers, under Wolf Isebrandt, annihilated, near Hemming-

stedt, a large combined Danish-Holstein army, on which occasion the Dannebrog, or Danish standard, was captured, and King Hans barely escaped with his life. The Reformation occasioned dissensions among the Ditmarschers; and danger from without became urgent when Duke Adolphus of Holstein, Christian III's brother, took it upon himself to subdue the defiant yeomen who would submit to no over-lord. Vainly had Adolphus urged his royal brother to take part in the expedition, and on the death of the king in 1559 he resolved to undertake it alone. But the Danish stadtholder in the Duchies, Henrik Rantzau, warned Frederick II of the plan, and moved the Danish king, together with his brother, Duke Hans, to cooperate. With an army of 20,000, under the veteran Johan Rantzau, the two princes marched into Ditmarschland, which, after a valiant resistance, worthy of the heroic traditions of the people, was compelled to surrender. The princes then divided the land between them; but the inhabitants were permitted to retain their ancient laws, privileges, and semi-independent form of government.

Equally triumphant was Frederick in his war with Sweden, though here the contest was much more severe. The tension which had prevailed between the two kingdoms during the last years of Gustavus Vasa had perpetually threatened a rupture; but it was not till the accession of Gustavus's eldest son, Eric XIV, that the struggle, known in northern history as the Scandinavian Seven Years' War, actually burst forth. There were many causes of quarrel between the two ambitious young monarchs. The Danish king persisted in retaining the three crowns in his escutcheon; and Eric retaliated by quartering the arms of both Denmark and Norway in his own. Sweden's policy of conquest in Esthonia, which had formerly been under Danish rule, also excited bitterness and envy in Denmark. Repeated efforts to adjust differences foundered upon mutual distrust; and in the beginning of 1563 an event took place which precipitated hostilities.

In accordance with his communication to the Riksdag of Arboga (cap. vi), in April, 1561, Eric, shortly after his coronation, had undertaken his long-meditated journey to England as the suitor of Queen Elizabeth; but contrary winds drove him back to his own kingdom, and the journey was postponed till the following year. June, 1562, saw him still in Sweden; and by that time Eric had begun to doubt the possibility of winning Elizabeth's hand. His fancy now turned more and more in the direction of Mary of Scotland. Accordingly he sent an embassy to Scotland to prepare the way, without, however, renouncing absolutely the English match; and simultaneously he opened matrimonial negotiations with a third lady, Christina of Hesse, of whom he soon received such good reports that he despatched a splendid embassy to Hesse to conclude the contract. This embassy, on reaching Copenhagen, was detained by King Frederick, who wished, for political reasons, to prevent the Hessian marriage. Despite Eric's protests, the embassy was still further detained; and this openly hostile act was speedily followed by another. Two Danish squadrons were sent into the German Ocean and the Baltic Sea respectively, to seize any vessel carrying muniments of war to or from Sweden. Eric promptly retaliated by despatching a fleet of nineteen sail, under Jakob Bagge, into the Baltic, ostensibly to convey an embassy to Rostock, there to meet the Hessian princess, but really "to see what the Danish fleet would do if it were met upon the open sea." The two fleets encountered each other on Whit Monday, May 30, off Bornholm; and the Swedes captured the Danish admiral with his flag-ship and two other vessels.

A peace congress, which assembled at Rostock, was rendered abortive by Denmark's formal declaration of war. Lübeck, moreover, already bound to Denmark by a defensive alliance dated June 13, 1563, alarmed by the progress of the Swedes in Livonia, and irritated by Eric's refusal to allow the Hanse League to trade with Narva, to the detriment of his

recently acquired port of Reval, also declared war against Eric; and on October 5 Poland acceded to the anti-Swedish league. Sweden was left to her own resources; but these, thanks to the care of Gustavus Vasa, were by no means inconsiderable. Her regular army, on the outbreak of the war, numbered 18,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry; and the fleet was in excellent condition. Early in August, 1563, Frederick II, at the head of an army of 28,000 men, invaded Halland from Scania, and captured the strong fortress of Elfsborg, after a few weeks' bombardment, thereby altogether cutting Sweden off from the North Sea. An attempt on the part of Eric to take the Danish fortress of Halmstad in October not only failed, but his retreating army was overtaken by the Danes at Mared, and defeated. On the sea nothing decisive took place; but the Swedish fleet of eighteen sail, under Bagge, sustained with honour the attack of the combined Danish-Lübeck fleet of thirty-three sail off the Isle of Öland. The campaign of 1564 was, on the whole, favourable to the Swedes. They conquered the Norwegian border-provinces of Jämtland and Herjedal, and even held the whole province of Trondhjem for a time. In Livonia, too, they captured the fortresses of Hapsal, Leal, and Löde, and drove the Danes almost entirely from the mainland. At sea there were two great battles, in the first of which, fought between Gothland and Öland 30 May, the Swedish flag-ship was blown up and the admiral captured; while in the second, fought off the northern point of Öland, at the beginning of August, the Swedes were victorious.

The war on land was marked by extraordinary ferocity, due partly, no doubt, to the increasing bitterness of national hatred, but primarily to the barbarous methods of Eric XIV, whose own conduct of the war in the Scandinavian peninsula was peculiar, his exploits consisting in the superintendence of the slaughter of defenceless prisoners whom his generals had captured. Nearly all Eric's instructions to his commanders contained orders "to defile, slay, burn, spoil, and

ravage foot by foot"—orders too often literally executed. The Danes naturally retaliated, sparing neither women nor children, and committing atrocities "of which neither Turks nor heathen were ever accused." In the campaign of 1565 the Swedish fleet was everywhere victorious. King Eric had done his best to make his navy strong and efficient; and on May 3 his admiral put to sea with no fewer than fifty ships. After destroying a small Lübeck squadron, he proceeded to the Sound, where he levied tolls upon 250 merchant-vessels, and thence sailed towards Lübeck. On June 4 he encountered the gallant Danish admiral, Herluf Trolle, off Bukov, between Rostock and Wismar, and defeated him, Trolle dying a few weeks afterwards of his wounds. On July 7 the Swedes won a still bloodier victory between Bornholm and Rügen, and for the remainder of the year were the masters of the Baltic, the Danish admiral not venturing to put to sea again. But the Danes were more than compensated for these reverses at sea by their victories on land. On October 20 Daniel Rantzau defeated a Swedish army far larger than his own at Axtorna; while, in Livonia, the Swedes lost the important fortress of Pernau.

A fresh attempt to mediate a peace, during the campaign of 1565, by the French envoy at Copenhagen, Charles Dançay, having failed, the war was energetically resumed early in 1556. Again the Swedes were victorious on the sea and unfortunate on land. Klas Horn put to sea with sixty-eight sail, scoured the Baltic without meeting a foe, once more levied tolls on the merchantmen passing through the Sound, and finally defeated the Danish-Lübeck fleet off Öland on July 26. The defeated fleet retired to Visby, and was there almost totally destroyed by a terrible storm, which the Swedish fleet safely weathered on the high sea. While the genius of Klas Horn thus enabled the Swedes to dominate the Baltic, the genius of Daniel Rantzau baffled all the efforts of the Swedish generals. After ravaging the province of Vestergötland, Rantzau defeated at

Alungsås a Swedish army which attempted to bar his retreat, and encamped near Elfsborg. Eric XIV, as a last expedient, now sent Klas Horn against him; but the great naval hero died of the plague before he could take the command, and Rantzau, after fresh victories and devastations, went into winter quarters in Scania. The campaign of 1567 was equally inconclusive. Two expeditions against the Norwegian fortress of Akershus failed utterly; and in Scania the Swedish general, Henrik Klasson, was badly beaten at Runafer, February 3. Against these reverses, however, could be set the conclusion, in the same month, of a defensive alliance between Sweden and Russia. In the autumn the Danish commander, Daniel Rantzau, penetrated into the heart of Östergötland, burning and ravaging without meeting with any resistance. On January 15, 1568, he also surprised the Swedish camp at Norrby, scattering the army and capturing the military chest and all the artillery. By this time, however, the Swedes had assembled a numerous army. They followed hard upon the heels of the far outnumbered Rantzau, who succeeded, nevertheless, in reaching the Danish border unscathed, after a masterly three weeks' retreat, scarcely less glorious than a signal victory in the field.

The deposition of King Eric (see cap. vi), in September, 1568, led to negotiations which resulted in a treaty signed, indeed, at Roskilde, Nov. 18, 1568, but repudiated as intolerable by the new king of Sweden, John III; while a Riksdag, held at Stockholm, declared that, instead of money, the Danish king should get "powder, lead, and pikes." The war, therefore, was resumed. A Danish attack on Reval, in July 1569, failed; but, on the other hand, the fortress of Varberg, which had remained in the hands of the Swedes for the last four years, was retaken (Dec. 4) by the Danes, who paid dearly for it by the loss of Daniel Rantzau, shot dead beneath its walls. As now the fortress of Elfsborg continued to be held by the Danes, Sweden was completely cut off from the Baltic; and



it also had become evident during the summer that she was no longer the mistress of the Baltic. Both countries, however, were growing weary of a war which had degenerated into a barbarous devastation of border provinces; and in July, 1570, they accepted the mediation of the Emperor, and a peace congress assembled at Stettin, which resulted in the Peace of Stettin, 13 Dec. 1570. According to this treaty, the Danish king was to renounce all claims upon Sweden; and the Swedish king was equally to renounce all his pretensions to the Norwegian-Danish provinces and the island of Gothland. The Swedes were also to pay 150,000 riksdalers in exchange for the surrender of Elfsborg. The question of "the three crowns" was to be settled by arbitration. The diocese of Reval-Osel was to be divided between Denmark and Sweden. On the whole the peace was decidedly disadvantageous to Sweden. In especial, the sum to be paid for the redemption of Elfsborg weighed heavily on a state already impoverished by a seven years' war; and, in order to raise it, the peasantry, "and the towns still unburnt," had to surrender no less than a tenth of all their gold, silver, copper, tin, and cattle.

During the course of this seven years' war, Frederick II had narrowly escaped the fate of his cousin, Eric XIV. The war was as unpopular in Denmark as it was popular in Sweden; and the closing of the Sound against foreign shipping, in order to starve out Sweden, had exasperated the maritime powers and all the Baltic states. Yet, despite foreign complications, despite the growing disaffection of the nobility, who more than once threatened to depose him, Frederick II, even after the almost total destruction of his fleet off the isle of Gothland, steadily pursued the policy he had set before himself of dominating Scandinavia. On New Year's Day, 1570, indeed, his difficulties seemed so overwhelming that he threatened to abdicate; but the Peace of Stettin came in time to reconcile all parties; and, though Frederick had now to relinquish his ambitious dream of reestablishing the Union of Kalmar, he

had at least succeeded in maintaining the supremacy of Denmark in the north, and favourably impressing his contemporaries. Thus the French minister at Copenhagen, Charles Dançay, expresses his amazement at the ease with which Frederick maintained a standing army which would have taxed the resources of any other sovereign of those times, and represented the Danish alliance to his court as a thing of real value.

After the peace, Frederick's policy became still more imperial. He now aspired to the dominion of all the seas which washed the Scandinavian coasts, and before he died he succeeded in suppressing the pirates who so long had haunted the Baltic and the German Ocean, and compelled all foreign ships to strike their topsail to Danish men-of-war, as a token of his right to rule the northern seas; moreover, Frederick erected the stately fortress of Kronborg, to guard the narrow channel of the Sound. Favourable political circumstances, no doubt, contributed to this general acknowledgment of Denmark's maritime greatness. The power of the Hansa had gone; the Dutch were enfeebled by their contest with Spain; England's sea-power had yet to be created; Spain, still the greatest of the maritime nations, was exhausting her resources in the vain effort to conquer the Dutch. Yet more even than to felicitous circumstances, Denmark owed her short-lived greatness to the group of statesmen and administrators whom Frederick II succeeded in gathering around him. For Frederick possessed the truly royal gift of discovering and employing great men irrespective of personal preferences, and even of personal injuries. Thus, Peder Oxe, who, as lord high steward from 1567 to 1575, saved the land from bankruptcy, and enriched the exchequer without imposing a single onerous tax, was entrusted with his office though he had been the king's most determined adversary. We may also mention the great chancellor, Johan Friis; his successor, the wise and noble Niels Kaas; the highly gifted Kristofer Valkendorf; the heroic

and saintly Herluf Trolle, the greatest admiral and the best beloved nobleman of his age; and, finally, Daniel Rantzau, the Turenne of Denmark. With the assistance of these men and their fellows, Frederick succeeded in raising his kingdom to the rank of a great power, prosperous at home and respected abroad. Never before had Denmark been so well governed, never before had she possessed so many political celebrities nobly emulous for the common good. Frederick himself, with infinite tact and admirable self-denial, gave free scope to ministers whose superiority in their various departments he frankly recognised, rarely intervening personally unless absolutely called upon to do so. It is unanimously agreed that his influence, always great, was never so irresistible as at his own table. Ever the most gracious and amiable of hosts, and a peace-maker by nature, banquets were the occasions generally chosen by him for the smoothing away of difficulties, and the converting of hatreds into friendships. It was characteristic of the manners of his court that after dinner he would remove the last barrier in the way of general conviviality, by exclaiming, "The king is not at home!" Yet he was always able to stop the frolic at the right time, with the words, "The king has come home again." And it should be remarked that, while his son and successor, Christian IV, had frequently to be carried senseless from board to bed by his body-guards, Frederick II could always carry off a carouse with ease and dignity, though there can be but little doubt that his love of wine accelerated his end. He died at Antvorskob, on April 4, 1588, in the 52nd year of his reign, universally regretted. No other Danish king was ever so beloved by his people.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE REFORMATION IN SCANDINAVIA, 1520-1560.

THE period embraced by the last three chapters roughly coincides with the rupture between the new Scandinavian states and the ancient Church which led to the establishment of Lutheranism in northern Europe, a rupture mainly due to political causes. There was no inherent necessity for Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians to change their form of faith. The bulk of the people, at least in the first instance, and especially in Sweden and Norway, were by no means disposed to look to Wittenberg rather than to Rome for spiritual guidance. On the contrary, only external pressure, strenuously and persistently applied, enabled the Reformation ultimately to prevail. At a later day, indeed, when a new generation of Scandinavians, trained up in Lutheranism from its cradle, was confronted by an aggressive and alien Catholic reaction, we find, abundantly, the ardent explosive zeal of convinced converts ready to sacrifice everything for "the pure Gospel"; but originally, as we shall see, it was far too frequently not the word of the preacher, but the sword of the civil arm, which converted the people to the new teaching. It will be convenient briefly to summarise the whole process in the present chapter, beginning with Denmark as being not only the leading Scandinavian state of the period, but also the first, owing to her geographical position, to encounter the impact of the German Reformation.

The devotion of the bulk of the Scandinavian people to the ancient Church indicates that, on the whole, that Church had faithfully discharged her duty ; but, in the course of centuries, many inveterate abuses had impaired her efficiency. Here, as everywhere, worldliness had become one of the most salient vices of a society which was nothing if not unearthly. Bishops were appointed with very little regard to their spiritual qualifications. The avarice of the papal Curia had accentuated this abuse. Since Christian I's journey to Rome in 1479 the Danish kings had, for a pecuniary consideration, acquired the right of investiture over many of the cathedral chapters ; and henceforth posts in the royal chancellery became the stepping-stones to deaneries and canonries. The bishops themselves tenderly regarded the interests of their nephews and cousins ; and this royal and episcopal nepotism led to the introduction of many unworthy persons into the ranks of the hierarchy. Characteristic of the times is a letter to Christian II from his envoy at Rome promising the papal consent to the erection of a new cathedral chapter at Odense, under the patronage of the king, in return for a gratification of 2000 ducats for himself and the cardinal who had the matter in hand. "Myself, and the other gentlemen who get fiefs in the Church," wrote the Danish agent on this occasion, "will so repay your Grace therefor, that your Grace shall be put to no charge whatever thereby." Another ancillary abuse, marking a further development of aristocratic greed, was the gradual exclusion of the middle-class element from its due share of Church preferment. The charter of Frederick I provided that only native-born noblemen should be made bishops and prelates, though doctors, and other learned men, might exceptionally hold canonries.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century the Church had acquired an enormous amount of property in Denmark, either by purchase or testamentary disposition, all of which was absolutely lost to the State. A great deal of land was also set

apart for the payment of masses for the dead, and the consequent support of altars and altar-priests. Thus in the cathedral of Roskilde alone, there were fifty such altars with as many officiating priests. Such an accumulation of land under the dead hand was equally injurious to the Crown, the nobility, and the yeomanry. Many of the prelates, too, lived like temporal magnates, far more occupied with the cares of State than with the cure of souls, and, in the worse cases, entirely given up to hunting, gambling, and dissipation. Thus of Bishop Niels Stygge of Borglum it was said that, as a monk, he had lived a rigorously ascetic life, but that as bishop "he spent his time in sports and games, wanton jests, cards and dice, or oftentimes diverted himself with the twirling of darts when he was tired of games: otherwise he was never happy unless surrounded by harlots and jesters, jugglers and sycophants."

From the prelates this deterioration spread to the lower clergy. Many priests lived so openly with their "dejer" (doxies), that the irregularity almost ceased to be a scandal. We find bishops, in their charges, prohibiting priests from holding christening feasts in their houses, or solemnly churching their concubines. The mendicant friars were becoming a nuisance. They regularly partitioned the various dioceses among themselves when they went on term, as they called their begging quest, and brought home waggon-loads of alms from far and near. Most of the convents had become refuges for the unmarried daughters of the aristocracy. Yet there was a bright side to the picture. The people at large were devoutly disposed; and the Church satisfied their religious cravings. At no later period of Danish history can she so truly be said to have been their mother as she was then. She was the first to welcome them when they came into the world, and she sent them forth on their last journey reassured by her promises and comforted by her sacraments. Her impressive and touching ceremonies familiarised the people with the sublime and consolatory thought that there was something higher and better

than the world around them. In the summer the priests and deacons, followed by their parishioners, proceeded, with cross and banner, from village to village, praying for a bountiful harvest, blessing house and home, flocks and herds, fields and orchards. Every season was consecrated by the Church, and had its own special significance. Never before had pilgrimages been so numerous and so frequent as at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Many young nobles journeyed to the Holy Land, to wash away their sins in the waters of Jordan, after encountering strange adventures by the way, like Mogens Gyldenstjerne, for instance, who, in 1522, took part in the defence of Rhodes against the Turks. The shrine of St Peter at Rome, and the shrine of St James at Compostella, were favourite resorts of Danish pilgrims; the Danish-born St Severin, archbishop of Köln, was especially honoured at Halmstrup in Sjælland; and the Blessed Virgin drew thousands of worshippers to her lowly church at Karup in the midst of the Jutland heaths. Of the sick and poor the ancient Church had always taken especial care; and the half spiritual, half temporal hospices in the chief cities, known as the Houses of the Holy Ghost, were in many places converted into monasteries of the Augustinian rule, and placed in communication with the parent monastery at Rome. Private charity assisted the efforts of the Church. Thus, to take but a single typical instance, the rich burgess and doctor of medicine, Klaus Denne, devoted his whole fortune to the foundation of St Anne's Hospital in Copenhagen, "for sick and poor men who are wont to lie about the streets and lanes, and can find no shelter in their sickness."

Moreover within the Church herself there were reformatory movements. The superior of the Gray Friars at Odense, Laurence Brandsen, introduced "the strict observance" into the houses subject to him; and he was supported by Queen Dorothea, and, after her death, by Queen Christina, who adopted St Francis of Assisi as her patron saint, and founded

convents in Copenhagen and Odense. Many of the bishops endeavoured to improve and multiply the church services, and utilised the newly invented art of printing for that purpose. A beginning was made by Karl Rönnov, bishop of Odense, who had a corrected and revised breviary printed in 1483 at Lübeck for use in his diocese; and many other prelates followed his example.

Humanism, meanwhile, was making its way into Denmark, and amongst the clergy it found many disciples. The most notable of these men was Paulus Eliae or Heliae. Born at Varberg, about 1480, of a Danish father and a Swedish mother, he was educated at Skara and became a monk in the Carmelite monastery at Elsinore. Here he met with a learned Dutch humanist, Frans Wormsen, who profoundly influenced him. Eliae was impressed by the decline of the Church, and in 1517 he issued a Latin dissertation severely animadverting upon the sale of indulgences and other abuses. He took the standpoint of Erasmus and became a zealous moralist, greeting Luther, on his first appearance, with enthusiasm as a fellow-worker. The parting of ways came later when Luther deliberately broke with the Church. In 1519 Christian II appointed Eliae professor of theology in connexion with the recently reconstituted university of Copenhagen, and, at the same time, summoned Mathias Gabler and Martin Reinhart from Wittenberg, the first to teach Greek, and the second theology. The latter was permitted to preach in German at the church of St Nicholas; and thus it came about that Lutheranism was first taught in Denmark. On his return from Sweden in 1521 Christian II sent Reinhart back to Wittenberg to induce Andreas Karlstadt, or Luther himself, to come to Denmark to assist him in his projected reforms. By this time, however, Luther had already been excommunicated, and shortly afterwards disappeared inside the Wartburg. Reinhart never returned; and, though Karlstadt accepted the royal invitation and came to Copenhagen, he speedily quitted it



in disgust when he was forbidden to preach against the Pope.

Christian himself always subordinated religion to politics, and was Papist or Lutheran according to circumstances. He began by forbidding the university to condemn Luther, but after the Stockholm Massacre he was anxious to stand well with both Pope and Emperor, though, to the last, he treated the Church more like a foe than a friend, elevating and deposing archbishops and bishops at will, flinging canons into prison, and unblushingly despoiling the richer dioceses of their property, in defiance alike of Pope and statute book. He retained, indeed, the Catholic form of church worship, and, though constantly at war with the Curia, never seems to have questioned the papal supremacy. On the flight of Christian II and the election of Frederick I, the Church recovered her jurisdiction; and everything was placed on the old footing. In all ecclesiastical matters the Pope was to be the ultimate arbiter; but every appeal was to be subject to the previous consent of the Danish prelates. Moreover, for the more effectual extirpation of heresy, it was provided by the royal charter of 1524, imposed upon the king by the dominant Catholic magnates, that no heretic disciple of Luther should be permitted "to preach or teach, privily or openly, anything contrary to the faith of the Holy Church, our most holy father the Pope, or the Church of Rome"; and that all such preachers should "be punished with loss of life and goods, wherever they may be found in our realm." Moreover the prelates endeavoured still further to strengthen their position by making a solemn alliance and compact with the temporal members of the Rigsraad on June 28, 1524, whereby the whole Senate undertook, in confirmation of the royal charter, to visit all enemies of the holy Christian faith with imprisonment and the other penalties provided by the canon law.

But the prelates were soon to discover that the cooperation of the nobility was but a feeble support. The greatest

dignitary in the land, the lord high steward Mogens Gøie, openly declared himself a Lutheran. Many of his peers joined him; and, though the majority of the Rigsraad, during King Frederick's lifetime, still held to the old Church, the wealth and splendour of the bishops excited the cupidity and rapacity of the poorer members of the aristocracy, and widened the breach already existing between the temporal and spiritual estates. The newly elected and still insecure German king, who had no desire to quarrel with his Danish bishops so long as danger threatened him from abroad, at first remained neutral; but in the autumn of 1525 the current of Lutheranism began to run so strongly in Denmark as to threaten to whirl away every opposing obstacle. This novel and disturbing phenomenon was mainly due to the zeal and eloquence of the ex-monk, Hans Tausen, who had been sent by his prior, in 1523, to complete his theological education at Wittenberg, and returned to the Johannite monastery at Viborg in Jutland a convinced Lutheran. All Viborg was soon converted by his preaching; and, when the monks closed the cathedral doors against him, his followers burst them open, and Tausen proceeded to defy his bishop from the pulpit. The fame of his eloquence soon spread to Copenhagen; and in the autumn of 1526 the king, who was really a crypto-Lutheran, took Tausen under his protection, appointed him his chaplain, and permitted him to preach the new doctrine. In the following year Frederick went a good step further. By the Odense recess (Aug. 20) both confessions were placed on a footing of equality in Denmark, the bishops being too divided and timorous to offer an effectual united resistance.

The three ensuing years were especially favourable for the Reformation, as during that time the king had unlooked for opportunities for filling the vacant episcopal sees of Sjælland and Fünen with men of his own choice; while the agitation against the old Church was sensibly promoted by the open encouragement given by the court to the Lutheran preachers.

In March, 1529, the aged bishop of Fünen, Jens Andersen Beldenak, resigned in favour of his coadjutor, the royal nominee, Knud Gyldenstjerne, who thus got possession of the see, though canonically he was no bishop, as he was never confirmed by the Pope, nor even by the Danish archbishop, whose own election remained unconfirmed by the Roman Curia: both prelates therefore were absolutely dependent on the king, as he intended them to be. A few weeks after Beldenak's resignation died Lage Urne, bishop of Roskilde; and, as his successor, the king appointed Jacob Rönnov. But, before being nominated and recommended to the cathedral chapter, he was obliged to give the king the most positive assurance of his loyalty. At the same time, he undertook "that, if anyone comes into the diocese of Roskilde, whether in town or country, who would preach the Holy Gospel clearly and plainly, as it can be proved from Holy Scripture, or if the priests or monks in the diocese wish to marry," he would not allow them violently and unjustly to be attacked; but, if any should bring accusation against them therefor, he would cite accuser and accused before the king and the Rigsraad. This startling violation of his own solemnly sworn charter demonstrates that King Frederick had all along intended to establish a purely national Church at the first convenient opportunity.

Rönnov having complied with these revolutionary demands, Frederick proceeded to nominate and confirm him as bishop of Roskilde, and thereupon sent him to the chapter, who, naturally, could not but elect him. On presenting himself subsequently to the king with his certificate of election, the king confirmed the choice of the chapter as if he were the head of the Church. From the Catholic point of view, Rönnov was, of course, no bishop at all; and his own misgivings on this head led him secretly to apply for a regular consecration to Jörgen Skodborg, who, since his expulsion from the archiepiscopal see of Lund (which Frederick had

the sacraments, solemnise marriages, and ordain the clergy, contrary to the law and in despite of the legislature; for even the royal authorisation to preach the Gospel could not make canonical priests of them. As a matter of fact, the old and the new religion could not subsist side by side in a city like Copenhagen, which was now dominated by the preachers; yet the king and Bishop Rönnov, before quitting it on August 2, 1530, enjoined a compromise whereby the canons of Vor Frue Kirke, the chief church in Copenhagen, were to be permitted to read, sing and say Latin masses, as they had done heretofore, whilst the evangelical preachers were also to be free to preach God's Word and say the Danish mass in the same church on Sundays. The magistrates of Copenhagen vehemently protested against this absurd ordinance, and warned Frederick that the only result of it would be a dangerous riot with which the magistrates might be unable to cope. The king left this warning unheeded. The consequence was that on December 27, 1530, a mob, led by the burgomaster Ambrosius Bogbinder, burst into the church, hewed down all the sacred images, destroyed the beautifully carved choir stalls, and were only ejected towards the evening by the personal intervention of Hans Tausen. By command of the king the church was then closed. The inevitable ecclesiastical crisis was postponed only by the superior stress of two urgent political events—Christian II's invasion of Norway (p. 31), and the outbreak, in 1533, of "Grevens Fejde" (pp. 52, 53).

The ultimate triumph of so devoted a Lutheran as Christian III sealed the fate of the Catholic Church in Denmark. That it should, nevertheless, have been necessary for the victorious king to proceed against the bishops and their friends in the Rigsraad, by way of a *coup d'état* (p. 61), is sufficient proof that the Catholic party was still considered formidable. It was upon the now helpless and imprisoned bishops and the Catholic senators that the new king threw the whole blame for the dire misfortunes which had visited the land during

the Civil War. Hence the vindictive character of the recess adopted by the Rigsdag of 1536, which enacted that the bishops should for ever forfeit their temporal and spiritual authority; that the existing episcopate itself should be abolished; and that other Christian bishops, or superintendents, should be set in their places to teach and preach the holy Gospel and God's Word to the people. Moreover, that the Crown of Denmark might be enabled to defend the realm against foreign and domestic enemies, all the property of the bishops and prelates was transferred for ever to the Crown, for the good of king and commonwealth. The king was also henceforth to have the right of presentation to all prelatures and other benefices hitherto possessed by the bishops. The monks were free to quit their cloisters; but those who preferred to remain were to have God's Word preached to them. The recess very cautiously avoids committing itself to any sweeping ecclesiastical change; but it is easy to read between the lines the desire of its framers gradually to abolish Catholicism; and it left it to the king, the Rigsraad, and "learned and reasonable men thereto appointed," to take whatever further measures might be deemed necessary.

Shortly after the close of the Rigsdag at which the recess was adopted, eighteen members of the Evangelical party, including Tausen and Sadolin, and eight leading Catholics, were summoned to a conference at Odense, which was continued at Haderslev; and a Church ordinance in Latin, based upon the canons of Luther, Melanchthon, and Bugenhagen, of an essentially practical and, on the whole, conciliatory character, was drawn up. Christian sent it in 1537 to Wittenberg. On being returned with Luther's approval, it was carefully supervised at a Herredag held at Copenhagen by the German reformer, Johann Bugenhagen, who had come to Denmark, at the express invitation of the king, in July, 1537, and was at once entrusted with the organisation of the newly-established Danish Church. As a final result of his labours, a Lutheranised

revision of the ordinance of Haderslev was by him submitted to the Rigsraad, which, while approving of it in general, at the same time suggested that the clergy should be directed to deal indulgently with those backsliders who would not at once receive the sacraments—a pretty plain hint that the old Church still had adherents in government circles whose feelings were worth considering. Finally, the king promulgated the new Church ordinance independently of the Raad on September 2, 1537.

On the same day the new superintendents or bishops—for the latter designation ultimately prevailed—were consecrated in Vor Frue Kirke by Bugenhagen, who himself had only priest's orders. This was a notable breach with traditional practice, involving the loss of the apostolical succession by the Danish episcopate. This is the more remarkable, as there was strong contemporary feeling on this very point; and the apostolical succession need not have been lost, inasmuch as the Norwegian Catholic bishop, Hans Reff, who had embraced the evangelical teaching, might very well have consecrated the new bishops. But the audacity of the Danish reformers prevailed; and the king, as the new head of the Church, gladly supported them. The seven superintendents who were consecrated on September 2 had all worked zealously for the cause of the Reformation. The archbishopric was abolished; but the see of Sjælland seems to have assumed a sort of primacy from the first. The new Jutland bishops were also Danes; but the bishopric of Ribe was given to a German, Hans Vandal, who could not conduct visitations in his diocese without the aid of an interpreter. In 1542 he was succeeded by Tausen, who in the meantime had been appointed professor of theology at Copenhagen and Roskilde. The difficulties encountered by these new superintendents led to a revision of the Church ordinance at the Herredag of Odense, June 14, 1539, which was further amplified by the so-called Articles of Ribe in 1542, which laid down stricter rules for the ordination of priests. Thus the

work of reformation was finally consolidated; and the constitution of the Danish Church has practically continued the same to the present day.

Naturally enough, Catholicism could not wholly or immediately be dislodged by the teaching of Luther. It had struck deep roots into the habits and feelings of the people; and traces of its survival were everywhere distinguishable a whole century after the triumph of the Reformation. Despite the rigorous inquisitorial visitations of the superintendents, sacred images continued to be adored, candles to be lit before the altars of the Virgin, and rosaries to be freely used; while crowds of pilgrims frequented Torum, Edensted, Bistrup, Karup, and other favourite shrines. Catholic practices were also observed in many places; and it is said that the nuns at Maribo kept to their strict rule as late as 1564. Not till the old generation had completely died out can the Reformation be said to have become truly national. Catholicism lingered longest in cathedral chapters. Here were to be found men of talent and ability, proof against the eloquence of Hans Tausen or Peder Plad, and quite capable of controverting their theories—men like Eliae, for instance, indisputably the greatest Danish theologian of his day, a critic and a scholar, whose voice was drowned amidst the clash of conflicting creeds. Most of these crypto-Catholics had been obliged to submit to the Church ordinance, but they continued to argue against the Reformation, and openly refused to receive the sacraments in the Lutheran form. To the last their influence over the higher and more cultivated classes was considerable; and even in the public disputations, authorised from time to time, notably those of 1543 and 1544, on the mass and the sacraments, they more than held their own against the assaults of the Lutheran controversialists.

In Norway the Reformation was accepted with comparative apathy. In the half German town of Bergen, Danish and German Lutherans had been busy during the twenties; but

the people were indifferent, and the king was inclined at first to leave the old Church ceremonies and customs alone. Thus the lower Catholic clergy provisionally retained their cures; and even so late as the death of Christian III (1559) the Reformation here had not gained much ground. The new superintendents, indeed, did their best to enforce the new Church ordinances, and in the towns they met with some success; but in the country parts progress was slow. There was, moreover, a great lack of pastors; and sufficient schools could not be founded for want of means. In some dioceses barely half of the vacant cures could be filled; many churches had to be pulled down and many parishes enlarged—an unhappy state of affairs in a country so vast, rugged, and difficult of access. Thus the Reformation was at first spiritually detrimental to Norway. It created no literature; it did little for education; it excited no enthusiasm. Nay, at first, Danish pastors refused to risk their lives among the wild population for the miserable stipends which had sufficed for the wants of the Catholic priests. Even Peder Plad, who interested himself in Norway, complained that the people were like sheep without a shepherd. The result was a curious blending of old and new. On Sundays Lutheranism was preached in the churches, and the catechism was taught in the schools; but on the old saints' days the people made pilgrimages to the ancient shrines; and the Blessed Virgin and the saints were appealed to in all times of distress and danger.

If in Norway the Reformation was received with indifference, in Iceland it encountered downright hostility. The two Catholic bishops of Skalholt and Holar, Ogmund Palsson and Jon Aresen, refused to submit to the new Church ordinance. But, when Ogmund, owing to the infirmity of age, was obliged to have a coadjutor, the choice of the government fell upon Gissur Einersen, a crypto-Lutheran, who was ordained bishop by Peder Plad in 1540, and returned to Iceland the same summer. He found the whole island in an uproar. The



Danish governor, Didrik of Minden, whilst on a visit to Bishop Ogmund, had been murdered for incivility by the retainers of his aged host; and the Althing, or Diet, had not only pronounced the bishop innocent, but patriotically rejected the new Church ordinance. The opposition was led by the Catholic bishops; and it was resolved at Copenhagen to use force. Christopher Hvitfeld was accordingly sent to Iceland with a body of troopers; and Bishop Ogmund was seized and carried to Denmark, where he died in 1542. The Church ordinance was then enforced; and the one remaining Catholic bishop, Jon Aresen, submitted. The Reformation made little progress till the death of Gissur Einersen in 1548; whereupon the Lutherans elected as his successor Martin Einersen, while the Catholics chose Abbot Sigurd of Thykkvabo. Bishop Aresen now issued from his retirement, warmly supported the abbot, and used the opportunity to re-enthroned Catholicism in Iceland. When therefore Christian III confirmed the election of the Lutheran candidate, Aresen raised the standard of revolt, appealed for help to Pope and Kaiser, and declared from the high altar of his church, in full canonicals and surrounded by his clergy, that he would rather die than be false to Holy Church. He then seized and imprisoned his rival, Bishop Martin, administered the vacant see of Skalholt, restored all the monasteries, and, at the Althing of 1550, expelled the royal governor Laurids Mule, and drove him from the island. Unfortunately for himself, the old bishop could not use his victory with moderation. In attempting to subdue by force of arms Dade Gudmundson, the one man in the island who still resisted him, he was defeated, captured, handed over to the Danish authorities, and by them beheaded together with his sons, November 7, 1550. In 1551 a Danish fleet arrived and restored order; the Althing swore allegiance to Christian III and his son; and the Reformation met with no further open resistance in Iceland, though it assumed a peculiar national character which it has preserved to the present day.

In Sweden the Reformation was far less a popular, and far more a political movement than it had been in Denmark, despite the fact that the last three Swedish archbishops had been violently anti-national. We know but little of the condition of the Church of Sweden at the final rupture of the Union of Kalmar. That some of the prelates were men of learning and ability is indisputable; but, on the other hand, it is equally clear that many of the lower clergy were very ignorant. Bishop Johannes Magni, writing in 1525, says there were very few priests who could preach the Word of God to the people, or read the Scriptures, much less expound them. Nor was their morality of a very apostolic character. In 1523, for instance, we hear of a chaplain of the governor, Sten Sture, striking one of his colleagues dead with a battle-axe; "manslayers and drunkards" were not uncommon among the parish priests; and the rule of celibacy was so generally infringed, that it was usual for the bishops to impose a tax upon those priests who desired to keep concubines or will away their property to their children. Nevertheless there is no reason for assuming that the spiritual condition of the Church in Sweden was any worse than it was elsewhere, or that reformation from within was impossible. In favourable circumstances the Swedish Church might have recovered herself without a rupture with Rome, for she had not yet forfeited the affections of the people; but the circumstances were not favourable. To begin with, she was leaderless. At the beginning of the Reformation all the episcopal sees but two were vacant. The archbishop, Gustavus Trolle, was an outlawed exile; the bishops of Skara and Strengnäs had perished in the Stockholm Massacre; the bishops of Vesterås and Åbo had both died in 1522; Ingemar, bishop of Vexjö, was old and decrepit. The sole champion of the Church in the higher hierarchy was Hans Brask, bishop of Linköping, a true patriot and an experienced statesman, but of a native caution accentuated by the timidity of old age. His position

was somewhat strengthened when Gustavus Vasa, in 1522 and 1523, filled up the vacant sees of Skara, Strengnäs, and Vesterås, especially as the energetic Petrus Jacobi, formerly chancellor and one of the warmest adherents of the Stures, had been appointed to the latter see; but, towards the end of 1523, Gustavus, always morbidly suspicious of the Sture influence, fastened a quarrel upon Chancellor Peder, as he was generally called, and superseded him in the see of Vesterås by Petrus Magni, a monk of Vadstena, just then at Rome on a mission from his monastery. The archiepiscopal dignity was finally conferred (Sept. 1523) on the papal legate Johannes Magni, a man of middle-class Swedish parentage, born at Linköping in 1488, and formerly a student at Louvain under Pope Adrian VI, who had sent him home from Rome, "to extirpate the Lutheran errors and confirm the faithful." A plausible, well-meaning ecclesiastic, he had easily won Gustavus's favour by a show of compliance, but he was far too pliable a character to hold the primacy successfully in a period of acute crisis.

But it was not enough that the new bishops should be elected by the cathedral chapters: their election required confirmation by the Pope; and serious difficulties at once arose, which resulted in Gustavus's definitive breach with the Papal See. Already, in the middle of June, 1523, immediately after the election of the king, the Swedish Råd had petitioned the Pope for a primate better able to promote peace and harmony than Gustavus Trolle. Three months later the king himself took the matter in hand, and wrote several letters to the Pope, begging him to appoint new bishops "who would defend the rights of the Church without detriment to the Crown." He was especially urgent for the confirmation of Johannes Magni as archbishop in the place of "that rebellious and bloodthirsty scoundrel, Gustavus Trolle." If the Pope would confirm the election of his bishops, Gustavus promised in all things to be an obedient son of the Church. Scarcely

had this letter been despatched than the king was surprised by a papal Bull ordering the reinstalment of Gustavus Trolle forthwith. The action of the Curia on this occasion was due to its conviction of the imminent triumph of Christian II and the instability of Gustavus's position. It was a conviction shared by the rest of Europe ; but, none the less, it was another of the many perhaps unavoidable blunders of the Curia at this difficult and inscrutable period. Its immediate effect was the loss of the Swedish Church. Gustavus could not accept as primate a convicted traitor like Trolle. He protested in the sharpest language not only to the college of cardinals but to the Pope himself, that, unless Johannes Magni were recognised by Rome as archbishop of Upsala, he was determined of his own royal authority henceforth to order the affairs of the Church in his realm to the glory of God and the satisfaction of all Christian men. Still more threatening became his tone when he learnt that the Pope, setting aside the choice of the cathedral chapter of Skara, had bestowed that see upon Giovanni Francesco of Potenza. In a letter dated November 2, 1523, he declared outright that, if the Pope refused or delayed to confirm the election of his bishops, he would have them confirmed by the one and only high-priest, Christ Himself, rather than allow religion in Sweden to suffer by the negligence of the Papal See. The newly appointed bishop of Skara he refused to recognise. His Holiness might be quite persuaded, he said, that he would never allow foreigners to preside over his churches. But Clement VII, who, in 1523, succeeded Adrian VI, was immovable. The utmost he would concede was that Johannes Magni should remain coadjutor of Upsala till the affair of Archbishop Trolle had been investigated. Gustavus made no further effort to overcome the obstinacy of the Pope; his thoughts had already turned in another direction.

The first tidings of Luther which reached Sweden are contained in a letter written from Rome, in 1518, by Per Månsson, subsequently bishop of Vesterås; but it was only

when native Lutherans began to spread a knowledge of the new doctrine in Sweden that it attracted public attention. The first of these propagandists was Olavus Petri. Born at Örebro in 1497, he was brought up with his brother Laurentius at a Carmelite monastery in his native place, completing his education at Wittenberg in 1516-1519, where he was promoted to the degree of Magister, and made the personal acquaintance of Luther, whom he accompanied on one of his visitations through northern Germany. Like his master he was of an ardent, energetic temperament, certainly eloquent but no theologian. On returning home he was ordained a deacon (1520) by Matthias, bishop of Strengnäs, and became a member of the cathedral chapter. It was here that he first made the acquaintance of his lifelong friend, Canon Laurentius Andreae, subsequently archdeacon of Upsala.

Lars Anderson, as he is called in Swedish, was born in 1482, educated at Rome, and returned to his native land one of the most learned men of his day. Although fifteen years the senior of Olavus Petri, he was so far carried away by his junior's eloquence as to become his disciple, though his calmer judgment operated as a brake upon the headlong impetuosity of his young friend. That Petri's enthusiasm frequently exceeded the bounds of charity the following anecdote sufficiently proves. His father, a pious Catholic, on his death in 1521, bequeathed a small piece of land to the Carmelites of his native place, that masses might be celebrated at his burial. But Olavus and his brother Laurentius refused to part with the land even when their bitterly afflicted mother reproached them for their unfilial conduct. So early as 1523 Olavus was notorious as an heretical teacher. Gustavus himself seems to have been neutral or indifferent, till on the occasion of his election by the Riksdag of Strengnäs, in the same year, he heard preach some "young men who were Master Olof's disciples, whereat he was surprised, and yet the same pleased

him well." He had several interviews with Olavus subsequently, and, not unnaturally, expressed his amazement when the young man confidently informed him that the Pope was Antichrist; but he consulted the older and graver Laurentius Andreae, who told him how "Doctor Martinus had clipped the wings of the Pope, the cardinals, and the big bishops," which could not fail to be pleasing intelligence to a monarch who never was an admirer of episcopacy, while the rich revenues of the Church, accumulated in the course of centuries, were a tempting object to the impecunious ruler of an impoverished people.

Nevertheless, but for his pressing financial needs, it is highly improbable that so eminently practical a ruler as Gustavus Vasa would ever have added to his innumerable difficulties a struggle with his prelates. With him, as with Christian II, religious were always subordinated to political questions. That the reformer had won Gustavus at Strengnäs was soon patent. A few months later Laurentius Andreae was made the king's private secretary; by the middle of 1524 he had become archdeacon of Upsala and a senator; while Olavus Petri, the same year, was appointed recorder of Stockholm. Master Olof's zeal soon led him, though still only a deacon, to preach Lutheranism in the chief church of the capital; but his violence repelled the graver members of his audience; and, while some applauded, others flung stones at him. The excesses in the capital of his German associates, the Anabaptists, Melchior Buntmakare and Knipperdolling, who egged on the lower classes of the people to attack and desecrate the Catholic churches, also excited general disgust, especially in the country parts, where the deeply religious peasantry threatened to come in force and purge "that corrupt Gomorrhah," as they called Stockholm, of all Lutherans and heretics. Finally, the king and Andreae intervened; and the Anabaptists were expelled the kingdom. Gustavus and the archdeacon were for allowing the new teaching to spread

quietly and gradually. Their conduct was eminently prudent throughout, but clearly unfair to the Catholics and disingenuous. Thus, in a letter written to the monks of the monastery of Vadstena, St Bridget's great foundation, Gustavus expresses himself as hurt at the rumour that "any new, less Catholic doctrine" is spreading in his kingdom. The monks must abstain from such frivolous utterances. "Prove all things and hold to that which is good" was his motto. If any new doctrine were found in any book published by Martin Luther or anyone else, such doctrine was not lightly to be rejected but tested by Holy Scripture. The king further opined that Martin was much too great to be confuted by such simple folks as he and they. When Bishop Brask besought him to suppress Luther's writings, Gustavus (June 8, 1524) declared himself in favour of the fullest discussion of the whole subject, and refused to persecute anyone for his religious convictions. The bishop, unsupported by the government, could henceforth only attack "the Lutheran, or rather the Luciferan heresy," in pastorals and charges.

On Sexagesima Sunday, 1525, Olavus Petri still further defied the ecclesiastical authorities by breaking his vow of celibacy and taking unto himself a wife. Old Bishop Brask could scarce believe his ears when he heard it. He at once wrote to the king and the archbishop, charging them to punish the offender. The archbishop did nothing. The king replied that he had sent for Master Olof, who declared himself ready and willing to defend his breach of ancient custom before any lawful tribunal. Gustavus added that it seemed strange to him that a man should be banned on account of marriage which the law of God had never forbidden, while immoral clerics should remain unblamed by the law of the Pope. In the same letter the king defended himself against the charge of employing for state purposes Church property which had been dedicated to pious uses. Finally he urged the plea of necessity, in his case a very real one.

A fresh step towards the promotion of the new teaching was the translation of the New Testament into Swedish—as is generally supposed, by Laurentius Andree and Olavus Petri—despite the opposition of Hans Brask. It was published in 1526. Simultaneously Gustavus began a systematic attack upon the monks and monasteries. At a popular conference held at Upsala he complained that there were too many unnecessary priests in the realm. All the monasteries, he said, were crammed with monks who were little better than vermin, as they consumed all the kindly fruits of the earth to the detriment of the people. In January, 1526, he proceeded from words to deeds, and began the suppression of the religious houses by sequestering the monastery of Gripsholm; but the affair caused such general indignation that Gustavus felt obliged, in May, to offer some justification of his conduct. A few months later there was an open rupture between the king and the archbishop. Johannes Magni had at last convinced himself that the king was incorrigible, while Gustavus was eager to reject a tool he could no longer use. He began by frightening the primate by a sudden accusation of treason, and then sent him as ambassador to Poland, hoping that the timid old man would never venture back. His hope was justified. On reaching Dantzic, Magni, congratulating himself on his escape, wrote to Hans Brask requesting his more spirited brother of Linköping to take charge of his diocese.

Hans Brask was now completely isolated: single-handed he had to defend the Church against her oppressors and despoilers. Of the newly elected bishops, three were still unconfirmed by the Pope, and the fourth, Petrus Magni, kept in the background. The burden was far too heavy for the shoulders of one man; but, in justice to Hans Brask, it should be added that to the utmost of his ability he fought for his cause and his convictions, and, well aware that the majority of the yeomanry were on his side, he braved for a time the wrath of the king himself. Irritated by this persistent opposition,



Gustavus abandoned the no longer tenable position of a moderator, and came openly forward as an antagonist. He commanded Brask to destroy his printing-press at Söderköping, from which he was issuing numerous anti-Lutheran pamphlets; and, when the indefatigable prelate transferred his press to Copenhagen, Gustavus forbade him to print and circulate among the common folk anything not previously submitted to himself. At a meeting of the Senate at Vadstena in 1526, two-thirds of the Church's tithes had already been applied to the payment of the national debt.

Still more significant of Gustavus's anti-ecclesiastical policy was his treatment of the two rebellious prelates, Peder the chancellor and Martin Knut Eriksson, who in the middle of 1525 had fled to Norway and placed themselves under the protection of Olof, the last Catholic archbishop of Trondhjem. Only after protracted negotiations did Gustavus succeed in obtaining their extradition. The unfortunate men were treated with shameful contumely. First they were set backwards on broken-down hacks and paraded through the streets of Stockholm, the chancellor with a crown of straw on his head and a filthy wooden sword by his side, and Master Knut wearing a mitre made of rushes; while buffoons ran alongside, deriding them and shouting to the crowd that here were the men who would rather be traitors than approve the teaching of Dr Martin Luther. On February 18, 1527, these martyrs of Catholicism were arraigned for treason before a tribunal consisting of four spiritual and six temporal senators. The king himself prosecuted; and the accused were condemned to the gibbet by the temporal assessors, after the spiritual judges had disputed the legality of the tribunal and withdrawn from it. The cruel sentences were executed forthwith. That two prelates should have thus been treated like the commonest felons caused widespread dismay. Yet Bishop Brask wrote to a friend at Rome, at the end of the same year, that the king's heart was in the hand of God, "who can always make Saul Paul."

Three months later the old man begins to despair. "If the Lord shorten not these days," he wrote to the fugitive primate, "we have naught to look forward to but the dissolution of the flesh."

Nor was it only in clerical circles that the king's conduct was disapproved. We have already seen (p. 45) that the people at large were violently anti-Lutheran, and prepared to fight for the old Church and faith. But it was Gustavus's great good fortune that no capable Catholic leader could be found; and he wisely resolved to complete the work he had begun while circumstances favoured him both at home and abroad. He began by summoning a Riksdag, which met on June 16, 1527, in the hall of the Black Friars' monastery at Vesterås. The bishops, well aware of what was coming, previously held a secret meeting, behind locked doors, in the church of St Egidius, and bound themselves by oath never to desert the Pope or tolerate Luther, and to protest beforehand against any contrary resolutions which might be adopted. This protest which, in the event, they durst not publish, was found, fifteen years later, beneath the floor of Vesterås cathedral. The same day the Riksdag was opened; and the worst fears of the prelates were justified. The royal propositions set forth the needs of the government, and urged the Estates to consider the best means of satisfying them. Brask, knowing that the property of the Church was aimed at, declared that the bishops could relinquish nothing without the permission of the Holy See; whereupon Gustavus, altogether losing patience, delivered himself of a passionate harangue, reproaching the Estates bitterly for their ingratitude and inertia, and concluding with these words:—"Ye have chosen me to be your king, but who would be your king under such conditions? Not the worst off in hell! So let me tell you straight out that I will not be your king any longer, and you may choose any good man you like in my place.....Pay me up the value of the clods of earth I have here, and what I have spent of my own

upon the kingdom ; and I promise you that I'll depart, and never, so long as I live, return to this noisome, degenerate, and ungrateful land." With that he burst into tears and rushed from the room.

After three days of the utmost confusion and dismay, the Estate of Peasants, in the complete absence of anything like counsel and guidance from their natural leaders, manfully took the initiative and compelled Laurentius Andreae and Olavus Petri to go up to the castle and implore the king to return. This of itself was an unconditional surrender ; but Gustavus was determined to make his subjects feel to the uttermost how indispensable he was to them. Not till the Estates had sent message after message to him, begging him, "for God's sake," to come back to them, did he relent. When at last, on the fourth day, he reappeared, it was as much as the Estates could do to abstain from falling down and kissing his feet. All his demands were instantly and unanimously granted, and embodied in the notable document known as the Vesterås Recess. Paragraph 2 of this document provides that the surplus revenues of the bishops, cathedral chapters, and land-owning monasteries, should be transferred to the Crown, which was also provisionally to take over the bishops' palaces and castles. Paragraph 3 authorised the nobility to redeem from the religious houses all the land devoted to pious uses since 1454, upon which they could make good their claims. The Church's relations to the State were still further defined and explained by the Vesterås ordinance. Bishops and other prelates were never henceforth to apply to Rome for confirmation ; Peter's pence were henceforth to go to the Crown instead of to the Pope ; ecclesiastics in temporal matters were to be amenable to the civil courts alone. Yet the changes made by the Riksdag of Vesterås were mainly economical and administrative. There was no modification of Church doctrine, for the general resolution that God's Word should be preached plainly and purely was not contrary to the teaching of the ante-Tridentine Church.

Immediately after the departure of the king from Vesterås, Hans Brask quitted Sweden, to pass the remainder of his days at the Polish monastery of Landa, where he died in 1539. The disappearance of the last effective champion of the old faith was a relief and an assistance to the Reformers. From the new bishops, nothing, apparently, was to be feared. In the beginning of January, 1528, they allowed themselves to be consecrated, without the papal confirmation, by Per Månsson, bishop of Vesterås, who, although he had been consecrated by the Pope before his return to Sweden, now submitted, against his convictions, to the royal will. The recess of Vesterås was confirmed and extended by the synod of Örebro, which was summoned, in February, 1529, for "the better regulation of Church ceremonies and discipline according to God's Word." It provided for the preaching of the new doctrines, declared the Holy Scriptures to be the sole norm of doctrine, and placed the religious orders under the jurisdiction of the bishops. But even now there was no formal protest against Rome; and the old ritual was retained unaltered, though it was to be explained as symbolical.

Three months after the synod of Örebro, a rising occurred which showed how unpopular the Reformation was in the country at large. It began with the murder, by peasants in Småland, of one of the king's bailiffs who had seized the monastery of Nydala. The rebels were encouraged by some of the most eminent men in Sweden, notably by Senators Ture Jönsson, Hölger Carlsson, and Magnus Haraldsson, bishop of Skara, who openly protested against the Vesterås recess, and aimed at nothing less than deposing the king. Gustavus was much disquieted. "I fear," he wrote, "that this treason is so great and widespread that we may not know whereto to betake us." Yet within a month his prudent measures had averted the danger. The peasants were pacified by a compromise made at Brodдетorp April 25, 1529, but never kept; the bishop and the senators fled first to Denmark and then

to Christian II in the Netherlands; and a Riksdag held at Strengnäs, June 17, reconfirmed the Vesterås recess, and condemned two of the Småland ringleaders to death.

Henceforth the work of the Reformation continued uninterruptedly, if gradually. In 1531 a Swedish missal was published authorising communion in both kinds. The same year an assembly of bishops and prelates elected Laurentius Petri, the brother of Olavus, hitherto a professor at Upsala, the first Lutheran primate of Sweden. Subsequently matters were much complicated by the absolutist tendencies of Gustavus, which, in his later years, passed all bounds. His arbitrary appropriation of the Church's share of the tithes from and after 1539, and his sequestration of the Church's movable property during the same year, drew protests even from his own archbishop and bishops, who rightly regarded these acts as violations of the Vesterås recess. Gustavus at first retorted only with insults and menaces. Then he took offence at certain references in the sermons of Olavus Petri to blasphemy and swearing, which he regarded as personal allusions; he certainly had the ugly habit of emphasising his speech with oaths. Olavus Petri made matters worse by openly calling Gustavus a tyrant and a skinflint, and by hanging up in the cathedral pictures of recent *parhelia*, which he explained as portents of calamities that the king's sins would bring upon the land. At last Gustavus's rage burst forth; and both Olavus Petri and Laurentius Andreae were arraigned before an extraordinary tribunal, largely composed of foreigners, on a mysterious and unconvincing charge of hiding their knowledge of a conspiracy against the king's life. This arraignment has all the appearance of a vindictive afterthought; yet nevertheless both Andreae and Petri were on January 2, 1540, actually condemned to death, though the sentences were commuted to ruinous fines. Gustavus had already (1539) appointed a German, Georg Norman, "superintendent and ordinator" over all the bishops and prelates, with plenipotentiary powers. At

a subsequent Riksdag held at Vesterås in 1544 the last shreds of Roman Catholicism were swept away. Even now no definite confession of faith was formulated; but the rupture with Rome had become so complete, in view of Gustavus's uncompromising attitude, that Sweden received no invitation to the Council of Trent, then in session. By the ordinances of 1539 and 1540 Gustavus had already so curtailed the power of the bishops that they had little of the dignity left but the name; and even that he was now disposed to abolish. The bishops appointed after 1543 were called by him ordinaries or superintendents, never bishops; and they were appointed directly by the Crown without even any previous pretence of an election by the cathedral chapters as hitherto.

Thus the Reformation in Sweden was practically the work of one overwhelmingly strong man acting contrary to the religious instincts of the nation for the good of the State. In the nature of things it could not be so thorough as it was in Denmark, where the people were less independent, and exposed directly to German influences. There could be no question of a return of Denmark to Rome after the Copenhagen recess of 1536; but in Sweden, even after the Riksdag of Vesterås in 1544, a Catholic reaction was always a possibility. That which subsequently took place, under pressure from without, was an event of some political importance, though Gustavus Vasa had done his work so well that it failed to shake the foundations of the new national Church.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SONS OF GUSTAVUS VASA, 1560—1611.

GUSTAVUS VASA left four sons, Eric, now in his twenty-seventh year, the only child of his first wife and his appointed successor, and John, Magnus, and Charles, the children of his second wife. Of these younger sons, John, created duke of Finland and governor of that province during his father's lifetime, was twenty-three; Magnus, duke of Östergötland, five years John's junior, grew up insane and was never of much account; while Charles, duke of Södermanland, was still a boy.

The news of his father's death reached Eric as he was on the point of embarking for England, to press in person his suit for the hand of Queen Elizabeth. He hastened back to Stockholm after burying his father, summoned a Riksdag which met at Arboga, April 13, 1561, and adopted the royal propositions known as the Arboga articles, April 14, considerably curtailing the authority of the royal dukes in their respective duchies. Two months later Eric XIV was crowned at Upsala with unprecedented pomp and splendour, on which occasion he first introduced the titles of baron and count into Sweden, by way of adding to the splendour of his court, and attaching to the Crown the higher nobility, these new counts and barons receiving lucrative fiefs adequate to the maintenance of their new dignities.

King Eric XIV has gone down to posterity as a monster whose misdeeds are barely excusable on the plea of insanity ; yet there can be no doubt that he exercised a singular charm over his contemporaries. The French ambassador, Charles de Dançay, who knew Eric personally, describes him as a very handsome, well-framed prince, marvellously accomplished, speaking German, French, and Latin as well as his mother tongue, a great mathematician and a very good musician. He also credits him with an alert and critical intelligence, a rare power of diagnosing character, and a laudable capacity for taking pains. Eric's own father, a difficult master to please, also had a high opinion of his son's judgment, and profitably consulted him on affairs of state. His first act as a ruler, the limitation of the excessive authority of the royal dukes, whatever its motives, was undoubtedly a wise one. To an immature, struggling state like Sweden, a strongly centralised government was then indispensable. Equally laudable were his efforts to promote good government by keeping a stringent watch on his governors and lord-lieutenants, lest they should overstep their powers ; by establishing a high tribunal, *Konungens Nämnd*, as the organ and definite representative of the Crown ; by the revival of the old practice of sending the judges on circuit at regular intervals ; and by the substitution of a regular course of administrative procedure for the more cumbrous system of purely personal government.

Unfortunately in company with these fine qualities were to be found dangerous vices, "childish, womanish emotions," as his anxious, far-seeing father used to call them. Yet Eric's vices were but his father's foibles released from the dominion of a mastering will, and exaggerated by vanity, licentiousness, and cowardice. Gustavus had been stern, violent and suspicious ; Eric was cruel and homicidal, feared all men and trusted few. From the very beginning of his reign his morbid suspicion of the upper classes, from "faithless rebeard," as he called his half-brother John, downwards, drove him to give



his absolute confidence to a man of base origin and bad character, though, it must be admitted, of superior ability. This was Göran Persson, the son of a priest who had been one of the first to contract the still illegal tie of wedlock under the protection of the Reformers. Born about 1530, Göran was sent to Germany to complete his studies, returned home with a certificate from Melanchthon, and obtained a post at court, where he behaved so badly that he was condemned to death, though the sentence was subsequently commuted to perpetual banishment. Instead of leaving the country, however, he sought refuge with Duke Eric, who took him into his service despite the warnings of his father. On succeeding to the throne, Eric made Göran his procurator and secretary; and from henceforth the priest's son became the king's acknowledged favourite and indispensable counsellor. It was at his suggestion that the tribunal known as *Konungens Nämnd* was instituted, a useful and necessary reform in itself, but frequently employed by Göran, who officiated therein as public prosecutor, as a sort of court of Star Chamber for capitally punishing or heavily fining scores of so-called political offenders cited by him before it. This powerful upstart was the natural enemy of the nobility, who suffered much at his hands, though it is very difficult to determine whether the initiative in these prosecutions proceeded from him or his master. Göran was also a determined opponent of Duke John, in whom, from the first, he recognised his master's most dangerous rival. Ever since the Riksdag of Arboga the brothers had been on unfriendly terms. Only with the utmost repugnance had John subscribed the articles of Arboga; and it was his practical infringement of them which now brought an open rupture between the king and the duke. The immediate occasion of John's offence was his independent action in regard to the Livonian question.

At the time of Gustavus Vasa's death there were two Livonian deputations in Sweden, one from the Master of the Sword Order, Gotthard von Kettler, soliciting Sweden's media-

tion in the war with Russia; the other from the Protestant city of Reval which, threatened at the same time by Russia, Poland, and the duke Magnus of Denmark, begged for pecuniary assistance from the Swedish king. Kettler's demands were rejected by Eric XIV as exorbitant, whereupon the Master submitted himself to Poland (Treaty of Wilna, Nov. 28, 1561). Courland and Semigallia, the ancient lands of the now extinct order, became a Polish fief with Kettler as its first temporal duke; and he was at the same time appointed governor of Livonia. This arrangement brought Sweden and Poland into direct collision in the Baltic provinces; for, in March, 1561, Reval, driven to extremities, had voluntarily placed itself beneath the protection of the Swedish Crown. John, as duke of Finland, had hoped to obtain a share of the spoil of the ancient Order, but, finding himself disappointed in his expectations, he gladly listened, in July, 1561, to a proposal from Sigismund I of Poland that he should wed that monarch's younger sister Catherine. Eric, clearly foreseeing the dangerous consequences of such a union for Sweden, forbade his brother to proceed with it, and, at the same time, commanded Klas Horn, the governor of Reval, to attack and take Pernau, one of the newly acquired possessions of Poland in Livonia, naturally supposing that his brother would now, as a matter of course, cease all negotiations with a belligerent power. Instead of that, John immediately set sail for Dantzic, was married to Catherine Jagellonika at Wilna, on October 4, 1562, and engaged to advance to the Polish king 120,000 dalers in exchange for seven castles situated on the Swedo-Polish frontier.

This unpatriotic act was a flagrant breach of that paragraph of the articles of Arboga which forbade the royal dukes to contract any political treaty without the royal assent; and Eric, suspecting, moreover, from confessions wrung by torture from one of John's servants, that his brother actually meditated rebellion, summoned the duke on April 23,

1563, to appear within three weeks in Sweden, to answer to a charge of treason. The time having elapsed, and John not appearing, Eric called a Riksdag to Stockholm to judge his brother; and the Riksdag, after taking evidence, condemned John (Jan. 7) to death as a traitor, but, at the same time, recommended him to the king's mercy. An army of 10,000 men was incontinently despatched to Finland; but the only resistance met with was at the capital, Åbo, which John himself surrendered after a month's siege. He and his consort, despite solemn promises to the contrary, were thereupon detained in Gripsholm Castle as prisoners of state. That John's quasi-treasonable conduct deserved some punishment there can be little doubt; and public opinion, as represented by the Riksdag and the nobility, supported Eric. If the king had only stopped here, all would have been well; but his suspicions, once aroused, were at the mercy of a morbid imagination; and his imagination suggested that, if his own brother failed him, the loyalty of the great nobles, especially the members of the ancient and illustrious Sture family, his own near kinsfolk, could not be depended upon. That the Stures had ever been the most dutiful and pacific subjects of the Vasas counted for nothing in the mind of such a monomaniac. They were, he seems to have argued, after the royal family, the nearest to the throne, and therefore must needs covet it.

The head of the Sture family, at this time, was Senator Count Svante, who had married a sister of Gustavus Vasa's second wife, and had by her a numerous family, of whom two sons, Nils and Eric, still survived. Eric, a mere youth, had been in Duke John's service before he entered that of the king. Nils, now in his twenty-fourth year, had already displayed conspicuous ability both as a diplomatist and a soldier. The dark tragedy known as the Sture murders began with Eric XIV's strange treatment of this young noble. In 1566 Nils Sture was summoned to the royal castle of Svartsjö and received with every mark of favour; yet, on his return to Stockholm, he was

amazed to hear himself and his second brother, Sten, who had died gloriously fighting for his country at the naval battle of Bornholm the year before, publicly proclaimed "traitors, knaves, and scoundrels" in the market-place. Immediately afterwards he received a visit from Göran Persson, who, in the king's name, gave him the choice between "riding into town on a hack with a straw crown on his head," or answering to the charges which Persson, by the king's command, was about to bring against him. Sture at once demanded to be confronted with his accusers. He was brought before the new tribunal, *Konungens Nämnd*, and condemned to death for gross neglect of duty, though not one of the frivolous charges brought against him could be substantiated. The death penalty was commuted into a punishment worse because more shameful than death. On June 15, 1566, the unfortunate youth, bruised and bleeding from shocking ill-treatment, was placed upon a wretched hack, with a crown of straw on his head, and led in derision through the streets of Stockholm. The following night he was seized in his bed and carried off to the fortress of Örbyhus. But forty-eight hours had not elapsed before the command came that Nils was to be brought back to Stockholm; and, a few days later, he was appointed ambassador extraordinary and despatched to Lorraine to resume the negotiations for Eric's marriage with Princess Renata. The king, on this occasion, sent Nils Sture word that what had just befallen him was due to the counsel and machination of wicked men, and at the same time requested him to acknowledge himself rightly condemned and to promise not to seek to avenge himself for "the slight punishment" which the king had mercifully imposed upon him. Nils Sture refused to give any such promise; but King Eric, nevertheless, despatched him forthwith to Lorraine.

Eric XIV must have been well aware that his treatment of Nils Sture was an outrage which the whole nobility of Sweden would resent. Moreover he had offended the aristocracy in

another way. Instead of seeking a bride from among them, as his father had twice done, he married, about this time, the daughter of a common soldier, Karin, or Kitty, Mänsdotter. Eric first made the acquaintance of this young and beautiful girl some time between 1561 and 1564. In the beginning of 1565 she was received at court as his mistress, and in 1566 bore him a daughter. The king had already requested both the Riksdag and the Råd to allow him to marry whomsoever he would, since all his matrimonial negotiations with foreign princesses had come to nothing. In this request both the Råd and the Riksdag had acquiesced; but the Råd, consisting as it did of the magnates of Sweden, was naturally more jealous of the royal dignity, and added the proviso that his Majesty should not look lower than the nobility for a consort.

Eric, who had determined to make Karin queen of Sweden, was greatly incensed by the Råd's suggestion, which he regarded as little short of treason. He appears, first of all, to have negotiated with them on the subject. In January, 1567, he extorted from two of the senators, Svante Sture and Sten Eriksson, a declaration to the effect that, inasmuch as certain persons, with the view of extirpating Gustavus Vasa's posterity, had succeeded in thwarting his foreign marriage projects, it was the king's duty to marry whom he would, noble or non-noble; and they engaged to assist him to punish all who should try to prevent his marriage. Simultaneously Göran Persson was busily employed in collecting proofs of a general conspiracy of the higher nobility against the king. A Riksdag was summoned to Upsala, in the middle of May, 1567, to judge between the king and those of the aristocracy whom he regarded as his personal enemies, including Svante Sture and his sons, Per Brahe, Gustaf Olsson Stenbock and his sons Abraham and Eric, Sten Eriksson Lejonhufvud, and half-a-dozen others. Many of these suspects, while on their way to the Riksdag, were invited to visit the king at his castle at Svartsjö. They arrived there in the beginning of May, but

were treated as prisoners instead of as guests. Brought before *Konungens Nämnd*, they were charged with treasonable designs on such flimsy contradictory hearsay evidence that the court ultimately sent them to Upsala for further examination, but not before two of their number had already been condemned to death.

At Upsala the Riksdag had already assembled ; but it was noteworthy that scarce twenty of the nobility were present, and that it consisted almost exclusively of members of the lower Estates. Eric himself arrived on May 16 in a condition of incipient insanity. On the 19th he opened Parliament in a speech which, as he explained, he had to deliver extempore owing to the "treachery" of his secretary. It dealt exclusively with the purely imaginary conspiracy which he believed he had detected at Svartsjö. Two days later, on May 21, Nils Sture arrived at Upsala fresh from his embassy to Lorraine. He immediately demanded an audience, but was prevented from seeing Eric by Göran Persson, and thrown into prison. On the 22nd he contrived to let the king know the result of his mission, which was favourable to Eric's suit. The same day Eric had a lucid interval. He wrote to Count Svante, Nils's father, a letter of reconciliation, deploring the differences between such near relatives, expressing his utter disbelief of the charges of treason brought against him by their common ill-wishers, and promising him that no harm should befall him and his sons. Count Svante responded in a letter of almost abject gratitude. On the following morning the king paid a visit to Count Svante in his prison, fell down on his knees before him, begged him, for Christ's sake, to forgive him for his unrighteous conduct, and swore incoherently that he would be a gracious sovereign to him for the rest of his days. Svante did his best to pacify the king ; and they parted to all appearance completely reconciled.

It is said that after this interview Eric went for a stroll on the banks of the river Fyris with one of Göran Persson's friends,

and immediately afterwards returned to the castle in an excited condition. Followed by his drabants, he rushed with a drawn dagger into Nils Sture's cell, and greeted him with the words, "So there thou art, thou traitor!" The prisoner, who was lying on his bed with a little prayer-book in his hands, at once fell upon his knees, protesting his innocence and begging for his life; but the king plunged first the dagger and then a dart into his body, and one of the drabants completed the deed on the spot. Eric then ordered that all the prisoners in Upsala Castle, "except Herr Sten," should be killed privately; and the order was at once carried out by Per Gadd, the royal provost-marshal, and a band of half-drunken soldiers, who murdered old Count Sture and his son Eric, with Ivan Ivarsson and Abraham Gustafsson, brother of the queen-dowager. The remaining prisoners, Sten Axelsson and Sten Eriksson, owed their lives to the uncertainty of the executioners as to which of the two was meant by "Herr Sten." These murders were perpetrated so promptly and secretly that it is doubtful whether the Estates, actually in session at the same place, knew what had been done when, on May 26, under violent pressure from Göran Persson, they signed a document declaring that all the accused gentlemen in Svartsjö and Upsala had acted like traitors and confirming all sentences already passed or that might be passed upon them. Thus by threats and violence Persson had at least contrived to cover his master's crimes with the cloak of legality.

Meanwhile Eric, after murdering his old tutor Denis Beurres, who had attempted to pacify him, wandered, a mere lunatic, in the district between Upsala and Stockholm. He was found, on May 27, in the village of Odensala in peasant's clothes, quite out of his mind, was taken back to Stockholm, and gradually grew calmer and saner. He now attempted to atone, so far as he could, for his misdeeds. The two remaining prisoners were released; negotiations were opened with the relatives of the murdered men; and, when they had agreed to

condone what had been done, Eric, on July 18, 1567, wrote a letter to Nils Sture's mother, Märta Erikdotter, explaining that her son had been overhastily despatched, that he, the king, was much displeased "that the slight difference between them should have been treated in this way," and proposing "a Christian reconciliation" between himself and Dame Märta's family. That Dame Märta, whose masculine force of character had earned her the title of King Märta, should even have consented to negotiate at all with the assassin of her husband and children is not the least amazing part of this amazing affair. She consented to be appeased, however, only on certain conditions, one of which was that the "venomous persons" who had advised the misdeed should be punished. To this Eric consented; and Göran Persson, in the course of 1567, was arrested, tried for peculation and perjury and condemned to death, but kept in prison pending the king's recovery.

During the greater part of 1567 Eric was so deranged that a committee of senators was appointed to govern the kingdom. One of his illusions was that he was not king, but his brother John, whom he now set at liberty. When, at the beginning of 1568, Eric recovered his reason, a reconciliation was effected between the king and the duke, on condition that John should recognise the legality of his brother's marriage with Karin Månsdotter, and her children as the successors to the Crown. A few weeks later Eric, by the advice of Göran Persson, who was presently released and accompanied his master, joined the army in the field, and returned to his capital apparently restored to health. A month afterwards, on July 4, he was solemnly married to Karin Månsdotter at Stockholm, by the primate, old Laurentius Petri. The next day Karin was crowned queen of Sweden, and her infant son, Gustavus, proclaimed heir to the throne; but none of the royal dukes and very few of the nobility were present on the occasion. Shortly after his marriage Eric issued a circular ordering a general thanksgiving for his delivery from the assaults of the



Devil. This document, in every line of which madness is legible, convinced most thinking people that Eric was unfit to reign. The royal dukes, John and Charles, had already taken measures to depose him; and in July the rebellion broke out in Östergötland. Eric at first offered a stout resistance, and won two victories; but on September 17 the dukes stood before Stockholm, and Eric, after surrendering Göran Persson to the horrible vengeance of his enemies, himself submitted and resigned the crown. On September 30, 1578, John III was proclaimed king by the army and the nobility; and a Riksdag, summoned to Stockholm, confirmed the choice and formally deposed Eric on January 25, 1569.

For the next seven years the ex-king was a source of the utmost anxiety to the new government. No fewer than three rebellions, with the object of releasing and reinstating him, had to be suppressed, and his prison was changed half-a-dozen times; even in Finland he was considered a danger. So early as September 13, 1569, King John had induced the archbishop and bishops to issue an opinion which declared that in the event of a rising in Eric's favour his life ought not to be spared. On March 10, 1575, an assembly consisting of the Råd, the bishops, and some of the leading men among the clergy of Stockholm, went a step further, and, at John's request, pronounced a formal sentence of death upon the deposed monarch. Two years later, on February 24, 1577, Eric died suddenly in his prison at Örbyhus. It is generally believed that he was poisoned by his new governor, Johan Henriksson, a man of notoriously infamous character and the secretary and intimate of King John, who had placed him in charge of his unfortunate brother at the beginning of the month. Eric's son Gustavus, expelled from Sweden by his jealous uncle, became a homeless wanderer, embraced the Catholic faith, and died, in 1607, at Kashin in Central Russia.

We have seen that the same Riksdag which deposed Eric

recognised John as his successor. On the same occasion Duke Charles acknowledged his brother as sovereign lord and king, and Duke Sigismund, his brother's son, as the lawful heir to the throne; whilst John confirmed the donation of the duchy of Södermanland to Charles, and recognised his brother's right of succession to the Swedish throne in case of the extinction of his own posterity.

The twenty-four years of John III's reign coincide with the beginnings of two great political movements—Sweden's territorial expansion and the Catholic reaction.

From the moment when Sweden got a firm footing in Esthonia by the acquisition of Reval she was forced to adopt a policy of combat and aggrandisement. To retreat would have meant the ruin of her Baltic trade, upon which the national prosperity so much depended. Her next-door neighbours, Poland and Russia, were necessarily her competitors; fortunately they were also each other's rivals; obviously her best policy was to counterpoise them. To accomplish this effectually she required to have her hands free; and the composition of the long outstanding differences with Denmark by the Treaty of Stettin (p. 83), was therefore a judicious act on the part of King John and his ministers. Equally judicious was the anti-Russian league with Poland, concluded in 1578. The war between Russia and Sweden for the possession of Livonia, resumed in 1571, had, on the whole, been disadvantageous to the Swedes. In January, 1573, the Russians captured Weissenstein; in July, 1575, Pernau and Hapsal; in 1576 Leal and Lode; and, in the beginning of 1577, a countless Moscovite host began the siege of Reval, the last Swedish stronghold in Esthonia. Hitherto Poland's attitude towards the belligerents had been hesitating and ambiguous; but when, in the course of 1576, Stephen Báthory, prince of Transylvania, was elected king of Poland, that great statesman immediately recognised the necessity of the Swedish alliance; and Swedes and Poles, acting in concert against the common

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foe, defeated the Russians at Wenden (October, 1578). While Stephen thereafter pursued his career of conquest into the very heart of Moscovy, the Swedes not only recovered most of the ground they had lost in Esthonia, but made fresh conquests in Carelia, Ingria, and Livonia, which culminated in the capture of Narva (September 6, 1581) and other less important fortresses.

The conclusion of a ten years' truce between Stephen and Ivan the Terrible, through the mediation of the papal legate Antonio Possevino, January 15, 1582, led to a further truce of three years between Sweden and Russia made at Pliusa, August 5, 1582, on a *uti possidetis* basis. Three years later the death of Stephen Báthory led to a still closer union between Sweden and Poland. The numerous competitors for the vacant throne included four Austrian archdukes, the new Russian Tsar Theodore, Andrew Báthory, and Duke Sigismund, King John's eldest son. After an interregnum of eight months Sigismund was elected, August 19, 1587, chiefly through the efforts of the great Polish chancellor, Andrew Zamoyski, and his own mother, Queen Catherine, after promising to maintain a fleet upon the Baltic, to build sundry fortresses in the border provinces against the Tatars, and not to visit Sweden without the consent of the Polish Sejm or Diet. Sixteen days later the Articles of Kalmar, signed by both monarchs, regulated the future relations between the two countries when, in process of time, Sigismund should succeed his father as king of Sweden. The two kingdoms were to be perpetually allied, but each of them was to retain its own laws and customs. Sweden was also to enjoy her religion, subject to such changes as a General Council might make; but neither Pope nor Council was to claim or exercise the right to release Sigismund from his obligations to his Swedish subjects. During Sigismund's absence from Sweden that realm was to be ruled by seven Swedes, six elected by the king and one by Duke Charles. No new tax was to be levied in Sweden during the king's absence; and Sweden was not to be administered from Poland.

Any necessary alterations in these articles were only to be made with the common consent of the king, Duke Charles, the Riksråd, and the gentry of Sweden.

A week after subscribing these articles young Sigismund departed to take possession of the Polish throne. He was expressly commanded by his father to return to Sweden if the Polish deputation, awaiting him at Dantzic, should insist on the cession of Esthonia to Poland as a condition precedent to the act of homage. The Poles proved even more difficult to satisfy than had been anticipated ; but finally a compromise was come to whereby the territorial settlement was postponed till the death of John III ; and Sigismund was duly crowned at Cracow on December 27, 1587.

The earnest endeavour of the Swedish statesmen to bind the hands of their future king was due to their fear of the rising flood of the Catholic reaction, which had begun to set in throughout Europe, and was soon to beat against the shores of distant Sweden. Till the beginning of 1560 Protestantism had everywhere been a conquering power. In Germany, with two exceptions, the leading secular princes professed allegiance to the Evangelical Confession. Of the six archbishops, two, of the twenty bishops, twelve, were Protestants. Calvinism had invaded and established itself in France ; England was more Protestant than Catholic ; in Scandinavia the new doctrines everywhere prevailed. Poland was vacillating, Bohemia schismatical, Austria indifferent. The ultimate universal victory of Protestantism appeared imminent and inevitable. But now a portent revealed itself. The ancient Church, suddenly recovering herself, displayed a vigour and a power of cohesion as unexpected as it was imposing. Shaken to her very base, far more by internal corruptions than by external assaults, she sagaciously recognised the necessity of self-correction, and emerged from the Council of Trent a new and living force inspired by an invincible belief in her divine proselytising mission. Everywhere she found Protestantism, after a brief existence of

barely half a century, already in the throes of dissolution. In England Episcopalians and Presbyterians, in Holland Arminians and Gomarists, in Germany Lutherans and Calvinists, were flying at each others' throats. And, before these fiercely contending parties were well aware of it, more than half the ground wrested by them from their ancient enemy had been recovered; and France, Austria, and Poland, with southern and central Germany, returned to their allegiance to the Holy See.

The northern lands were more difficult to recover, not so much from any racial peculiarity as from geographical aloofness and purely political circumstances. Under Eric XIV the Reformation in Sweden had proceeded on much the same lines as during the reign of his father, quietly, unobtrusively, retaining all the old Catholic customs not flagrantly contrary to the Scriptures. Naturally, after 1544, when the Council of Trent had formally declared the Bible and tradition to be equally authoritative sources of all Christian doctrine, the contrast between the old and the new teaching became more generally obvious; and in many countries a middle party arose which aimed at a compromise between extremes by going back to the Church of the Fathers. One of the foremost spokesmen of this movement was the distinguished Dutch theologian, George Cassander, whose views largely influenced King John III. John was by far the most learned of the Vasas. He had a taste for philosophical speculation, had made a special study of patristic literature, and was therefore entitled to have an opinion of his own in theological matters. His beloved consort, too, was a Catholic, a circumstance which predisposed him to judge equitably between the two Confessions. As soon as he had mounted the throne he took measures to bring the Swedish Church back to "the primitive Apostolic Church and the Catholic faith," and, in 1574, persuaded a synod assembled at Stockholm to adopt certain articles framed by himself on what we should call a High Church basis. Moreover, on the death of Laurentius Petri in 1573, he passed over the violent

Protestant, Martinus Olai, bishop of Linköping, and bestowed the primacy on another Laurentius Petri, an ecclesiastic of learning and moderation. In February, 1575, a new Church ordinance, drawn up by the king and his secretary, Petrus Fecht, was presented to another synod held at Stockholm, and accepted thereat, but very unwillingly. This ordinance was a further approximation to the ancient patristic Church, although formally protesting against auricular confession and communion in one kind. In 1576 a new liturgy or prayer-book was issued by the king, on the model of the Roman missal but with considerable modifications. To a modern high Anglican it would seem an innocent manual enough; but the extreme Protestants in Sweden, headed by Duke Charles, who, in matters of religion, was somewhat fanatical, at once took the alarm. The duke refused to allow the new prayer-book to be used in his duchy; and in Stockholm and Upsala some of the clergy and professors openly preached against it. That much of this opposition was purely factitious is plain from the readiness with which the Riksdag, assembled at Stockholm early in 1577, adopted the new liturgy, only the extreme Protestant section of the clergy insisting that, if adopted at all, it should be interpreted in a natural and obvious sense.

The adoption of the ordinance of 1575 and the liturgy of 1576 greatly encouraged the Catholic party in Europe. They regarded these measures as steps in the right direction; and the celebrated Polish prelate, Cardinal Hosius, who was in constant communication with the zealous and devout Queen Catherine, wrote a letter of congratulation to the king. A clever Norwegian Jesuit, Laurentius Nicolai, popularly known as Klosterbasse, was then despatched to Stockholm, and soon gained such an influence over John by his spirited defence of the new liturgy, that the king was at last persuaded to send an embassy to Rome, to open negotiations for the reunion of the Swedish Church with the Holy See. The Curia now entertained the highest hopes of reestablishing the dominion of Rome in

Scandinavia; and, in order to remove the last scruples of King John, the Pope sent one of his ablest diplomatists, the Jesuit Antonio Possevino, to Stockholm. He arrived in December, 1577, and, after six months of almost incessant argument with the royal disputant, prevailed upon John to make his confession to him, receive absolution, and communicate according to the Roman Catholic rite.

This is what has overhastily been called King John's conversion to Catholicism: in reality it was only a first step in that direction. John consented to embrace Catholicism only under certain conditions; and those conditions were never fulfilled. He had insisted throughout that there could be no reunion of the Swedish Church with Rome, unless Rome conceded communion in both kinds, a married clergy, the use of the vernacular in the celebration of mass, and the disuse of holy water, invocations of the saints, and prayers for the dead. These conditions were duly forwarded to Rome by Possevino; and, in October, 1578, the Pope's answer was received, rejecting them altogether. John was the more displeased at the collapse of his ecclesiastical policy as his negotiations with Rome had imperilled the popularity of his new liturgy, of which he was pedantically proud. Yet his relations with the Holy See were not broken off; and Possevino, during a second visit to Sweden (July, 1579-1580) did what he could for the future of Catholicism in the north by persuading the king to send young Swedes to be educated at the Jesuit seminaries at Braunsberg and Olmütz; by making the monastery of Vadstena, which had survived the Reformation, a propagandist centre; and by circulating broadcast translations of the catechism of the Jesuit Canisius. The only important result, however, of this first assault of the Catholic reaction upon Sweden was the formal conversion of the Crown-Prince Sigismund to the Roman faith.

Disappointed in his hopes of a reunion with Rome, John redoubled his efforts to impose the new liturgy on the Swedish nation. Tithes were forbidden to be paid to those priests who

refused to use it; and the few prelates who wrote and preached against it were deposed or imprisoned. The malcontents sought a refuge with Duke Charles in Södermanland, where he enjoyed almost absolute sovereignty; and from henceforth he became the centre of the opposition to the new liturgy, and indeed to everything distantly resembling crypto-Catholicism. But the duke and his Protestant friends were a mere minority. The Stockholm Riksdag of 1582 decreed that the new liturgy was to be used by all congregations in the realm without exception; while the temporal Estates steadily set their faces against the political usurpations of Duke Charles, and, in the most emphatic terms, subordinated his jurisdiction to the paramount authority of the Crown. The relations between the king and the duke grew still more strained when Charles ostentatiously absented himself from the wedding of his brother with Gunilla Bjelke in February, 1585<sup>1</sup>; and when, in the following year, in direct violation of the statute of 1582, he proceeded to appoint Petrus Jonae, whom the king abhorred, bishop of Strengnäs. For a moment a civil war seemed inevitable; but at the Vadstena Riksdag of 1587 a compromise was arrived at, favourable, on the whole, to the royal claims. Towards the close of his reign King John's suspicions of the Riksråd led to a complete reconciliation with his brother, which was publicly confirmed at the Stockholm Riksdag of 1590. On this occasion the Estates consented to a new law of succession, whereby heirs female were to succeed to the throne on the failure of heirs male; while, in case of a minority, the regency was to be vested in the sovereign's nearest and eldest relations. Two and a half years later (November 17, 1592) John III died. Swedish historians have been as unfair to him as our own Whig historians have been to Charles I. Yet John III's ecclesiastical policy was a well-meant *via media* between two bitterly antagonistic extremes; and he displayed an admirable self-restraint in the teeth of

<sup>1</sup> Queen Catherine had died fourteen months before.



irritating and semi-treasonable opposition. His foreign policy, moreover, was judicious, and by no means unsuccessful.

Immediately after King John's death Duke Charles hastened to Stockholm, and, together with the Råd, provisionally undertook the government till the arrival of King Sigismund from Poland. Both the duke and the Senate agreed in wishing to preserve "the true Christian religion according to the Augsburg Confession," well aware that the Catholic reaction in Europe placed high hopes on the proselytising tendencies of the new Catholic king. Naturally, therefore, their first measure was to summon a synod for the regulation of doctrine and ritual. The synod assembled at Upsala on February 25, 1593, and was attended by no fewer than 340 prelates and priests. Its spirit may be gauged from the choice of its president, Nicolaus Olai, a comparatively young man, who had been imprisoned by the late king for his opposition to the new liturgy. On March 5 the synod agreed upon its confession of faith. Holy Scripture and the three primitive creeds were to be the rules of Christian faith; but the Augsburg Confession was solely to be taken as rightly interpreting the meaning of Scripture. On the following day King John's liturgy was rejected, and the old mass-book, with certain alterations, readopted. On March 14 the three vacant sees were filled by zealous Lutherans; the new primate, Abraham Angermannus, in particular, had been a determined adversary of the Johannine *via media*.

That the new king should regard the summoning of the synod of Upsala without his previous knowledge and consent as an infringement of his prerogative was only natural, especially as its decrees were obviously directed against himself. We cannot therefore be surprised that he refused to give a written confirmation of the Upsala decrees. The Protestant party had intended to prevent Sigismund from crossing to Sweden by keeping back the fleet till he had given them the most satisfactory assurances on the head of religion; but this design

was frustrated by the loyalty of Klas Fleming, the governor of Finland, who, in defiance of Duke Charles's express prohibition, placed his division of the fleet at the service of Sigismund, who arrived at Stockholm on September 30, 1593. He was accompanied by the papal legate, Germanicus de Malaspina, three Jesuits, several Catholic priests, and a large and imposing Polish retinue. A few days after his arrival the duke and the Råd again demanded an assurance that he would respect the religious liberties of his Swedish subjects. Sigismund promised to give such assurance after his coronation; the duke and the Råd insisted upon having it before that ceremony. The unseemly wrangle continued for the next four months; and it was only when the coronation Riksdag, on February 16, 1594, formed a religious union for the maintenance of the pure evangelical religion and the Upsala decrees, and the duke, who now had an army behind him, demanded a satisfactory reply within four-and-twenty hours, that Sigismund finally gave way. On the same day he declared his approval of the demands of the Estates, and recognised Abraham Angermannus as primate.

On February 19 Sigismund was crowned at Upsala; on which occasion he swore to maintain the Augsburg Confession in Sweden, to employ no person in affairs of state who did not belong to the state religion, and faithfully to observe all the ancient laws and liberties of Sweden. Then, after he had been invested with the regalia, Duke Charles, the Råd and the nobility, swore fealty to him in the cathedral, while the lower Estates did homage in the public square. One striking fact indicates what progress religious intolerance had made since the days of King John: the Estates now refused to allow the Catholics liberty of worship; and Sigismund, in default of a church, was obliged to hire a large house in Stockholm where mass, according to the Roman rite, was celebrated by a Swedish Jesuit. No wonder that the bitterness between the two religious parties, in these circumstances, grew

day by day. While in the court chapel at Drottningholm Jesuit preachers thundered against the errors of Luther, the inflammatory sermons of the Protestant pastor, Eric Skippare, stirred up the populace of Stockholm ; and collisions between Poles and Swedes, in the streets of the capital, became more and more frequent. It was with a feeling of relief that the more moderate men saw Sigismund depart for Poland on July 14, 1594, leaving the duke and the Råd to rule Sweden in his absence.

The principal act of the new government was the conclusion of the Russian war, which had been raging intermittently since 1590. The ambassadors of both powers met together at a peace congress at Teusin on the river Narva ; and peace was signed on May 18, 1595. By the Peace of Teusin Russia recognised the right of Sweden to Esthonia and Narva, while Sweden retroceded the province of Kexholm in Finland to Russia.

But now the restless ambition of Duke Charles led to fresh complications. Charles was dissatisfied with the powers conferred on him by his nephew. He had demanded, and been refused, the title of regent ; and, in the course of 1595, contrary to the express command of the king, he persuaded the Råd to summon an extraordinary Riksdag to Söderköping for the purpose, as he wrote to Sigismund, of giving Sweden a more stable and regular government in view of the indefinite absence of the sovereign. The Riksdag met on September 30, 1595 ; and on October 7 the duke asked their opinion as to how the government might best be carried on during Sigismund's residence in Poland. Other questions relating to religious matters were subsequently submitted to the Estates. The Riksdag responded with the decree of October 22, 1595, which was issued jointly by the Råd and the Estates. By this statute the duke was formally declared regent ; but he was to act conjointly with the Råd. The same statute has the mournful distinction of initiating religious persecution in

Sweden. All the Catholic congregations, hitherto tolerated without question, were henceforth to be abolished ; all Catholic priests were to leave the country within six weeks ; Catholic laymen might reside in the realm, but were disqualified from holding official appointments. In December, 1595, the duke proceeded to the great convent of Vadstena, which had done so much for the religious and moral welfare of Sweden, expelled the nuns without warning, and confiscated their property. His agents naturally exceeded their master in brutality. Charles had empowered the archbishop and bishops to conduct a general visitation of the realm ; and the new primate, by way of carrying out the ducal commands, proceeded to use his pastoral staff as if it were a bludgeon. In the course of his "visitation" we hear of men flogged till they bled, of women and children ducked and soused, and of Christian worshippers, whose only fault was a natural love of the familiar and beautiful Catholic ritual, "worried and hustled." Even the duke, merciless as he was to everything Catholic, was obliged to intervene and remind Dr Abraham Angermannus that he was not a public executioner but an archbishop ; while the visitations were provisionally suspended.

As for the men whom King Sigismund had left behind him to rule the provinces, the duke treated them as public enemies, driving them from their offices and expelling them from the realm. The most powerful of them, Klas Fleming, governor of Finland, openly defied him by refusing to recognise the decrees of the Söderköping Riksdag, even before he knew that Sigismund had rejected it, and continuing to hold the Finnish army at the king's disposal. The duke would have made open war upon Fleming ; but the Råd refused to punish the governor of Finland for being more loyal to his sovereign than they were themselves. Technically the duke's procedure was treasonable enough, yet, for all that, it was both statesmanlike and patriotic. The whole position was anomalous. Sigismund was the rightful king of Sweden, yet the political

and religious interests of a Catholic prince who was at the same time king of Poland were absolutely incompatible with the welfare of Sweden. The duke recognised this cardinal fact from the first, and was justified in opposing to the utmost his royal nephew's reactionary policy. As, however, each party was fully convinced of the righteousness of its own cause, it was obvious that only the arbitrament of battle could decide between them.

The struggle began when Sigismund, in the beginning of January, 1597, vested the government in the Råd alone, and forbade the assembling of a Riksdag already summoned by the duke. None the less the Riksdag met at Arboga on February 22, 1597, though, significantly enough, only a single senator, Count Axel Lejonhufvud, appeared there to represent the Råd. With the utmost difficulty (but for the steady support of the peasantry it would have been impossible) Charles succeeded in inducing the Estates to confirm the statutes of the previous Riksdag of Söderköping, conferring the government on him alone. The duke's success was followed by the flight of the senators of the royal party, and the outbreak of a civil war in Finland, which was held for the king by Klas Fleming and his successor Arvid Eriksson Stålarms. At the end of July, 1598, Sigismund himself, with an army of 5000 men, landed at Kalmar. The fortress at once opened its gates to him; the gentry of Småland and Västergötland flocked to his standard; and the capital received him gladly. The Catholic world watched his progress with the most sanguine expectations. Sigismund's success in Sweden was regarded as only the beginning of greater triumphs. Secure of Sweden, he was next to reduce both Denmark and the Hanse towns to the papal obedience; while the port of Elfsborg on the west coast of Sweden was to be ceded to Spain, to serve her as a starting point for a fresh attack upon Protestant England. But it was not to be. After fruitless negotiations with his uncle, Sigismund advanced with his army from Kalmar,

but was defeated by the duke at Stångebro, September 25. Three days afterwards, a compact was made between them at Linköping, whereby Sigismund surrendered the five fugitive senators to the duke, and agreed that the points in dispute between them should be submitted to a Riksdag at Stockholm. Instead, however, of proceeding to Stockholm as arranged, he took ship for Dantzic, after secretly protesting to the two papal proto-notaries who accompanied him that the Linköping agreement had been extorted from him and was therefore invalid.

The duke received the news of the king's flight with the utmost amazement. He was now convinced that the assurances of a prince who thus trifled with his promises were worthless, and that to break with him absolutely was the only safe course to adopt. An assembly of notables held at Jönköping, February 5, 1599, concurred with him, and authorised him, as "hereditary reigning prince," to reduce the fortress of Kalmar and the Grand Duchy of Finland to obedience by force of arms. Kalmar surrendered on May 12; and, on July 24, a Riksdag summoned to Stockholm formally deposed Sigismund as a papist, oath-breaker, and enemy of the realm. His son Wladislaw was, however, to be recognised as king if he were sent to Sweden, within twelve months, to be educated in the national faith. Finland was subdued by the beginning of October, 1599; but Charles's victory was stained by the execution of all the Finnish leaders caught with arms in their hands. Among them was Johan Fleming, the innocent son of the duke's old adversary, Klas Fleming, whose execution can be attributed only to personal vengeance.

On December 14, 1599, Charles summoned the Estates to assemble at Linköping on February 24, 1600. The first act of the Riksdag was to condemn to death the five senators who had been surrendered by Sigismund to Charles at Stångebro; and they were executed in the market-place of Linköping on March 20, the duke remaining inexorable to every petition for mercy. On the previous day a decree of the Riksdag

declared that Sigismund and his posterity had forfeited the Swedish throne, and, passing over Duke John, the second son of John III, a youth of ten, recognised the duke as their sovereign under the title of Charles IX. In case of his death, his son Gustavus Adolphus was to succeed him, with reversion to Duke John in case of the extinction of Gustavus's male line.

Another important measure passed by the Linköping Riksdag, at the suggestion of Charles, was the establishment of a regular army: each district was henceforth to provide and maintain a certain number of infantry and cavalry. This resolution was largely due to the rumours of imminent war which were reaching Sweden from across the Baltic. The power most to be feared was Poland, whose monarch had just been deprived of his Swedish inheritance. The Linköping Riksdag had sent an ultimatum to the Polish Sejm, the only answer to which was the incarceration of the Swedish ambassadors; and Charles prepared at once for the worst. Esthonia, where Sigismund had many partisans, was first secured; Karl Horn was appointed stadtholder; and Charles himself, with 9000 men, arrived at Reval on August 9, 1600. Receiving no satisfactory answer from Sigismund's commander in Livonia, Charles invaded that province; and, by March, 1601, the whole country, except Riga and Kokenhausen, was in his possession. At the end of May a Landtag held at Reval resolved upon union with Sweden. But in the beginning of 1602 the tide turned. The loss of Livonia had roused the Polish Diet from its lethargy; and the Grand Hetman, Jan Chodkiewicz, Poland's greatest general, speedily recovered fortress after fortress, and routed the Swedes at Weissenstein, September 15, 1604. In August, 1605, Charles IX, with an army of 16,000 men, again assumed the offensive and advanced against Riga. Chodkiewicz, who had only 5000 men at his disposal, entrenched himself at Kirkholm, two miles south-east of Riga, and was there attacked by the over-confident Swedish

king, who was utterly defeated by the Grand Hetman's superior tactics, with the loss of no fewer than 8000 men.

The defeat of Kirkholm was the more serious as the pretender, known as the first false Demetrius, who was placed on the Moscovite throne by the influence of Poland, in June, 1605, now openly declared himself the enemy of Sweden. But the Swedish Estates liberally supported their king; and Charles prepared to encounter the twofold enemy with indomitable energy. The opportune assassination of Demetrius, May 17, 1606, relieved the Swedish monarch of much anxiety: while the domestic troubles which agitated Poland, after the death of the chancellor Zamoyski, prevented Sigismund from immediately reaping the fruits of the victory of Kirkholm. In June, 1607, the Swedish general, Mansfeld, recovered the fortress of Weissenstein, and, in the following year, captured the Livonian fortresses of Dunemünde, Kokenhausen, and Fellin; but all these places were recovered by Chodkiewicz in the course of 1608 and 1609. Then Russia once again became the centre of gravity of the Swedo-Polish struggle. In 1606 a second false Demetrius, like his predecessor supported by the Poles, had risen against Tsar Vasily Shuisky, defeated him in 1608 at Bolkov, and encamped at Tushino near Moscow.

A well-grounded fear lest "the whole Russian nation should become the thralls of the Polacks" moved Charles IX in the beginning of 1608 to offer Vasily his assistance; and in November of the same year a convention was concluded between Russia and Sweden at Great Novgorod, confirmed by a formal treaty of alliance at Viborg, February 28, 1609. Nine months later a Polish army advanced against Smolensk. It was Sigismund's intention to profit by the anarchy of Moscow by seizing the Russian crown himself; but Jakob De la Gardie, the Swedish commander, anticipated him by entering Moscow on March 12, 1610. In the beginning of June De la Gardie attempted to relieve Smolensk, which the Poles were still besieging, but was so badly beaten at Klutshino, June 24, 1610, by the Crown



Hetman Zolkiewski, that, to save the remainder of his army, he was forced to abandon Vasily and quit Moscow. The fate of Vasily was now sealed. The victorious Zolkiewski marched against Moscow; Vasily was dethroned; and Sigismund's son Wladislaw was proclaimed Tsar. But a Polish Gosudar was an abomination to the orthodox Moscovites. A few months later a popular rising broke out against Wladislaw; and in the course of 1611 Moscow seemed to be on the verge of dissolution.

In these circumstances Sweden's policy towards Russia was bound to change its character. Hitherto Charles had aimed at supporting the weaker against the stronger Slavonic power; but, now that Moscow seemed about to disappear from among the nations of Europe, Swedish statesmen naturally began to seek some compensation for the expenses of the war before Poland had had time to absorb everything. A beginning was made by the siege and capture of Kexholm in Russian Finland (March 2, 1611); and on July 16 De la Gardie stormed Great Novgorod, and concluded a convention with the magistrates of that wealthy city, whereby Charles IX's son was to be recognised as Tsar of Moscow.

Compared with his foreign policy, the domestic policy of Charles IX was comparatively unimportant. It aimed at confirming and supplementing what had already been done during his regency. Not till March 6, 1604, after Duke John had formally renounced his rights to the crown, did Charles IX begin to style himself king. The first deed in which the title appears is dated March 20, 1604. Two days later the new succession edict appeared, vesting the crown in Charles's male descendants with reversion to Duke John and his heirs male. In the case of the total extinction of the male line, the crown was to be inherited by the eldest unmarried princess. The Estates, at the same time, declared that they would recognise none as king who was of a different religion from themselves. Any heir to the throne who fell away from

"God's pure Word," as represented by the Augsburg Confession, or married a wife professing any false religion, or married without the consent of the Estates, or accepted another kingdom, was thereby to forfeit his rights to the Swedish throne. None belonging to any but the established religion was to hold any office or dignity in Sweden; and every recusant was to be deprived of his estates and banished the realm.

On March 15, 1607, Charles IX was at length crowned king at Upsala. The coronation Riksdag which met on that occasion is memorable for the attempt of the king to reconcile the two great Protestant sects, the Lutherans and the Calvinists. Charles IX was statesman enough to perceive that, if Protestantism were to prevail against the common foe, it must combine its forces. Inclining to Calvinism himself, and with sufficient theological learning skilfully to defend his views, even against such dialecticians as Olaus Martini, the new Lutheran primate, he stoutly opposed the efforts of the Estates to make the ultra-Lutheran decrees of the synod of Upsala the sole rule of faith for the State Church; and, when the Estates, nevertheless, persisted in their intention, he declared, in one of his too frequent outbursts of rage, that he doubted their sincerity in offering him the crown, and would never consent to be their make-shift. Menaced by the threat of abdication, the Estates formally agreed to a compromise. Both the Upsala decrees and the Augsburg Confession were to be cited in the royal coronation oath as the bases of the faith of the Swedish Church; but the concession was robbed of all its value by the addition of the words: "so far as they are grounded upon God's Word and the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures."

Four and a half years after his coronation Charles IX died at Nyköping (October 30, 1611), in the 61st year of his age. As a ruler he is the link between his great father and his still greater son. He consolidated the work of Gustavus

Vasa, the creation of a great Protestant state: he prepared the way for the erection of the Protestant empire of Gustavus Adolphus. Swedish historians have been excusably indulgent to the father of their greatest ruler. Indisputably Charles was cruel, ungenerous, and vindictive; yet it is impossible not to respect a man who seems, at all hazards, strenuously to have endeavoured to do his duty, as he understood it, during that most difficult of periods, a period of political and religious transition, and who, despite his fanaticism, possessed many of the qualities of a wise and courageous statesman. The Swedish nobility, whom he depressed and persecuted, were no doubt justified in regarding him as a tyrant; but the Swedish people frankly trusted and cheerfully obeyed a monarch beneath whose protection they felt happy and secure, and who loved his country, in his own rough way, above all else.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CHRISTIAN IV OF DENMARK, 1588-1648.

THE death of Frederick II on April 4, 1588, placed Denmark in an altogether unexpected situation. The succession to the throne was indeed assured, for already, in his father's lifetime, Prince Christian had been elected king; but he had not yet completed his eleventh year, and no provision had been made for a regency. Under these circumstances the Rigsraad assumed the government in Christian's name; and on April 15 a circular letter was issued placing the executive authority in the hands of the chancellor, Niels Kaas, the lord high admiral, Peder Munk, and the two senior senators.

The foreign policy of the regents was cautiously expectant. Neutrality at all hazards was its watchword. Its fear of the Spanish Armada, which had induced it to post small observation squadrons off the Norwegian and Danish coasts, passed away with the destruction of the great fleet in 1588; and evasive answers were invariably returned to the suggestions of James VI and Henry IV that Denmark should accede to the Evangelical Union and close the Sound against the Dutch. Especially anxious was the Danish government to avoid irritating Sweden. But great changes were now at hand. On August 17, 1596, the young king, now in his nineteenth year, signed his *Haandfæstning*, or charter, in the presence of the Raad, and thus came into his full rights as king of Denmark. Three years previously, at the Landtag of Flensborg, September 1, 1593, the Estates of

Holstein and Sleswick had acknowledged him as their sovereign duke.

The realm which Christian IV was to govern had undergone great changes within the last generation. To all appearance the Danish state was now more powerful than it had ever been before. The detachment of Sweden had been more than compensated for by the absorption of Norway; and the vast extent of territory, the large increase of population, which Norway brought to the whole monarchy, enabled it for another generation to retain the rank of a great power. Towards the south the boundaries of the Danish state remained unchanged. Levensaa and the Eyder still separated Denmark from the Holy Roman Empire. Sleswick was recognised as a Danish fief in contradistinction to Holstein, which owed vassalage to the Emperor. The "kingdom" stretched as far as Kolding and Skodborg, where the "duchy" began; and this duchy, since its amalgamation with Holstein by means of a common Landtag, and especially since the union of the dual duchy with the kingdom on almost equal terms in 1533, was, in some respects, a semi-independent state. The complicated relations between the kingdom and the duchies were to have far-reaching consequences, and become the source of great danger to the unity of the state in the future.

Denmark moreover, like Europe in general, was politically on the threshold of a transitional period. During the whole course of the sixteenth century the monarchical form of government was in every country, with the single exception of Poland, rising on the ruins of feudalism. The great powers of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were to be the strong, highly centralised, hereditary monarchies, like France, Spain, and Sweden. There seemed to be no reason why Denmark also should not become a powerful state under the guidance of a powerful monarchy, especially as the sister state of Sweden was developing into a great power under apparently identical conditions. Gustavus Vasa, when he reconstituted the realm,

was obstructed by a feudal system of the same sort as the Danish; the changes he effected were very similar to those effected by Christian III; and the royal authority in Sweden was limited and hampered, just as it was in Denmark, by an aristocratic senate. Yet, while Sweden was surely ripening into the dominating power of northern Europe, Denmark had as surely entered upon a period of uninterrupted and apparently incurable declension. What was the cause of this anomaly? Something of course must be allowed for the superior and altogether extraordinary genius of the great sovereigns of the house of Vasa; yet the causes of the collapse of Denmark lay far deeper than this. They may roughly be summed up under two heads: the weakness of an elective monarchy, and the absence of that public spirit which is based on the intimate alliance of ruler and ruled. Whilst Gustavus Vasa had leaned upon the Swedish peasantry, in other words upon the bulk of the Swedish nation, which was, and continued to be, an integral part of the Swedish body-politic, Christian III on his accession had crushed the middle and lower classes in Denmark and reduced them to political insignificance. Yet it was not the king who benefited by this blunder. The Danish monarchy continued to be elective; and an elective monarchy at that stage of the political development of Europe was a mischievous anomaly. It signified in the first place that the Crown was not the highest power in the state, but was subject to the aristocratic Rigsraad. The Rigsraad was the permanent owner of the realm and the crown-lands; the king was only their temporary administrator. If the king died before the election of his successor, the Raad stepped into the king's place; and, even while he was alive, it decided all disputes between him and his subjects. Moreover an elective monarchy implied that at every fresh succession the king was liable to be bound by a new charter. The election itself might, and did, become a mere formality; but the condition-precedent of election, the acceptance of the charter, invariably limiting the royal authority, remained a reality.

Again, the king was the ruler of the realm, but over a very large part of it he had but a slight control. The crown-lands and the towns were under his immediate jurisdiction, and the crown-lands had grown considerably in value since the Reformation; but by the side of the crown-lands lay the estates of the nobility, which already comprised about one-half of the superficial area of Denmark, and were in many respects independent of the central government both as regards taxation and administration. In a word, the monarchy had to share its dominion with the nobility; and the Danish nobility in the sixteenth century was one of the most exclusive and self-seeking aristocracies in Europe. In the Middle Ages the kingdom had been divided into provinces; but now other and far deeper lines of demarcation, parallel lines, the lines of caste distinction, were superseding the old local jealousies. Such a development brought along with it serious political and social perils. And, still worse, the Danish nobility, unlike the Swedish, which, under the genial stimulus of Gustavus Adolphus, became the prolific nursery of a whole series of statesmen and generals; unlike even the Polish nobility, which, under the salutary discipline of disaster, was still capable of producing heroes and regenerators like Koniecpolski and Stephen Czarniecki—the Danish nobility, I say, was already far advanced in decadence. Hermetically sealing itself against any intrusion from below, it deteriorated by close and constant intermarriage; and it was already, both morally and intellectually, below the level of the rest of the nation. It was a bad sign, for instance, that Tycho Brahe, the one aristocrat of genius in Denmark, should be looked down upon by his peers because he had so far freed himself from the privileges of caste as to marry a commoner. Yet this aristocracy, whose claim to consideration was based not upon its own achievements but upon the length of its pedigrees, insisted upon an amplification of its privileges which endangered the economical and political interests of the state and the nation. The time was close at hand when a Danish

magnate was to demonstrate to the world that he preferred the utter ruin of his country to any abatement of his own personal dignity.

All below the king and the nobility were generally classified together as "subjects." Of these lower orders the clergy stood first in the social scale. As a spiritual estate, indeed, it had ceased to exist at the Reformation. Since then, too, it had become quite detached from the nobility, which ostentatiously despised the teaching professions. The clergy recruited itself, therefore, from the class next below it, and looked more and more to the Crown for help and protection as it drew apart from the gentry, who, moreover, as dispensers of patronage, lost no opportunity of appropriating church-lands and cutting down tithes.

The burgesses had not yet recovered from the disasters of "Grevens Fejde"; but, while the towns had become more dependent on the central power, they had at the same time been released from their former vexatious subjection to the local magnates. Within the estate of burgesses itself, too, a levelling process had begun. The old municipal patriciate, which used to form the connecting link between the *bourgeoisie* and the nobility, had disappeared; and a feeling of common civic fellowship had taken its place. All this tended to enlarge the political views of the burgesses as a separate estate, and was not without its influence on the future. Yet, after all, the prospects of the burgesses depended mainly on economical conditions; and in this respect there was a decided improvement, due to the increasing importance of money and commerce all over Europe, especially as the steady decline of the Hanse towns immediately benefited the trade of Denmark-Norway. There can indeed be no doubt that the Danish and Norwegian merchants at the end of the sixteenth century flourished exceedingly, despite the intrusion and competition of the Dutch and the dangers to neutral shipping arising from the frequent wars between England, Spain, and the Netherlands.



At the bottom of the social ladder lay the peasant estate, whose condition had decidedly deteriorated. Only in one respect had it been benefited by the peculiar conditions of the sixteenth century: the rise in the price of corn, without any corresponding rise in the land-tax, must have largely increased its material prosperity. Yet the number of peasant proprietors had diminished, while the obligations of the peasantry generally had increased; and, still worse, their obligations were vexatiously indefinite, varying from year to year and even from month to month. They weighed especially heavily on the so-called *Ugedagsmand*, who were forced to work two or three days a week on the demesne lands. This increase of villenage, tending as it did to reduce householders to the level of menials, morally depressed the peasantry, and widened still further the breach between the yeomanry and the gentry. Politically its consequences were disastrous. While in Sweden the free and energetic peasant was a salutary power in the state, which he served with both sword and plough, the Danish peasant was sinking to the level of a bondsman.

Such then was the condition of things in Denmark when Christian IV ascended the throne. Where so much was necessarily uncertain and fluctuating, there was room for an almost infinite variety of development. Much depended on the character and personality of the young prince who had now taken into his hands the reins of government, and for half a century was to guide the destinies of the nation.

Christian IV, on his accession, was nineteen and a half years old. He had developed rapidly. A year before he had seemed a mere child; now he was a man of stately and commanding appearance. He had grown up agile and athletic, always extraordinarily energetic and tenacious. His writing and his sketches testify to a sure hand and a sense of form. Everything decorative and ornamental attracted him. He was a good linguist, speaking, besides his native tongue, German, Latin, French and Italian. Naturally cheerful and hospitable,

he delighted and shone brilliantly in lively society ; but he was also passionate and irritable, with the strong sensual inclinations of a plethoric and life-loving temperament. Yet he was not without the elements of many noble virtues. He possessed unconquerable courage, a vivid sense of duty, an indefatigable love of every sort of work, and all the inquisitive zeal, all the inventive energy, of a born reformer. Want of self-control ruined all these fine qualities. He was of the stuff of which great princes are made, yet he never attained to greatness. His own pleasure, whether it took the form of love or ambition, was always his first consideration. In the heyday of his youth his exuberant high spirits and passion for adventure enabled him to surmount every obstacle with *elan*. But, in the decline of life, the bitter fruits of his lack of stability became miserably obvious ; and he sank into the grave a weary and broken-hearted old man.

Christian's marriage had been decided upon during his minority. The bride was Anne Catherine, a daughter of Joachim Frederick, margrave of Brandenburg ; and the wedding was celebrated at Haderslevhus on November 27, 1597. The queen died fourteen years later, after bearing Christian six children. The king was speedily and frequently unfaithful to her, but four years after her death he privately wedded a handsome young gentlewoman, Christina Munk, by whom he had no fewer than twelve children. This connexion was disastrous indeed to Denmark.

The early years of the young king were largely devoted to pleasure ; and his court was one of the most joyous and magnificent in Europe. Yet his superabundant energy also found time for work of the most various and comprehensive description. To begin with, a whole series of domestic reforms was originated. The harbours of Copenhagen, Elsinore, and other towns were enlarged ; a postal system for the whole of Denmark was established in 1624 ; many decaying towns were abolished and many new ones founded under more promising conditions,

including Christiania, which grew up in August, 1624, on the ruins of the ancient city of Oslo. Some of these places were to serve as staples and fortresses at the same time, like Glückstadt, built among the marshes of the Elbe to rival Hamburg and defend Holstein. Various attempts were also made to improve trade and industry by abolishing the still remaining privileges of the Hanseatic towns, by promoting a wholesale immigration of skilful and well-to-do Dutch traders and handicraftsmen into Denmark under most favourable conditions, by opening up the rich fisheries of the Arctic seas, and by establishing joint-stock chartered companies, such as the Danish East India Company with its headquarters at Tranquebar, founded in 1616; the Danish Ceylon Company of 1618, which was to expel the Portuguese from the island; the Icelandic Company of 1619, and the West India Company of 1625; yet most of them ended in failure, due mainly to want of foresight, insufficient capital, and the disasters befalling the Dano-Dutch shipping. Copenhagen especially benefited by Christian IV's commercial policy. He enlarged and embellished it, and provided it with new harbours and fortifications; in short, did his best to make it the worthy capital of a great empire.

On the national defences Christian IV also bestowed much care. Ancient fortresses were repaired and enlarged; new ones were constructed under the direction of Dutch engineers. In the fleet he was still more interested. Some of the new war-ships were built after his own designs; and he had many foreign ship-builders in his employment. Whereas in 1596 the Danish navy had consisted of but twenty-two vessels, in 1610 the number had risen to sixty. The formation of a national army was attended with greater difficulties, inasmuch as both the military capacity and the willingness of the people to contribute towards the maintenance of armaments had sensibly declined since the Middle Ages. This was due to the superior attraction of peaceful pursuits and the progressive costliness of modern warfare. War had everywhere become a technical pursuit;

and the bulk of the army consisted of mercenaries led by professional officers. Christian also was obliged to depend upon hired troops, supported by native levies recruited for the most part from the peasantry on the crown domains, the gentry in this, as in many other respects, exhibiting a disgraceful backwardness.

But it was in the foreign policy of the government that the royal influence was most perceptible. Unlike Sweden, Denmark had remained outside the great religious-political movements which were the outcome of the Catholic reaction; and the peculiarity of her position made her rather hostile than friendly to the other Protestant states. The possession of the Sound enabled her to close the Baltic against the western powers; the possession of Norway carried along with it the control of the rich fisheries, which were Danish monopolies and therefore a source of irritation to England and Holland. Denmark, moreover, was above all things a Scandinavian power; and her interests and her ambition were confined to Scandinavia. While the territorial expansion of Sweden in the near future was a matter of necessity, Denmark had not only attained but exceeded her national limits. Aggrandisement southwards, at the expense of the vast German Empire, was becoming every year more difficult; and in every other direction she had nothing more to gain. Nay, more, Denmark's possession of the Scanian provinces deprived Sweden of her proper geographical frontiers.

Clearly it was Denmark's wisest policy to remain closely allied with Sweden, especially as Sweden's political interests were almost identical with her own. The wisest statesmen of both countries so strongly recognised the necessity of such an alliance that at the Peace Congress of Stettin (1570) an arrangement had been made whereby the two Senates were to meet periodically to compose any differences which might arise between them. But neither Charles IX nor Christian IV was disposed to listen to pacific counsels. Both kings were

ambitious and sensitive; and there were many causes of disagreement between them, chief among which were Sweden's endeavours to secure possession of Lapmark and other districts of northern Norway, and so gain access to the Arctic fisheries. Charles IX's pretensions increased continually. On his coronation he took the title of "King of the Lapps of Nordland"; and the privileges conceded by him to the citizens (mostly Dutch colonists) of the newly founded city of Gothenburg included the right to trade and fish in the disputed districts. But Christian IV also was by no means disposed to be accommodating; and the desire of revenge was bound up with hope of conquest and the lust of glory. Only very reluctantly did the Danish Raad yield to his urgency. In January, 1611, he overbore their opposition by declaring that, if they would not aid him against Sweden, he would wage war on his own account as duke of Sleswick and Holstein. This decided the matter; and on April 4 Christian signed his formal declaration of war.

Christian's plan of campaign was to attack Kalmar, the chief eastern fortress of Sweden, and occupy the southern province of Småland as a first step towards the conquest of the whole of Sweden. He relied as much upon the discontent of the Swedes as upon the valour of his army. The fleet was to co-operate by blockading the Swedish coast and keeping his own communications open. On May 6 he crossed the border with 6000 men, and two days later stood before Kalmar. On May 27 the town was taken and plundered; but the fortress stubbornly held out. On June 11 Charles IX, with a vastly superior force of 12,000 men, hastened to Kalmar. A fortnight later Charles's son, Gustavus Adolphus, then a youth of sixteen, achieved his first feat of arms by capturing and destroying the Scanian fortress of Kristianopel; and on July 7 the Swedish fleet, under Hans Bjelkenstjerna, reprovisioned the fortress. Christian's German generals began to despair; but Christian himself refused to budge, and success rewarded his doggedness.

On July 17 Charles IX attempted to crush him by force of

numbers; and a combined attack was made upon the Danish camp from the Swedish camp and the fortress. The battle raged furiously all day. More than once the fate of the Danes hung upon a hair; but the situation was finally saved by a magnificent charge of the Danish nobility with the young king at their head. The Swedes were finally routed; and the glory of the day belonged indisputably to Christian IV. Four days later the principal Danish fleet arrived. The fortress was now still more closely invested; and on August 4 the new commandant of Kalmar, Krister Some, surrendered it to Christian IV for an estate in Holstein and 1000 dollars. The fall of Kalmar was followed by the voluntary surrender of the adjacent isle of Öland. Success made Christian IV imperious and hard. The entire conquest of Sweden now seemed to him only a matter of time. He dated his letters from "Our castle of Kalmar"; and when Charles IX, deeply moved by the loss of the fortress, sent his youthful rival a challenge to single combat, Christian sarcastically advised him to seek the safe seclusion of a warm fireside. On September 11 Christian returned to Sjælland; and the greater part of his army went into winter quarters. But the campaign was not yet over. In the first week of October Gustavus Adolphus recovered Öland. At the end of the same month Charles IX died at Nyköping Castle. Gustavus Adolphus was proclaimed king of Sweden.

Gustavus Adolphus, with two other wars already on his hands, earnestly desired peace with Denmark. From the first his attitude was conciliatory. He omitted from his title the words "King of the Lapps," and offered terms of peace on the basis of the retrocession of Kalmar. But Christian rejected these overtures; and the beginning of the second campaign was also favourable to the Danes.

On May 13, 1612, Elfsborg, the most important southern fortress of Sweden, was captured; and early in June Öland was retaken. But Christian failed to capture the fortress of Jönköping as a first step towards occupying central Sweden, and returned to

Copenhagen in August. By this time the western powers had grown uneasy at the continuance of a war so mischievous to their trade. In the summer of 1611 the States General had sent plenipotentiaries to Denmark and Sweden to mediate a peace, but without result. When the ambassadors reproached Christian for warring against a fellow-Protestant, he lightly retorted, "non agitur de religione sed de regione." Where the States General failed, James I of England succeeded; but not before the combatants had been convinced of the uselessness of prolonging the struggle. Finally, through the efforts of Robert Anstruther, the plenipotentiaries of both powers met at Knäred in Halland; and there, on January 20, 1613, peace was signed. In all essential points Sweden gave way. She renounced her claims to the isle of Ösel and to Lapmark, conceded to the king of Denmark the right of placing the three crowns in his escutcheon, and engaged to pay one million rix-dollars in six equal instalments, hypothecating in the meantime the fortress of Elfsborg and the towns of Gothenburg, Old and New Lödöse. All other conquests on both sides were to be restored; and Sweden's immunity from the Sound tolls was especially recognised for the first time. Thus Denmark, once more and for the last time, had vindicated her right to be regarded as the greatest Scandinavian power. If Christian IV had not succeeded in subduing Sweden, he had certainly humbled her. The relatively enormous war-indemnity in particular was a most grievous burden. By the time the last instalment of 250,000 rix-dollars had been paid (and Christian IV would accept nothing but ready money), all the Swedish royal silver plate had disappeared in the mint, and the whole country was swept clean of cash.

Yet Denmark derived no essential benefit from "the Kalmar War," which left behind it an intense feeling of hostility between the two kindred people of Scandinavia. Before the Kalmar War there had still been the possibility of a peaceful union; and all classes of both kingdoms had viewed the

outbreak of hostilities with apprehension. But the Elfsborg indemnity filled every Swedish home with bitter hatred of the Danes ; perpetual recurring toll and boundary disputes fed this smouldering animosity ; and when, in 1617, Gustavus Adolphus acquired Ingria, and the same year conquered Pernau in Livonia (cap. VIII), Christian IV perceived that the dominion of the northern seas, which he regarded as the most precious jewel in his crown, was about to pass away from him. Moreover a common distrust of Denmark now began to draw the Netherlands and Sweden together. Oldenbarneveld regarded Sweden as an advantageous counterpoise to Denmark in the Baltic ; and Sweden gladly seized the opportunity of securing the amity and assistance of the Netherlands. In 1614 Gustavus Adolphus joined the Dutch-Lübeck alliance, which was virtually an anti-Danish league.

Thus Denmark became more than ever separated from the other Protestant powers ; and, as Christian IV at first steadily refused to contract any alliance with his co-religionists, the Catholic powers began to have hopes of him. Spain even sent an embassy to Copenhagen in 1617 ; but, though Christian rejected her overtures, he was inclined for a time to listen to proposals for an alliance from Sigismund of Poland, till North Germany offered him a nearer and more convenient field for his ambition. His object was twofold—first to obtain the control of the great German rivers, the Elbe and the Weser, as a means of securing his dominion of the northern seas ; and secondly to acquire the secularised German bishoprics as appanages for his younger sons. Now the acquisition of these very bishoprics was one of the burning questions of the day. The Catholic party hoped to recover them in the near future ; nearly every North German prince of any importance, including the dukes of Holstein, also coveted them ; while Gustavus Adolphus watchfully observed every step of his rival's policy south of the Elbe, and offered both the Hanse towns and the German princes his protection against Denmark. Equally



disquieted were the Netherlands by Christian's attempts to dominate the Elbe and the Weser, for a Danish prince in possession of the see of Bremen would be as great an obstacle to their trade as the Sound tolls.

Meanwhile great events were happening in Germany, which were to be decisive of the future of Europe. In May, 1618, the Bohemian Estates rose against their Habsburg king, Ferdinand; and, in August, 1619, they elected in his stead the Elector Palatine Frederick V. The Thirty Years' War now began. It soon became evident that, in vigour, capacity, and power of cohesion, the Catholics were far superior to the Protestants. Very few of the German Evangelical princes supported the new king of Bohemia; and Frederick himself was not the man to rally a drooping cause. The battle of the White Mountain converted him into an outlawed fugitive; and his domains were confiscated by the Emperor. The war now dwindled down to mere raiding, feebly fed by intermittent Dutch subsidies. Christian IV was profoundly impressed by this upheaval. He was not without sympathy for his nephew, the ex-king of Bohemia, but for once he listened to the advice of his Raad to wait the issue of events. Nevertheless he skilfully profited by the alarm of the German Protestant towns and princes to secure the coadjutorship to the see of Bremen for his son Duke Frederick (September, 1621), a step followed in November by a similar arrangement as to Werden; while Hamburg, by the compact of Steinburg (July, 1621), was induced to acknowledge the Danish overlordship of Holstein.

But the Catholics were also zealous at the work of appropriation. In February, 1623, the Palatinate was bestowed by the Emperor upon Maximilian of Bavaria, in direct violation of the Imperial constitution, thereby giving the Catholics a majority in the Electoral College. Simultaneously the troops of Spain and the League drew nearer to the Lower Saxon Circle; and a Catholic was elected bishop of Osnabrück. With his eye steadily fixed upon the coveted bishoprics,

Christian now felt strongly inclined, for purely political reasons, to champion the cause of the North German Protestants; and in July, 1623, with the help of subsidies tardily granted by the Raad, he began to levy troops on behalf of the Lower Saxon Circle, concentrating his forces at Rensborg, while a so-called defensive alliance was arranged with the princes of that Circle. He still, indeed, professed to be neutral, but his neutrality was rapidly becoming an armed neutrality. Tilly's victory over Christian of Brunswick in July, 1623, the hesitation of the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, and, above all, his critical relations with Sweden during 1623, combined, however, to make him hold his hand for a time.

But now a great change took place in the European situation. James I at last abandoned his fruitless negotiations with Spain and contracted an alliance with France, an alliance cemented by the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Henrietta Maria, the French king's daughter. Almost simultaneously (April, 1624) Cardinal Richelieu entered the French ministry; and from that moment the house of Habsburg had a new and irreconcilable enemy to face. To secure the co-operation of the northern powers, Robert Anstruther was despatched to Denmark and James Spence to Sweden. Spence's vague representations failed to convince the far-seeing statesmanship of Gustavus Adolphus; but Anstruther easily persuaded Christian IV. What weighed most with Christian was the fear lest Gustavus Adolphus should supplant him as the leader of the German Protestants. The Rigsraad earnestly dissuaded him from departing from his neutrality before he was certain of money and active assistance from his allies; and at first Christian listened to his counsellors. But finally impatience, ambition, an over-sanguine confidence, and, above all, jealousy of Sweden, induced him recklessly to plunge into a war against the combined forces of the Emperor and the League, without any adequate guarantees of co-operation from abroad. His immediate allies, the North German princes and towns, proved more

than usually unreliable and parsimonious. At a congress held at Lauenberg under his presidency some measures were indeed taken for the defence of the Lower Saxon Circle (Lauenburg recess, March 25, 1625), while the Lüneburg Kreistag elected him its chief; but the Elector of Brandenburg would give no promise of assistance, and the Brunswick Kreistag, which met in May to fix the respective military contingents of the allies, consented to war only by a bare majority, to which Christian himself contributed two votes.

On May 9, 1625, Christian IV quitted Denmark for the front. At Steinburg, in southern Holstein, he mustered his troops, consisting mainly of Germans, for, as he was waging war as duke of Holstein, no regular levies had been made in Denmark. He had at his disposal from fifteen to twenty thousand infantry and four to five thousand cavalry, irrespective of the troops of the Lower Saxon Circle. The king himself was generalissimo; Duke Johan Ernst of Saxe-Weimar commanded the cavalry; and General Johan Philip Fuchs, an old soldier of fortune, "with a keener eye for difficulties than for the means of overcoming them," led the infantry. On June 7 Christian crossed the Elbe and marched to Hameln, occupying all the fortresses along the river. Unexpected difficulties accumulated during his march. The army was undisciplined, and ill-provided with artillery; and the officers could not be paid because the stipulated contributions from the Circles were not forthcoming. Tilly, who had watched Christian's advance from his own quarters in the diocese of Paderborn, himself crossed the Weser at Höxter on July 18; and the Danish division, reconnoitring in the district, retired before him. And now, just when vigorous action was essential to Christian's success, a great misfortune befell him. On July 20, while riding on the ramparts of Hameln, then under repair, his horse stumbled and flung him into a deep hole. He was picked up and carried back to Werden unconscious. A month later he insisted upon resuming the command; but his energy was

considerably impaired for the rest of the campaign. Meanwhile Tilly, advancing rapidly, captured Hameln and other fortresses. Niemburg on the Weser was the first obstacle to his victorious advance; and when Christian, in the middle of September, relieved the place, Tilly retired to the south-eastern part of the Lower Saxon Circle. But the old Walloon was no longer the only enemy. A Bohemian nobleman, Albrecht Eusebius von Waldstein, or Wallenstein, now volunteered to raise another army for the Emperor; and by the autumn of 1625 he had already occupied the dioceses of Magdeburg and Halberstadt.

Christian IV was still in the Lower Saxon Circle with his headquarters at Rotenburg. The clouds had begun to clear. Ernest of Mansfeld and Christian of Brunswick had joined him; and the States General had invited France and the Protestant princes to a congress at the Hague for the purpose of forming a general alliance. The congress proved a failure, as France, Sweden, Brandenburg, and Saxony ignored the invitation; but, on the other hand, a treaty was signed between Denmark, England, and the Netherlands; and the western powers promised considerable subsidies if Christian IV would maintain an army of from thirty-five to thirty-eight thousand men against the Emperor. Christian IV was now quite alive to the difficulties of the situation, and doing his utmost to meet them. Troops were at last levied in Denmark proper; a line of fortification was begun between Lübeck and Hamburg to protect the southern Danish frontier; and the Estates of Brunswick were induced to vote a military contingent. Negotiations had also been opened at Brunswick with Tilly and Wallenstein, but in February, 1626, they were broken off. And now fresh disappointments came thick and fast. The Netherlands sent a few troops instead of money; but England's promises remained unfulfilled. The duke of Holstein, too, refused to co-operate; and George, duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, openly joined the Emperor.

Nevertheless Christian IV resolved to open the campaign

of 1626 by assuming the offensive. John Ernest of Saxe-Weimar was sent westward to open communications with the Netherlands and procure the election of Christian's second son, Frederick, to the vacant bishopric of Osnabrück, in both of which enterprises he succeeded, besides drawing off Tilly from Brunswick to Paderborn. Fuchs and Mansfeld meanwhile marched westward to Silesia, to join hands with Gabriel Bethlen, prince of Transylvania; but this hazardous enterprise was frustrated by Wallenstein's victory over Mansfeld at Rosslau (April 15), whereupon Christian recalled John Ernest from the west to reinforce Fuchs and Mansfeld. Tilly, meanwhile, relieved from the pressure of John Ernest, had driven Christian of Brunswick out of Hesse, and himself advanced against Brunswick. On August 2 he captured Göttingen and turned northward against Northeim; whereupon Christian, having meanwhile recalled Fuchs from the east, resolved to attack Tilly. After relieving Northeim on August 11, he advanced southwards towards Thuringia, with the intention of preventing the junction of Tilly with a division of Wallenstein's army, but failing to do so retired, pursued in his turn, and, on August 27, 1626, was utterly routed by the Imperialist general at Lutter in the difficult mountainous region of the Bärenberg. Tilly's troops thereupon overran the greater part of Werden and Brunswick.

Still more serious were the political consequences of the defeat of Lutter. The weak bands which hitherto had connected the Lower Saxon towns and princes with Christian IV were instantly snapped asunder; of all his allies only the dukes of Mecklenburg remained faithful to him. It is greatly to the honour of Christian IV that, in the midst of these adversities, he displayed no lack of courage and energy. He prevailed upon the Rigsraad to grant additional subsidies, despatched Paul Rosenkrantz to England and France for help, and signed a fresh treaty of alliance with Gabriel Bethlen. Yet these extraordinary efforts had but poor results. Very little money was

received from England and France; and the auxiliary corps, under Colonel Morgan, sent by Charles I, proved altogether inadequate. The ensuing campaign of 1627 was one of unmitigated disaster. An expedition to Silesia and Hungary failed utterly; Christian lost two of his best generals, Ernest of Mansfeld and John Ernest of Saxe-Weimar, in the same year; and a vital blow was struck at his resources when the irresistible tide of war burst at last over Danish territory.

At midnight on July 25 Tilly forced the passage of the Elbe at Bleckede, and by the beginning of August he was in Holstein. A general panic ensued. The king summoned the Rigsraad in haste to Kolding; and that body sanctioned the levying of 12,000 infantry and the arming of the whole male population between the ages of eighteen and fifty-five. But these desperate expedients were all too late. At the end of August Wallenstein, after effecting a junction with Tilly at Büchen in Lauenburg, took the supreme command and invaded Sleswick. The Danish cavalry fled before him, leaving the defence of the isolated fortresses to English, Scotch, and French mercenaries. In a couple of days northern Sleswick was a reeking wilderness. Amidst the general confusion Christian himself lost his head, abandoned Jutland to its fate, and never rested till he had reached the safe seclusion of Dalum Minster, near Odense.

Like the locusts of Apollyon, Wallenstein's mercenaries swooped down upon Jutland, ravaging, burning, and plundering the defenceless country. Denmark itself seemed paralysed. From the first the Raad had been against the war; and its disastrous issue was the Raad's best justification. The king was blamed not only for the military disasters, but for the ravaging of Jutland; sharp notes passed between him and his senators; the nobility showed ominous signs of disloyalty; and the distribution of the subsidies, grudgingly granted to him in May, 1628, was administered by commissioners independent of the Crown. Abroad the outlook was not encouraging. Tilly, in the course of the autumn and winter,

nad conquered all that remained to be conquered in the Lower Saxon Circle; and the war now proceeding between England and France deprived Denmark of her last hope of assistance from the West. No wonder that the house of Habsburg now began to dream of a universal empire. At Vienna and Madrid the most extravagant projects were entertained. All the Protestant sees were to be Catholicised; Sleswick was to become a fief of the Empire; while Jutland was to be sold to Spain. An Imperial fleet was to dominate the Baltic with the double object of menacing Denmark and assisting Poland against Sweden; while the trade of the Dutch was to be transferred to the Hanseatic towns. Wallenstein, to whose fantastic imagination nothing seemed impossible, received from the Emperor, in the course of 1628, the title of "Captain-General of the Oceanic and Baltic Seas," together with the forfeited duchies of Mecklenburg as an appanage. Negotiations were also entered into with the duke of Gottorp for making his port of Frederiksstad a naval station for the Spanish fleet.

But the very magnitude of the Habsburg plans benefited Denmark by alarming the other Protestant powers for their own safety. Christian IV, who had by this time recovered his usual energy and gained some slight advantages at sea, was provided by the Dutch with muniments of war sufficient to enable the fortresses of Krempe and Glückstadt to hold out against Wallenstein; and on January 1, 1628, an alliance was signed with Sweden, whereby Gustavus Adolphus pledged himself to assist Denmark with a fleet in case of need. In February, 1628, Wallenstein, to gain a footing on the Baltic, sent General Hans Georg von Arnim to besiege the Hanseatic city of Stralsund, which had refused to admit an Imperial garrison. Stralsund appealed to Denmark and Sweden for help; and each power despatched an auxiliary corps. Simultaneously Christian led an expedition against Pomerania and captured Usedom and Wolgast, thus compelling Wallenstein to abandon the siege of Stralsund in order to recover these

places; while the intervention of Gustavus Adolphus confronted Wallenstein with fresh difficulties. In these circumstances the Emperor became more inclined to make peace with Denmark; and a congress was accordingly opened at Lübeck in January, 1629. The terms of the Imperial plenipotentiaries presented on March 2 were outrageous. They demanded nothing less than the cession of the duchies, the surrender of Jutland to the Elector of Saxony, the abandonment of the North German bishoprics, the payment of the expenses of the war, and the closing of the Sound against all the enemies of the house of Habsburg. Subsequently, however, secret negotiations were opened by Wallenstein with Christian's delegates; and on May 27 a treaty was ratified whereby Jutland and the duchies were restored to Denmark, Christian IV undertaking in return to renounce the North German dioceses, and to abstain altogether from interference in German affairs.

The Peace of Lübeck was hailed in Denmark with general satisfaction. The four years' war had ended more favourably than anyone had dared to hope; all danger for the future seemed averted; no cession of territory had been made; no war-indemnity demanded. In his relief Christian IV ordered a medal to be struck with the inscription: "Tandem bona causa triumphat!" though it would have been equally difficult to explain what the good cause was or how it had triumphed. Yet the war had seriously injured the country. Even those provinces which had not been occupied by the enemy had suffered severely from the levying of taxes and the quartering of troops; while Jutland was so impoverished that fiscally it was likely to remain unproductive for some time to come. The material damage was accompanied by a still more alarming moral retrogression. In many places downright anarchy prevailed; the laws were no longer respected, the authorities no longer obeyed. Moreover the almost general cowardice, slackness, and imbecility of the gentry during the war had justly provoked against them the anger and the hatred of the burgesses and peasants. Never since



"Grevens Fejde" had the tide of indignation against the privileged classes risen so high and raged so fiercely. So strong was this feeling of outraged patriotism that, in the course of 1629, delegates from the Jutland towns met at Viborg, and again at Ry; and a petition was presented to the king urging him to help the towns and the peasantry to their rights again, and to take measures for promoting the national defence irrespective of the privileges of the nobility.

Unfortunately this truly national movement, which might have been the beginning of better things, had no result; everything points to the melancholy fact that at this crisis Christian IV was a broken man. His energy was temporarily paralysed by accumulated misfortunes. Not only his political hopes, but his domestic happiness had suffered shipwreck. In the course of 1628 he discovered a scandalous intrigue of his wife, Christina Munk, with one of his German officers, the Rhinegrave Otto Ludwig von Salm; and when he put her away the lady revenged herself by giving private political information to the Swedish resident at Elsinore, and endeavoured to cover up her own disgrace by only too successfully conniving at an intrigue between Vibeke Kruse, one of her discharged maids, and the king. In January, 1630, the rupture became final; and Christina and her mother retired to their estates in Jutland. Meanwhile Christian openly acknowledged Vibeke as his mistress; and she bore him a numerous family, upon whom he wasted large sums of money. Vibeke's children were of course the natural enemies of the children of Christina Munk; and the hatred between the two families was not without influence on the future history of Denmark.

Nor was the measure of Christian's wretchedness even yet filled up. In October, 1631, he lost his mother, Queen Sophia, who had always been a financial support as well as an affectionate parent; while in August, 1633, his youngest son, Duke Ulric, by far the most promising of the Danish princes, was assassinated in Silesia. And at this very time Denmark was

visited by one national calamity after another. In September, 1629, Frederick II's splendid castle of Kronborg was destroyed by fire; the next few years were memorable for a series of epidemics; and in October, 1634, a terrible storm devastated the south-west coasts of Jutland. And all this time the country was groaning beneath a hitherto unprecedented load of taxation. Between 1600 and 1614 fourteen separate subsidies, amounting to 1,900,000 rix-dollars, had been levied; and during the years 1629–1643 no fewer than thirty-five subsidies, amounting to 3,900,000 rix-dollars, were imposed in the proportion of two-thirds to Denmark and one-third to Norway. Of this amount 2,500,000 rix-dollars were applied to the maintenance of a standing army. In Denmark proper the peasantry paid about three-fourths, and the clergy and the towns the rest of this relatively enormous impost. Nevertheless, between 1629 and 1643 the monarchy gained both in popularity and influence. During that period Christian obtained the control of the foreign policy of Denmark as well as of the Sound tolls, and, towards the end of it, he hoped to increase his power still further with the assistance of his sons-in-law, who now came prominently forward.

Even after his divorce from Christina Munk, Christian IV dearly loved his seven daughters by her, despite their growing hatred of his children by Vibeke Kruse; and he was at some pains to provide the former with suitable husbands who should share their splendour and increase his own authority. All these young "countesses" had one feature in common, an inordinate idea of their superior dignity as the king's daughters, and a determination to enjoy the privileges attached to that dignity to the very uttermost at their country's expense. Of their husbands only two deserve especial mention, Korfits Ulfeld and Hannibal Sehested. Ulfeld, the son of the respected chancellor, Jacob Ulfeld, was born in 1606; Hannibal Sehested was three years younger. Both of them received abroad the best education that the age could offer them; both of them entered the royal

service on their return home ; and to each of them a daughter of the king, while still a child, was solemnly betrothed, Leonora Christina to Ulfeld and Christiana to Sehested. Ulfeld's age gave him the advantage of his brother-in-law. His marriage took place in 1636, Sehested's six years later, whereupon both took their seats in the Rigsraad. Sehested was entrusted with missions abroad. His lucid intellect, brilliant social gifts, and consummate tact made him an ideal diplomatist ; nor did his cynicism, inveterate sensuality, and all-embracing egotism stand in the way of his advancement. In 1642 he was made stadtholder of Norway, and in that capacity displayed administrative ability of a high order. Ulfeld, the most striking personality at the Danish court, was at first mostly employed at home. In all superficial graces and mental accomplishments he far outshone his compeers. Yet, if his parts were brilliant, his nature was base ; and his ambition, avarice, and absolute lack of honour and conscience were to convert him at no distant day into a traitor and a scoundrel. But now, with a wife by his side who was at once the most beautiful, the most talented, the most courageous, and the most unscrupulous of the king's daughters, he was the natural leader of the royal sons-in-law ; and his appointment in 1643 to the dignity of lord high steward made him at the same time the first minister of the Crown.

Even at the lowest ebb of his fortunes Christian IV had never lost the hope of retrieving them ; and between 1629 and 1643 the European situation presented infinite possibilities to speculative politicians with a taste for adventure. The Thirty Years' War was losing more and more of its original character of a war of religion. Political considerations overbore all other. The growing tension between the two Protestant Scandinavian powers threatened a speedy rupture ; and Catholic France had extended the hand of friendship to Gustavus Adolphus. The whole struggle, in fact, was merging into a trial of strength between the houses of Bourbon and Habsburg. A statesman at Copenhagen, like Griffenfeld for instance, would have made

his opportunities and profited by them. Unfortunately, with all his gifts, Christian IV was no statesman. He was incapable of a consistent policy, and preferred playing with half-a-dozen contradictory projects to steadily adopting any one of them. Thus he would neither conciliate Sweden, henceforth his most dangerous neighbour, nor guard himself against her by a definite system of counter-alliances. In a word, his whole diplomatic system was pettifogging and tortuous. Despite the Peace of Lübeck, he still hoped to recover his influence in North Germany, especially on the Elbe. His attempt, in 1630, to enforce the Compact of Steinburg, whereby Hamburg had acknowledged the sovereignty of Holstein in 1621, led indeed to the humiliation of the Hanse town, but at the same time alienated Christian from all his contingent allies, who resented the imposition of tolls upon the Elbe trade by Denmark. Meanwhile Sweden, by the acquisition of Livonia and the Prussian littoral, was becoming a dangerous rival in the Baltic; and with ever-increasing bitterness Christian watched the steady development of her power. Moreover, despite all his efforts to prevent it, Gustavus Adolphus in 1630 landed in Germany actively to participate in the great European struggle.

To say nothing of its world-wide significance, the intervention marks a turning-point in Scandinavian history. Gustavus Adolphus had practically supplanted Christian IV. The extension of the Swedish dominion along the Baltic threatened the very heart of Denmark. The hegemony of the North was to be fought out on the battlefields of Germany. It was therefore with a secret feeling of relief that Christian, two years later, received the news of his great rival's death at Lützen, though his tears of sympathy, on first hearing the tidings of that tragedy, were perfectly sincere. For the position of Sweden in Germany seemed weaker than before, and the position of Denmark stronger. On the other hand, Axel Oxenstjerna, who now controlled the destinies of Sweden, rightly regarded his country as primarily a

Scandinavian power ; and his policy was therefore more acutely anti-Danish than his great master's had been.

Christian IV now bent all his efforts towards minimising the influence of Sweden in Germany by mediating in favour of the Emperor, and contrived to glean some minor advantages. Thus in 1633 the Emperor conceded the Elbe tolls to him for four years ; and in November, 1634, the Estates of Bremen elected his son, Duke Frederick, archbishop of Bremen. Encouraged by these successes, but still more alarmed by the progress of the Swedes, Christian, at the same time that he offered his mediation, concluded a secret compact with the Emperor against Sweden. In the spring of 1637 a congress, under the mediation of Denmark, met at Hamburg ; and on December 15, 1641, preliminaries were drawn up, subsequently to be submitted to a definitive peace congress which was to assemble at Münster and Osnabrück in March, 1642. Christian's position as the arbiter of the peace of Europe was imposing enough, but so far from bringing him any corresponding political advantages it only embroiled him with Sweden. And yet to hinder the expansion of Sweden's power south of the Baltic was indubitably the correct policy for Denmark. Sweden in those days was an aggressive power ; her leading statesmen were restless and ambitious, and they knew they could always count upon the strong anti-Danish feeling of the Swedish people. The domination of the North was the object they set before them ; and only Denmark barred the way. Well aware of this, Christian IV should have avoided what we now call "a policy of pin-pricks," which irritates without disabling ; but this, unfortunately, was just the sort of policy he pursued by preference.

Still more reprehensible was his neglect of the most ordinary diplomatic precautions. With a war with Sweden on the threshold, it should have been his first duty to provide Denmark with serviceable allies ; and the most obvious of such allies were the United Provinces, whose treaty with Sweden expired in 1629, and whose resentment at the ruinous

tolls levied by the Swedish government in all the ports of Livonia, Prussia, Pomerania, and Mecklenburg was then at its height. Denmark thus possessed an unrivalled opportunity of supplanting Sweden as the ally of the Dutch; and the Rigsraad again and again counselled such an approximation. Unfortunately the king, intent on smaller momentary advantages, not only neglected the far weightier matter of the Dutch alliance, but proceeded to irritate the United Provinces by his diplomatic coquetries with Spain. Sehested was sent to Madrid in August, 1640; and by his raising of the Sound tolls—the income thence derived rising from 230,000 to 600,000 rix-dollars in a couple of years—Christian IV forfeited the amity of the United Provinces at the most critical period of his career. So strong was the Dutch animus against Denmark during 1640 that a rupture seemed imminent; and in September the alliance between Holland and Sweden was renewed for fifteen years, an alliance tacitly directed against Denmark.

In Sweden Christian IV's toll policy was still more bitterly resented. By the Peace of Knäred Swedish subjects had been guaranteed exemption from the Sound tolls; but Christian refused to extend this privilege to the newly acquired Swedish provinces, or to Swedish merchandise carried in Dutch ships. He also refused to allow muniments of war to pass through the Sound at the very time when Sweden's metal industry and the manufacture of arms and powder supplied her with some of her most lucrative exports. All these vexations and grievances had long convinced Swedish statesmen that a war with Denmark was only a question of time; and in the spring of 1643 it seemed to them that the time had come. They were now able for the first time to attack Denmark from the south as well as from the east; the Dutch alliance promised to secure them at sea; and—what was most important—an attack upon Denmark would prevent her from utilising the impending peace negotiations to the prejudice of Sweden, for a belligerent could not mediate.

In May Axel Oxenstjerna laid the matter before the

Riksråd; and it was agreed that war should begin if the Danish Rigsraad, upon due representations being made to them, failed to induce Christian to change his policy. The same day orders were sent to Lennart Torstensson, then in the heart of Moravia, to march to the Baltic coast, cross the Holstein frontier, penetrate as far as possible into Jutland, and provide for a simultaneous invasion of Fünen and Sjælland. A sharp note was then directed to the Danish Raad; but nobody in Denmark regarded it in the light of an ultimatum. By the end of September Torstensson received his instructions. After arranging a truce with the Imperial commander Gallas, he set out on his march northwards. On December 12 he had crossed the border; and within a week all Holstein, except the fortresses of Glückstadt and Krempe, was in his possession. By January 9, 1644, he had penetrated into North Jutland; a Danish force of 5000 men, encamped at Snøghoj, surrendered after a few days' cannonade; and by January 20 the whole peninsula was occupied and the islands threatened. This totally unexpected attack, conducted from first to last with consummate ability and lightning-like rapidity, caused a terrible panic in Denmark. From Jutland, still mindful of the horrors of sixteen years before, there was a general exodus; everyone who could fly, fled. Nor was this all. A fresh danger now appeared on Denmark's political horizon. Frederick III, duke of Holstein-Gottorp, purchased neutrality by surrendering his fortresses to the enemy. The first step in the fatal approximation of Holstein to Sweden had been taken.

Fortunately, in the midst of almost universal helplessness and confusion, there was still one man who knew his duty and had the courage to do it, and that man was Christian IV. In his sixty-sixth year he once more displayed something of the magnificent energy of his triumphant youth. Night and day he laboured to levy armies and equip fleets. The forces at his disposal amounted to about 6000 horse and 20,000 foot; and in the Christmas week of 1643 he set off for Fünen to take

supreme command. Fortunately, too, the Swedish government delayed hostilities in Scania till February, 1644, so that, when Gustavus Horn crossed the eastern border, he found the Danes prepared to meet him; and, though he quickly captured Lund and Helsingborg, the incomparably more important Malmö resisted him. In the eastern provinces, indeed, the war was from first to last of the usual brutal guerilla type, a war of harrying, burning, and plundering; but the islands, the cradle of the monarchy, remained intact. Torstensson was unable to cross over to Fünen; an Imperial commissioner appeared at Copenhagen to negotiate an alliance with Denmark; and the United Provinces, divided between alarm at the triumphs of Sweden and a desire for revenge upon Denmark, long hesitated between peace and war. At length the representations of the Swedish envoy, Ludvig de Geer, prevailed; and in April, 1644, an auxiliary fleet, under Admiral Martin Thijssen, sailed from Holland to assist Torstensson to transport his troops to Fünen. But Christian's fleet was ready for it; and on May 16 the squadrons encountered each other between Sild and Rönö on the west coast of Sleswick. Though superior to the Danish, Thijssen's fleet, after a hard fight, was compelled to retire; and eight days later it was so badly beaten by Admirals Ove Gjedde and Pros Mund that it returned to Holland. On June 1 the Swedish fleet of forty sail, under Klas Fleming, sailed from Stockholm to Kiel to convey Torstensson and his troops to Sjælland. Christian IV, with a somewhat superior fleet, quitted Copenhagen to seek the enemy on June 29. The two fleets encountered each other off Kolberger Heide in the south-east portion of Kiel Bay on July 1, on which occasion Christian IV displayed a heroism which endeared him ever afterwards to the Danish nation, and made his name famous in song and story. As he stood on the quarter-deck of the *Trinity* a cannon close by was exploded by a Swedish bullet, and splinters of wood and metal wounded the king in thirteen places, blinding one eye, damaging his right ear, and flinging him to the deck. But



he was instantly on his feet again, cried with a loud voice that it was well with him, and set everyone an example of duty by remaining on deck till the fight was over. Darkness at last separated the contending fleets; and, though the battle was a drawn one, the Danish fleet showed its superiority by blockading the Swedish ships in Kiel Bay.

In Jutland also things began to look more hopeful. In the middle of July the Imperialists, under Gallas, marched into Holstein. Torstensson's position seemed to be critical. But again the tide turned. On July 30 the Swedish fleet, favoured by the wind, emerged from Kiel Bay; the Danish admiral, Peder Galt, neglected a favourable opportunity of attacking it, and the Swedes escaped to Bornholm. Peder Galt was incontinently tried and shot for his stupidity, but that did not mend matters. On land, too, Christian's hopes were disappointed. Gallas retreated to the south-east; Torstensson at once pursued him; and in the beginning of September Jutland was reoccupied by the Swedes. Meanwhile, owing to the untiring exertions of Ludvig de Geer, another Dutch fleet of twenty-two sail left Holland; and a thrill of dismay passed through Denmark when the fortress of Kronborg, which was supposed to dominate the narrow waters of the Sound, proved powerless to arrest the progress of the Dutch ships, which, on August 9, passed Elsinore unscathed. By the end of September the Dutch and Swedish fleets, together forty sail, had united, and on October 13 this Imperial armament encountered the Danish admiral, with only seventeen ships, between Femern and Laaland, and, after a stubborn fight, annihilated his squadron.

Denmark's military resources were now exhausted; there was no hope of any further assistance from the Emperor; and all negotiations in other directions proved fruitless. In these desperate circumstances Christian IV gladly accepted the proffered mediation of France and the United Provinces, both of them anxious to release the Swedish armies for further service in Germany; and a peace congress was opened on

February 8, 1645, at Brömsebro on Kalmar Sound, near the Dano-Swedish frontier. The negotiations were protracted till August 13, when a peace was signed whereby Sweden acquired definitively the islands of Ösel and Gothland, the provinces of Jemteland and Herjedal, and Halland for thirty years. The freedom from the Sound tolls was also extended to Sweden's Baltic provinces. On the same day, by the Treaty of Kristianopel, very considerable reductions in the Sound and the Norwegian tolls were conceded to the Dutch.

The Peace of Brömsebro was the first of the long series of treaties, extending down to our own days, which mark the progressive shrinkage of Danish territory into an irreducible minimum. Sweden's appropriation of Danish soil had begun; and at the same time Denmark's power of resisting the encroachments of Sweden was correspondingly reduced. The Danish national debt, too, had risen enormously, while the sources of future income and consequent recuperation had diminished or disappeared. The Sound tolls, for instance, in consequence of the treaties of Brömsebro and Kristianopel, had sunk from 400,000 to 140,000 rix-dollars; and the Elbe tolls, by a special agreement with Hamburg, 1645, had been abandoned altogether. The political influence of the Crown, moreover, despite the energy and heroism displayed by Christian IV during the war, had inevitably been weakened, inasmuch as the foreign policy, for which the king was mainly responsible, had suffered total shipwreck. The conduct of foreign affairs therefore now began to glide out of his hands. It was a significant symptom of the decline of the royal authority when Christian, in August, 1645, resigned his exclusive right to fill up vacancies in the Rigsraad; henceforth he was to choose from among eight nominees presented to him by the Raad itself.

The last years of the dejected monarch were still further embittered by sordid differences with his sons-in-law, especially with the most ambitious of them, Korfits Ulfeld. Christian attributed the naval collapse of 1644 to the remissness of Ulfeld;

and the unlucky result of the peace negotiations, during which Ulfeld was the chief Danish negotiator, embittered Christian still further against him. When the Treaty of Brömsebro was signed, there was a violent scene between the king and Ulfeld; yet, when Ulfeld offered his resignation, the king durst not accept it. Personal grievances still further exacerbated what was originally a political quarrel, for, during and after the war, the long simmering ill-will between Christina Munk's children and the children of Vibeke Kruse, whose influence remained unimpaired, flamed up anew, especially when Vibeke's daughter, Elizabeth Sophia, was affianced to Major-General Klaus Ahlefeld. Matters proceeded to such lengths that Christian felt justified in detaining Christina Munk (February, 1646) in her Jutland manor-house, and depriving her of the control of her property. This last step was regarded by the nobility in general as a violation of the charter; and all the king's sons-in-law thereupon combined against him. In December the rupture was patched up; and Ulfeld, acute enough to perceive that an alliance with the Netherlands was the best counterpoise against Sweden, obtained the king's consent to depart, as ambassador extraordinary, to the Hague to bring about more friendly relations between the two countries. A defensive alliance, indeed, owing to divergent opinions in the Netherlands and to Swedish intrigues, he was unable to accomplish; but, after protracted negotiations, he succeeded in obtaining a treaty (February, 1647) regulating the long-pending toll question.

The results of his embassy by no means corresponded to their costliness, and, when he returned to Denmark in July, 1647, he found the king profoundly irritated against him, and his rival, Hannibal Sehested, in almost exclusive possession of the royal confidence. Ulfeld, supported by the Raad and the nobility, who resented the elevation of Vibeke's children, and objected to the whole commercial and fiscal policy of the king, was emboldened openly to resist both his father-in-law and his brother-in-law, and triumphed completely. Broken by age, illness, misfortunes

and excesses, the old king finally gave way on every point. His last dream of aggrandising the royal power had failed utterly. The aristocracy, the Rigsraad, the faction of the sons-in-law had triumphed. Christian IV never recovered from the shock of this last humiliation. On February 21, 1648, at his earnest request, the dying monarch was carried in a litter from Frederiksborg to his beloved Copenhagen, where he expired a week later in his 71st year. Rarely has a life which opened with such brilliant promise ended in such dismal and unmitigated failure. Christian's cardinal defect was to overvalue his own abilities and the resources of his country; and he paid the penalty of his miscalculation to the very last farthing. Yet his manly figure, standing boldly out as it does against a murky background of almost universal egotism and cowardice, looks bright and heroic by the contrast.

## CHAPTER VIII.

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AND AXEL OXENSTJERNA,  
1611-1644.

WHEN Charles IX died at Nyköping on October 30, 1611, he left his country environed with dangers. The Danes held the two chief fortresses of Sweden, and the heart of the land lay open before them; the disruption of Russia had forced upon Sweden a policy of conquest over-seas, with altogether inadequate resources; and victorious Poland, already in possession of Moscow, was preparing to expel the intrusive Swedes from her Baltic provinces. The grievous burden of empire now rested on the shoulders of a youth of seventeen, whose title to the throne, if not disputed, was at least disputable. Yet the dying monarch rightly judged that he was leaving his affairs in better hands than his own. *Ille faciet* were the prophetic words with which, on his death-bed, he indicated to his counsellors his eldest son as his successor.

Gustavus Adolphus was born at Stockholm Castle on December 9, 1594. From the first he was carefully nurtured, to be the future prop of Protestantism, by his austere father. Gustavus was well grounded in the classics, and his linguistic accomplishments were extraordinary. He may be said to have grown up with two mother-tongues, Swedish and German; at twelve he had mastered Latin, Italian, and Dutch, and he learnt subsequently to express himself in Spanish, Russian, and Polish. But his practical father took care that he should grow

up a prince, not a pedant. So early as his ninth year he was introduced to public life; at thirteen he received petitions and conversed officially with the foreign ministers; at fifteen he administered his duchy of Vestmannland and opened the Örebro Riksdag with a speech from the throne; indeed from 1610 he may be regarded as his father's co-regent. In all martial and chivalrous accomplishments he was already an adept; and when, a year later, he succeeded to supreme power, his superior ability was as uncontested as it was incontestable, while a singularly winning exterior and a peculiar charm of manner, the index of a noble heart, predisposed all men in his favour.

For the first six weeks after the death of Charles IX there was an interregnum in Sweden. Some doubt existed as to who was the lawful king. It is true that by the decree of the Norrköping Riksdag, which transferred the right of succession to the line of Duke Charles, Gustavus was the legitimate heir to the throne; yet, by the natural law of descent, setting aside Sigismund and his line, Duke John of Östergötland, the son of John III, was the rightful heir. Charles IX himself had maintained in his last will that the duke's natural right stood higher than any parliamentary decree. The matter was settled by the Nyköping Riksdag of 1611, which assembled on December 10. John himself opened Parliament, and, six days later, publicly surrendered the government to Gustavus Adolphus, at the same time bestowing his benediction on the young king, and exhorting him to govern the realm according to God's Word and the law of Sweden—a picture of kinsmanlike goodwill, as edifying as it was unusual in the Vasa family. On January 6, 1612, Gustavus Adolphus dismissed the Estates, after signing a royal assurance whereby the liberty and property of the subject were effectually secured against royal tyranny in the future, the privileges of the gentry were confirmed, and the political influence of the Råd was increased at the expense both of the Crown and the people. Henceforth the king was

not to declare war, conclude peace, alter old or make new laws, without the knowledge or consent of the Råd and the Riksdag. The Råd, moreover, was also to control the imposition of tolls and taxes and to decide when the Riksdag was to be summoned. It was fortunate that the well-defined prerogatives of an hereditary monarchy and the sturdy independence of the lower Estates effectually counterpoised the authority of the patricians, and saved Sweden from the almost inevitable abuses of an oligarchy from which Denmark was already beginning to suffer.

The first act of the young king was to terminate the fratricidal struggle with Denmark-Norway. He had made plain his pacific dispositions a few days after his succession by omitting from his royal title the words, "King of the Lapps of Nordland," whereby his father had given such offence to the Danes; but it was not till a couple of years later that the struggle was terminated by the Peace of Knäred (January 28, 1613, (p. 155).

Simultaneously another war, also an heritage from Charles IX, had been proceeding in the far distant regions round Lakes Ilmen, Peipus, and Ladoga, with Great Novgorod as its centre. It was not, however, like the Danish war, a national danger, but a political speculation meant to be remunerative and compensatory. We have already seen (p. 141) how Jacob De la Gardie, the Swedish commander in those parts, occupied Great Novgorod in the summer of 1611. Sword in hand, he compelled the citizens of the richest city in Moscovy to accept the suzerainty of Sweden, and acknowledge Duke Charles Philip, Gustavus Adolphus's brother, as their Tsar. Already Swedish statesmen began to imagine a trans-Baltic dominion extending from Lake Ilmen northwards to Archangel, and eastwards to Vologda.

The spontaneous election of Michael Romanov as Tsar of Moscovy by the Russian clergy and people in February, 1613, dissipated this dream of empire. Gustavus himself

ultimately recognised its futility, though at first he was disposed to retain Great Novgorod and unite it with Sweden, as Lithuania had been united to Poland. But even this modified ambition had soon to be abandoned. In vain did the Swedes, in the course of 1612, conquer one Ingrian fortress after another; Pskov, the most important stronghold in those parts, regarded by Sweden, Russia, and Poland alike as the key of Livonia, steadily resisted them; the Russians began to concentrate their forces west of Lake Peipus; and, by the end of 1613, De la Gardie felt insecure in Great Novgorod itself. The conclusion of the Danish war, however, released large bodies of troops for service in the Baltic provinces; and in the summer of 1614 Gustavus himself arrived at the seat of war. At Narva he joined the division which had succeeded on September 10 in recapturing Gdov from the Russians. De la Gardie's position, meanwhile, had been secured by his victories over the Moscovites at Bronitsi and Staraya Russa; but the campaign as a whole proved abortive. On July 8, 1615, Gustavus a second time crossed the seas, and, on the 30th, stood before Pskov; but, though a breach was made in the walls, every effort to take the stubbornly defended fortress failed; and in the middle of October Gustavus was forced to raise the siege and retire to Finland. It was on this occasion that what may be regarded as the first Finnish Landtag was held at Helsingfors (January, 1616).

By this time Swedish statesmen had become convinced of the impossibility of partitioning reunited Moscovy; while Moscovy (perpetually harried in the west by the Polacks, in the south by the Tatars, and in the north by myriads of freebooters, the outcrop of the national misery) recognised the necessity of buying off the invincible Swedes by some cession of territory. The new Tsar had already invited the good offices of England; and a peace congress was opened at the village of Dederina. The negotiations were protracted over eighteen months, and only came to a conclusion when the Swedish



delegates openly threatened an immediate resumption of hostilities. Finally, on February 27, 1617, peace was signed at Stolbova. Moscow ceded to Sweden the provinces of Kexholm and Ingria, including the fortress of Nöteborg on the Neva (the subsequent Schlüsselburg), the key of Finland. Russia furthermore renounced all claims upon Esthonia and Livonia, and paid a war-indemnity of 20,000 rubles. In return for these concessions Sweden surrendered Great Novgorod, and acknowledged Michael Romanov as Tsar of Moscow. The Peace of Stolbova denotes the high-water mark of Sweden's progression eastwards. Gustavus had succeeded in excluding Moscow from the Baltic. "I hope to God," he declared to the Stockholm Riksdag of 1617, when he announced the conclusion of peace, "that the Russians will feel it a bit difficult to skip over *that* little brook." He recognised, indeed, the latent strength of the vast Russian empire, and warned his subjects that, if only the Russians learnt justly to appreciate their own resources, and succeeded in recovering their lost territory, they would become a menace to Europe. But at the same time he undoubtedly underestimated the danger of attempting forcibly to cut Russia off from her natural means of communication with the western world; and he never realised how impossible it was for a nation numbering scarce a million, even when armed with the weapons of a superior civilisation, permanently to gag and bind a neighbouring nation of more than thirty millions. Sweden was far too feeble for such a Herculean task. Her hold upon the Baltic provinces could never be more than a prolonged military occupation: the only wonder is that she resisted for so long the immense and ever-increasing pressure from within, which was bound, sooner or later, to burst asunder the flimsy barriers of her artificial empire and hurl her back upon her native peninsula.

Thus the second of the two wars inherited from his father had been terminated by Gustavus. The long-outstanding

feud with his last and most obstinate adversary, the Polish Republic, still remained. But first his presence was required in Sweden itself.

Although the whole reign of Gustavus Adolphus is a long chain of almost imperceptibly interlinking wars, during which the king was necessarily absent from his country, her welfare was always his chief care ; and the same period which saw the extension of the Swedish empire abroad saw also the peaceful development of the Swedish constitution at home. In this, as in every other matter, Gustavus himself took the initiative. Nominally the Senate remained the dominant power in the State ; but gradually all real authority was transferred to the Crown. Various were the causes of this salutary change. The Swedish nation owed to the monarchy its unity and independence, and consequently regarded its kings with gratitude and a devotion which could find excuses even for the crimes of Eric XIV and the cruelties of Charles IX. What then must have been its enthusiasm for Gustavus, whose character presented that most rare and noble combination of strength and gentleness, and whose alert genius was perpetually opening up new paths of prosperity in every direction ? It was only natural that the Riksråd should speedily lose its ancient character of a grand council representing the semi-feudal landed aristocracy, and become instead a bureaucracy holding the chief offices of state by the appointment and at the will of the king.

This change operated insensibly throughout the reign of Gustavus. During the king's frequent absences abroad, a committee of the Råd, consisting of the great officers of state and the chiefs of the various "Kollegier," or public departments, regularly assembled in the capital, and conducted the administration, subject only to the royal authority and the consent and co-operation of the Riksdag. In the constitution of 1634 we find the whole system in complete working order. The Riksdag also is now changing its character,

and becoming a legally recognised power in the State. This, of itself, marks a momentous turning-point in Swedish history. Whilst in every other European country, except England, the ancient popular system of representation by Estates was about to disappear altogether, in Sweden, under Gustavus Adolphus, it had grown an integral portion of the constitution. The first step in this direction was taken by the Riksdag ordinance of 1617, which converted a turbulent and haphazard mob of "Riksdag men," "huddling together like a flock of sheep or drunken boors," into a dignified national assembly, meeting and deliberating according to rule and order. The king, surrounded by the princes of the blood, the great officers of state and the senators, now addresses from the throne the Estates solemnly convened together in the Rikssal. One of the nobility (first called the Landtmarskalk, or Marshal of the Diet, in the Riksdag ordinance of 1626) is elected by the king as the spokesman of the first Estate, whilst the primate generally acts as the spokesman of the three lower Estates. The king then submits to the consideration of the Estates "the royal propositions," or matters for debate, upon which each Estate proceeds to deliberate in its own separate chamber. The replies of the Estates are duly delivered to the king at another session in congress. Such was henceforth to be the Riksdag's rule of procedure. Differences of opinion between the king and the Estates were adjusted by mutual discussion; but if the Estates differed amongst themselves, each Estate had to defend its opinion before the king, or "his Majesty might accept whichever [opinion] seemeth him best."

Yet the Riksdag was not merely a deliberative assembly. The "Konungaförsäkran," or royal assurance given by every Swedish king on his accession, guaranteed the collaboration of the Estates in the work of legislation, and they were also to be consulted in all questions of foreign policy. The king possessed the initiative; but the Estates had the right of objecting to the measures of the government at the conclusion

of the Riksdag. It is in Gustavus's reign, too, that we first hear of the "Hemliga Utskott," or Secret Committee, for the transaction of extraordinary affairs, which was elected by the Estates themselves, and provided with full credentials. The constitution of the *Riddarhus*, or Upper House, was fixed by the *Riddarhusordning* of 1626, which divided the nobility into three classes, deliberating in common. Most of the eleven Riksdagar held by Gustavus Adolphus were almost exclusively occupied in finding ways and means for supporting the grievous and ever-increasing burdens of the Polish and German wars. Naturally it was very difficult for the Estates to maintain their independence in the face of a government controlled by a monarch of surpassing genius and boundless popularity. Their very affection and admiration for one who was, in the fullest sense of the word, the father of his people, blinded them to every other consideration but the necessity of supporting him in his most ambitious and hazardous enterprises. For to the eternal honour of the Swedish people be it said, that from first to last they showed a magnanimity, a public spirit, a religious and patriotic zeal, which shrank from no sacrifice, however costly. Even the stubborn obstacle of class egotism was swept away by the impetuous current of enthusiasm when the gentry at the second Riksdag of 1627 voluntarily abandoned many of their most cherished privileges for the common good, and, for a time, it was agreed that all classes should be taxed alike.

It was but natural that great men should arise and flourish in the genial and stimulating atmosphere which surrounded Gustavus Adolphus; and it is not the least of that monarch's many great qualities that he always knew where to lay his hand on those best qualified to assist him in his great designs. Conspicuous amongst these illustrious fellow-workers, hardly inferior to the king himself in native genius and nobility, was the grand chancellor, Oxenstjerna.

Axel Oxenstjerna, whose name is so identified with his

country's history during the most critical period of her existence that the history of his life for half a century is, at the same time, the history of Sweden, was born at Fänö in Upland, on June 16, 1583. His family, which could trace its descent back to the beginning of the thirteenth century, had intermarried with both the Danish and Swedish royal houses. After his father's death in 1597 his prudent mother sent him to the German universities. Latin he learnt so thoroughly that he expressed himself as fluently in that language as in his mother-tongue, and far more elegantly. But theology, from the first, was his favourite study; and he devoted himself to it with as much ardour as if he were about to take holy orders. In 1602 he was recalled to Sweden by Charles IX, who, quickly discerning his worth, employed him on several diplomatic missions, raised him to the dignity of Riksråd when he was but twenty-six years old (1609), and appointed him the guardian of his children, and the head of the regency which was to govern during his son's minority. The first act of Gustavus Adolphus was to appoint him Riks-Cancellor, or Imperial chancellor; and from henceforth he became the motive-power of the whole machinery of state, and the indefatigable and indispensable counsellor of his royal friend and master, each supplying to the other the qualities in which he knew himself to be deficient. The impetuous monarch sometimes grew impatient with the judicial prudence of the minister. "If my heat did not put a little life into your coldness, we should all *freeze up!*" exclaimed Gustavus on one occasion. "And if my coldness did not assuage your Majesty's heat," replied the chancellor, "we should all *burn up!*" Whereupon the king laughed, and admitted that indeed he had too little patience and too much temper. Rarely has the world seen an example of such perfect harmony between two great men of equal though widely different genius.

If Axel Oxenstjerna was Gustavus Adolphus's first counsellor, the second was indisputably Johan Skytte, a man of

unusual talent just falling short of genius. He had begun his career as Gustavus's tutor, but, exchanging pedagogy for diplomacy, distinguished himself so greatly that he was ennobled, made a senator, and finally (1629) appointed governor-general of Livonia. His fluent pen, perfect command of Latin, and rhetorical skill, made him invaluable as an ambassador. James I was so impressed by his Ciceronian eloquence on the occasion of his special embassy to England in 1617 that he knighted him on the spot.

The other prominent members of the government were Gabriel Gustafsson Oxenstjerna, the chancellor's brother, and Gabriel Bengtsson Oxenstjerna, his nephew; Klas Fleming, the creator of the Swedish navy; Sten Bjelke, of whom Gustavus said that he knew of none more capable of filling Axel Oxenstjerna's place; and the acute and judicious John Casimir, Count Palatine of Zweibrücken, the brother-in-law of the king. Adler Salvius belongs to a somewhat later day. Finally, several foreigners of distinction were attracted into the service of the newly arising great power, men such as Ludvig Cammerarius, who represented Sweden at the Hague, then the centre of European diplomacy, Hugo Grotius, Van Dyck and Rutgers, Sadler von Salneck, the Englishman Spencer, and many more.

The wars with Russia and Denmark had been almost exclusively Scandinavian wars; the Polish war was of world-wide significance. It was, in the first place, a struggle for the Baltic littoral, upon the possession of which the future prosperity of both states depended; and this struggle was intensified by the knowledge that the Polish Vasas, as represented by Sigismund and his son Wladislaw, denied the right of Gustavus to the Swedish throne, which they claimed by right of primogeniture. Gustavus, moreover, regarded the Polish war as a war of religion. This is plain from his instructions to the plenipotentiaries, whom he sent to the abortive congress of Knäred in the beginning of 1619, to contract, if possible, an

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offensive and defensive alliance with the Danes against "the king of Poland, as a principal and dangerous member of the popish league." The two Scandinavian kings are there represented as the two chief pillars on which the evangelical religion reposes; while their disunion and ill-will is regarded as likely to open a door of entrance in the North to the Pope and his league, and so bring about the destruction of Denmark and Sweden alike. There is much of unconscious exaggeration in this. As a matter of fact, the Polish Republic was no danger whatever to Protestantism. All dissenters in Poland, except the Unitarians, were allowed fuller liberty of worship than they enjoyed elsewhere. King Sigismund's obstinate insistence upon his right to the Swedish crown was, after all, the most serious impediment to the conclusion of a war of which the Polish nation was already growing weary. Apart from Sigismund's Jesuit entourage, no responsible Pole dreamed of aggrandisement in Scandinavia; Gustavus, whose imagination was easily excited by religious ardour, magnified the influence of the Jesuits in Poland, and saw dangers where only difficulties existed.

On the death of Charles IX the existing truce between Poland and Sweden was renewed from year to year, while Sigismund was fighting the Moscovites, and Gustavus Adolphus the Danes. Repeated attempts were made to convert these truces into a permanent peace; and the senates of both nations exchanged frequent notes on the subject. But Gustavus refused to negotiate directly with a prince who would allow him no higher title than that of duke of Södermanland; and the war, after an interval of six years, was resumed. It began on the Swedish side with an unsuccessful descent upon Dünamünde. Three years later, when Poland was involved in a desperate struggle with the Turks on the Danube, and their northern frontier was consequently denuded of troops, Gustavus, after Sigismund had again scornfully rejected liberal offers of peace in which even the title of king

of Sweden was conceded to him, resolved to attack Riga as the first step towards conquering Livonia. In July, 1621, a Swedish fleet of 150 sail, with Gustavus and 14,000 men on board, sailed from Elfsnabb harbour; at Pernau the king was joined by Jakob De la Gardie with 5000 Finnish levies; and on August 13 Riga was invested, and, after a valiant defence, surrendered (September 15) to the Swedish king. On October 3 Mittau, the capital of the friendly duchy of Courland, was occupied; and then the advanced season compelled Gustavus to quarter his troops for the winter in the conquered districts. His brother, Duke Charles Philip, a youth of great promise, died of dysentery at Narva, on January 25, 1622, a week after the king's departure; indeed so great had been the ravages of sickness during the campaign of 1621 that the Swedish army had to be reinforced by no fewer than 10,000 men, and even then it could do but little.

A truce was thereupon concluded, and hostilities were suspended till the summer of 1625; when Gustavus, having reorganised and greatly strengthened his army, sailed first to South Livonia, where he took the fortress of Kokenhausen, invaded Lithuania, and captured the fortress of Birse. Meanwhile his generals, Jakob De la Gardie and Gustavus Horn, had subdued the whole of eastern Livonia up to the river Ewst, including Dorpat; but the Ewst was to mark the limit of the Swedish advance; and Horn, who attempted to take Dünaburg, was badly beaten beneath the walls of that fortress by Gonsiewski. During the winter the Swedish host suffered terribly from want of food, the close surveillance of three small Polish armies, and the incursions of the Cossacks. Early in January, 1626, the king crossed the frozen Dwina, and attacked the nearest Polish camp at Wallhof, scattering the whole army, after slaying a fifth part of it without losing a single man himself, and capturing six hundred waggons of provisions and military stores. This victory, remarkable



besides as Gustavus's first pitched battle, completed the conquest of Livonia.

As, however, it became every year more difficult to support an army in the Dwina district, Gustavus now resolved to transfer the war to the Prussian provinces of Poland with a view to securing the control of the Vistula, as he had already secured the control of the Dwina, hoping that the great Protestant city of Dantzic and the Protestant Elector of Brandenburg, George William, who held East Prussia as a fief from Poland, would assist him in his enterprise against a Catholic state. But Dantzic derived her enormous wealth mainly from her toll-free trade with her nominal suzerain Poland, besides enjoying the most absolute religious and political liberty. She therefore could only lose by an alliance with a military monarchy like Sweden. George William of Brandenburg seemed, at first sight, a much more likely ally. He was Gustavus's brother-in-law; and, to say nothing of their common Protestantism, the political interests of the little aspiring North German state seemed to be identical with those of Sweden. But Sweden, not yet a great power, though in the way to become one, was far away over the sea, while close at hand stood George William's suzerain, King Sigismund, who threatened to deprive his vassal of his fief if he entered into any negotiations with the Swedish usurper. These threats had a decisive influence upon the naturally cautious George William, and made him "the historical type of political instability."

At the end of June, 1626, the Swedish fleet, with 14,000 men on board, anchored in front of the chain of sand-dunes which separates the Frische Haff from the Baltic. In the narrow inlet leading into the Haff lay Pillau, the only Baltic harbour then accessible to ships of war, from whence, with a fleet commanding the principal arm of the Vistula, near Dantzic, tolls could be levied on the whole trade of Prussia. The possession of this important point was indispensable to

the success of Gustavus's enterprise; but unfortunately, lying as it did in East Prussia, it belonged to Brandenburg, a friendly power. Gustavus told the commandant that he did not want a handful of his brother-in-law's land, but he must provisionally hold the little place among the dunes so "to have his back free." There could be no question of resistance; Pillau was at once occupied; tolls were forthwith levied there; and Königsberg, shortly afterwards, was scared into an unconditional neutrality. To all the representations of the Elector Gustavus was absolutely deaf. "Don't talk to me of your treaty with Poland," said he; "in war time all treaties are dumb." July was employed in conquering the bishopric of Ermeland. The surrender of Elbing and Marienburg placed Gustavus in possession of the fertile and easily defensible delta of the Vistula, which he treated as a permanent conquest, making Axel Oxenstjerna its first governor-general. Communications between Dantzic and the sea were cut off by the erection of the first of Gustavus's famous entrenched camps at Dirchau; but the mighty city-republic, relying on its position and its garrison of 7500 men, openly contested Gustavus's dominion of the Vistula. From the end of August, 1626, the city was blockaded, and in the meantime Polish irregulars, under the capable Stanislaus Koniecpolski, began to harass the Swedes.

But the object of the campaign, a convenient basis of operations, was already won; and in October the king departed to Sweden to get reinforcements. He returned in May, 1627, with 7000 men, which raised his forces to 14,000, against which Koniecpolski could oppose only 9000. But the Polish general did wonders with his scanty resources, and defeated and scattered a large band of auxiliaries, whom Gustavus had hired in North Germany, as soon as they had crossed the border. Dantzic, too, defied all the efforts of the Swedes to capture her fortified outposts; and Gustavus, in the course of the year, was twice dangerously wounded, and so disabled that he could never wear armour again.

During the winter of 1627-28, the States General, anxious for commercial reasons for the conclusion of the war, attempted to mediate between the belligerents, but in vain. Sigismund obstinately denied Gustavus the royal title; and Gustavus would not consent to a dishonourable peace. Moreover he had already taken two important steps which pledged him to plunge still further into the general European war. In the beginning of 1628 he had signed a treaty with Denmark for the common defence of the Baltic, and, shortly afterwards, he had sent Oxenstjerna with reinforcements to Stralsund, now hardly pressed by Wallenstein. Gustavus had made extensive preparations for the ensuing campaign. He brought back with him from Sweden reinforcements amounting to 12,000 men, and took the field with 33,000. But once again, though far outnumbered, and ill-supported by his own government, Koniecpolski showed himself a superior strategist. He entrenched himself so impregnably at Mewe that the king did not venture to attack him, but led his army against Dantzic, whose fleet he all but annihilated at Weichselmünde. But now torrential rains made further operations impossible. Only at the beginning of August was Gustavus able to move against Poland proper; and again Koniecpolski frustrated his efforts by entrenching himself impregnably at Gaudenz, and holding the whole Swedish army at bay for six weeks. Finally, on September 10, Gustavus broke up his camp and returned to Prussia; the whole autumn campaign had proved a failure and cost him 5000 men.

During the ensuing campaign of 1629, Gustavus had to contend against the combined forces of Koniecpolski and an auxiliary corps of 10,000 Wallenstein mercenaries under Johan von Arnim. The Polish commander now showed the Swedes what he could do with adequate forces. At Stuhm, on June 29, in a rearguard action, he defeated Gustavus, who lost most of his artillery and narrowly escaped capture. A more vigorous prosecution of the war might now have rid

men, were commanded by generals supposed to be unconquerable because they had never been conquered. When the war was resolved upon, the full effective strength of the Swedish army was but 50,000 men, though ultimately it was brought up to 76,000, while Axel Oxenstjerna subsequently raised an additional army in Prussia of about 20,000. In striking contrast with Christian IV, Gustavus had done everything in his power to minimise risks. He was not the man to think of taking the second step before he had taken the first. The jealousy of Holland, the anarchy of England, the haughtiness of France, had compelled him to abandon his original plan of a combination of the western powers against the house of Habsburg; while the fears of the North German princes prevented the formation of any Protestant league. But the emissaries of the Swedish king had sought for allies so remote as the Khan of the Crimea, and the Cossack Republic on the Dnieper; his diplomatic agents had thwarted the diplomatists of the Emperor at the Divan of the Sublime Porte; and negotiations had even been entered into with the prince of Transylvania, the republic of Venice, and the Swiss cantons. But his chief reliance was upon his own country, and his own country did not fail him. The secret committee of the Riksdag granted him subsidies for three years in advance, on the sole condition that the war should, so far as possible, be conducted beyond the borders of Sweden; the Swedish gentry furnished him with a staff of officers, men like Johan Banér, Lennart Torstensson, Åke Tott, Niels Brahe, Gustavus Horn, and Gustavus Vrangell, who were soon to be reckoned amongst the greatest captains of that or any other age; while the hardy yeomen of Sweden and Finland formed the nucleus and the leaven of that international army which was gathering around his standard.

On May 19, 1630, Gustavus solemnly took leave of the Estates of the realm assembled at Stockholm. He appeared before them holding in his arms his only child and heir, the little Princess Christina, then in her fourth year, and tenderly

committed her to the care of his loyal and devoted people. Gustavus seems to have had a foreboding that he should never see Sweden again. "It generally happens," he said with his usual homely simplicity, "that the pitcher goes so often to the well that at last it breaks; and so, at last, it may befall me, inasmuch as I who have so many times shed my blood for the welfare of Sweden, and hitherto, through God's gracious protection, have been spared, must at last give up [my spirit]." Then, conscious that his motives might be misinterpreted, he solemnly took the Estates to witness, as he stood there, "in the sight of the Almighty," that he had begun hostilities "out of no lust for war, as many will certainly devise and imagine," but in self-defence and to deliver his fellow-Christians from oppression. Finally he gave the Estates his benediction, and commended them to God's protection. When he ceased speaking there were tears in every eye, but the predominant feeling was one of hope and confidence as became men embarking on a great enterprise with high resolutions.

On June 17, 1630, the Swedish fleet set sail; on Midsummer Day it cast anchor off Cape Perd on the isle of Rügen; and two days later the whole army, 16,000 strong, was disembarked at Peenemünde. Gustavus's plan was to take possession of the mouths of the Oder Haff, and, resting upon Stralsund in the west and Prussia in the east, penetrate into Germany. In those days rivers were, what railways now are, the great military routes; and Gustavus's German war was a war fought along river lines. The opening campaign was to be fought along the line of the Oder. After fortifying Christian IV's trenches at Peenemünde, Gustavus compelled Bogislav IV, duke of Pomerania, to become his ally. Stettin, the capital of Pomerania, and the key of the Oder line, was the most important strategic point in the immediate theatre of the war; and its possession was therefore indispensable to Gustavus. Bogislav, already allied with Wallenstein, preferred to remain neutral.

But, in the middle of July, a Swedish fleet and army appeared before Stettin; the inhabitants received "the gentle, gracious master" in the simple grey military uniform as a friend and deliverer; and Bogislav reluctantly placed his capital and his duchy at the absolute disposal of the Swedish king. After converting Stettin into a first-class fortress and a base for further operations, Gustavus proceeded to clear Pomerania of the piebald Imperial host composed of every nationality under heaven, and officered by Italians, Irishmen, Bohemians, Croats, Danes, Spaniards, and Walloons. Gustavus's army has often been described by German historians as an army of foreign invaders: in reality it was far more truly Teutonic than the official defenders of Germany at that period. Conti, the Imperialist commander-in-chief, soon showed that he had not learnt the art of war under Wallenstein in vain. Posting his lieutenant, Savelli, at Peene to cut off the Swedes' communications with Stralsund, he established himself in two impregnable camps at Garz and Greiffenhagen on Oder, and compelled Gustavus to stand on the defensive. Thus the king had driven a wedge between the various Imperialist divisions, but could move no further himself.

Still more serious than Gustavus's military difficulties were the political. Whatever the German people might have felt—and, whenever they could freely express their sentiments, they welcomed him gladly—the German princes, not one of whom could look beyond his petty personal interests, naturally regarded their would-be deliverer as a foreign intruder. Only those who had nothing to lose, fugitives and exiles, or the landless younger sons of princely houses, showed any disposition to join him. As to the two leading princes of North Germany, John George, Elector of Saxony, and George William, Elector of Brandenburg, the former most carefully avoided committing himself to anything resembling an alliance with Gustavus, while the latter, immediately after the occupation of Stettin, sent his ambassador, Wilmersdorf, to the king of

Sweden, to induce him to turn back, or, at least, go no further, at the same time offering his mediation with the Emperor. "What might not the Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony have accomplished!" cried Gustavus bitterly. "Would to God that we could nowadays find a Maurice of Saxony!"

Suddenly the hopes of Gustavus were revived by the news of two important and favourable events. The Emperor, yielding to the threats and the entreaties of the Kurfürstentag of Regensburg, and secretly but energetically worked upon by the League and its foreign supporters, dismissed Wallenstein August 13, 1630, and reduced his army to 60,000 men; while, almost simultaneously, Magdeburg, the greatest city of the Lower Saxon Circle, openly declared for the Swedish king. At last Gustavus had found a powerful and voluntary ally in Germany. From a strategical point of view, Magdeburg, as the strongest fortress of North Germany, was of the highest importance to him, commanding, as it did, the passage across the Elbe, for at that time there was no bridge over the river north of Magdeburg. It was, as Gustavus expressed it, a sally port for the invasion of south-western Germany, the territory of the Catholic League, where he recognised that the struggle must be fought out. Magdeburg undertook to hold the Elbe fords open for the king; and, in return for this essential service, Gustavus promised to protect the city at his own cost, and never abandon it. Unable to go to Magdeburg himself, he sent thither one of the most trustworthy of his German officers, Didrik von Falkenberg, to organise the defence and form a new Swedish army corps. Falkenberg arrived at Magdeburg in October, disguised as a chapman, by which time the city was already closely invested by the Imperial troops.

Gustavus first proposed to relieve Magdeburg by way of Dömitz on Elbe, the chief fortress of Mecklenburg, after clearing the duchy of the Imperialists. The storms of autumn, which prevented the co-operation of the Swedish fleet, together with the superiority of the Imperialist generals in North

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Germany, nullified this plan; whereupon Gustavus attempted to open the Oder route to Magdeburg by attacking the Imperialist entrenched camps at Garz and Greiffenhagen in Pomerania. With 40,000 excellent troops at his disposal, opposed to the half-starving, half-naked remnants of Conti's host, this proved an easy task. Greiffenhagen was stormed on Christmas Eve, 1630, whereupon Garz was destroyed and abandoned by the Imperialists themselves, who retreated towards Frankfort on Oder, hotly pursued by the Swedes as far as Küstrin.

At the beginning of 1631 Gustavus's hands were strengthened by the conclusion of a definite alliance with France at Bärwalde, January 13. Richelieu, who at first had regarded Gustavus as a mere Scandinavian *condottiere*, who might be induced to fight the battles of France in Germany at so much a head, had recognised at last that the Swedish king was in a position to prescribe rather than accept conditions, and must, in every respect, be treated as an equal. The fruitless negotiations at Dresden and München, during the summer, had convinced the French diplomatist of the impossibility of uniting Protestants and Catholics against the Emperor; whilst the subsequent reconciliation between the Emperor and the League necessitated a political counterpoise in North Germany which could only be found in the Swedes. The treaty was concluded for five years, its objects being to keep the northern seas open and restore the *status quo ante bellum* in Germany. France contracted to pay Sweden an annual subsidy of 400,000 rix-dollars; and Gustavus undertook to maintain in Germany an army of 26,000 men. Richelieu's action was more than justified by the abortive issue of the Protestant congress at Leipsic, which met in February, 1631, under the presidency of the Saxon Elector George Frederick, to reconcile Lutherans and Calvinists, and form a middle party in Germany, but separated after a three months' discussion without coming to any conclusion.

But, while the German Protestants were "debating and



demonstrating," Gustavus was acting. On hearing that Tilly, at the head of 24,000 men, was advancing upon Frankfort on Oder to unite with Hannibal von Schaumburg, Gustavus broke up from Küstrin, and made a second attempt to relieve Magdeburg by way of Mecklenburg, capturing on his way the strong fortress of Demmin. Tilly at once quitted the line of the Oder to bar Gustavus's way to the Elbe, and this he succeeded in doing, for the king shut himself up in an entrenched camp at Schwedt on Oder, and remained there till March, when Tilly himself departed for Magdeburg, which had in the meantime been closely blockaded by Pappenheim. Gustavus thereupon advanced against the important fortress of Frankfort, which he took unexpectedly by storm on Palm Sunday afternoon, April 15, thus securing possession of the line of the Oder. Magdeburg now became the focus of the whole campaign: its immediate possession was equally indispensable to each of the combatants. Only with Magdeburg in his hands could Tilly hope to exclude Gustavus from southern and western Germany; while to Gustavus the city was, not merely the key of the situation but his one faithful and courageous ally who must be delivered at all hazards. His royal word was pledged to Magdeburg: to relieve her was to him as much a matter of honour and conscience as of military and political expediency.

The city was now in extremities. The garrison was already living from hand to mouth; ammunition was running short; all the outworks had been abandoned. Courier after courier was sent to Gustavus by the despairing commandant. Unfortunately Gustavus's movements were hampered by the timidity of the Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony. Without their support and assistance it was impossible for him to march to the relief of the beleaguered city with an army but half the size of Tilly's; to have done so would have been to risk for the sake of a single town the whole future of German Protestantism. What he required of the Electors was a free passage through their

territories and the union of their forces with his; and till these objects were secured his hands were tied. But the Electors were deaf to all his entreaties; and Gustavus was forced to cut the diplomatic tangle with the sword. On May 14, 1631, he dictated at the gates of Berlin a treaty whereby the Elector of Brandenburg agreed to pay monthly subsidies for the support of the Swedish army, and surrender his two principal fortresses, Küstrin and Spandau, till Magdeburg had been relieved. But with the Elector of Saxony nothing could be done. He refused not only to co-operate with Gustavus, but even to permit him to cross the Elbe at Wittenberg, the nearest way to Magdeburg; and, as the Saxon army was numerically as large as the Swedish, Gustavus could not extort compliance. All that the king could do was solemnly to hold the Elector responsible for any harm that might befall Magdeburg, and take the one route still remaining open—the circuitous route by way of the Havel in a northerly direction. But by this time the fate of Magdeburg was already decided. On May 20, the same day on which John George had closed his gates to Gustavus, the most prosperous and populous city of North Germany had become a heap of smoking ruins. The cathedral and about one hundred houses alone escaped the flames. Unwillingly stormed by Tilly, who did what little he could to save the women and children from his barbarous hordes, the city was accidentally fired by some of Pappenheim's marauders; and a strong gale blowing at the time did the rest. Like Napoleon at Moscow, Tilly himself was the immediate loser by this unexpected catastrophe. Magdeburg was to have been a basis for further operations as well as a storehouse for his half-famished troops. Want and hunger compelled him, a fortnight after its fall, to retreat southwards in the direction of Thuringia.

Meanwhile Gustavus, still too weak to meet the foe in the open field, had entrenched himself at Werben, at the confluence of the Havel and Elbe, whence he could defy the superior forces of the Imperialists, and safely await the inevitable

accession of the Protestant princes. For the position of these princes was becoming every day more untenable. The Emperor had rejected their petitions, pronounced the Leipsic congress illegal, commanded them to disband their troops, and ordered the reinforcements returning from Italy, under Fürstenberg and Altringer, after the Peace of Chierasco (1631), to execute the sequestration decrees against the South German Protestants. Self-preservation, therefore, drove the German princes, one by one, to seek protection in the Swedish camp at Werben, especially after Tilly had made his abortive attacks upon it in the course of the autumn. Landgrave William of Hesse-Cassel led the way, and he was speedily followed by William and Bernard of Saxe-Weimar: all of these now entered the Swedish service. The Elector of Saxony still persisted in attempting to maintain an impossible neutrality; but, when the Emperor ordered Tilly to invade Saxony from the north, while Fürstenberg and Tiefenbach co-operated with him from the south and east, John George saw himself compelled either to abandon his lands to plunder, or implore Gustavus for assistance, and submit to his dictation. He chose the latter humiliation. A courier was instantly despatched to Gustavus; the Swedish and Saxon armies effected their junction at Düben; and on September 12 a treaty was signed between the king and the Elector, whereby the latter placed himself absolutely at the disposal of the former. Thus, at last, Gustavus's chief object was won. He was no longer a foreign intruder but the recognised leader of the Protestant party in Germany.

The war now assumed an altogether different character. Numerically equal to his opponents, Gustavus abandoned the fortified camp system, and took the open field. Events developed rapidly. On both sides it was recognised that a decisive action was at hand. Tilly, after combining with Fürstenberg, had ravaged Saxony up to Leipsic, which, warned by the fate of Magdeburg, opened its gates to him. But here his course was stayed, for, at a council of war held at Düben,

Gustavus decided to march against him forthwith. The septuagenarian Tilly would have avoided an engagement if possible; but his staff persuaded him to stand firm, and he awaited Gustavus on the wide plain of Breitenfeld north of Leipsic. The two armies encountered on September 17, 1631, the Imperialists numbering about 32,000, the combined Swedish-Saxon army about 41,000 men. The battle, which lasted from early morning to sunset, was most bitterly contested. The Saxon contingent, indeed, which was placed on the extreme left, with their Elector at their head, "took to their heels by companies" at the first onset of Fürstenberg's pikemen, dangerously exposing the Swedish left, which was saved from destruction only by a masterly manœuvre of Gustavus Horn, who reformed his whole front in the heat of the engagement. On the Swedish right the impetuous charge of Pappenheim's 5000 cavalry was arrested by the steady fire of the Swedish and Finnish regiments; and, on attempting a flank movement, Pappenheim was seven times repulsed and finally scattered by Johan Banér. The battle was decided by the king capturing Tilly's artillery and turning it against the Spanish tertiaries which composed his centre. These unconquerable battalions stood like a wall till sunset, when they formed a square round their wounded general and marched unbroken from the battlefield. But an army Tilly no longer possessed. No fewer than 7000 of the Imperialists fell on the field of battle; 5000 prisoners were incorporated with the Swedish army; several thousands of stragglers were massacred by the country-folk. The booty captured was immense, and included the military chest of the League, which was plundered systematically.

The first battle of Breitenfeld marks a turning-point in the history of the Thirty Years' War. It settled the fate of the Restitution Edict, and dissipated, once for all, the dream of a united Catholic Germany. Protestantism regained once more the confidence it had lost during the reverses of the last ten years; and its future existence in the Empire was assured. On

contemporaries the victory produced an overwhelming impression. At Vienna pious Catholics could not at first believe that "God had all at once turned Lutheran." To Gustavus it was the fulfilment of his most audacious hopes: the only question now was, In what way should he utilise his advantage? Should he invade the Austrian crown-lands, and dictate peace to Ferdinand II at the gates of Vienna? or should he pursue Tilly westwards and crush the League at its own hearth and home? The matter was debated at a council of war held at Halle a week after the battle. Axel Oxenstjerna and Gustavus Horn were for the first alternative, but Gustavus decided in favour of the second. His decision has been greatly blamed. Oxenstjerna himself, nineteen years later, expressed his deep regret, in full senate, at this the one great mistake of his great master; and more than one modern historian has argued that, if Gustavus had done in 1631 what Napoleon did in 1805 and 1809, there would have been a Fifteen instead of a Thirty Years' War. But, on the other hand, it should be borne in mind that in the days of Gustavus Vienna was by no means so essential to the existence of the Habsburg monarchy as it was in the days of Napoleon; and even Gustavus could not afford to allow so dangerous an opponent as Tilly time to recover himself. The Saxon army, with such a leader as the Saxon Elector, would have been no match for the veteran Walloon; and Gustavus, with rare diplomatic sagacity, had already decided upon sending John George against the hereditary estates of the Emperor, and thus hopelessly compromising him with the court of Vienna, while he himself set out for the Rhine lands at the head of his victorious army. His march was a triumphal progress. Joyfully welcomed as a deliverer by all the Protestant cities, he met with no resistance till he came to Marienberg on Main, which was taken by storm and yielded such an enormous booty that the Swedish soldiers measured their gold by the hatful. After resting a whole month in the rich Würzburg district, Gustavus continued his onward march

“to conjoin the Main with the Rhine,” as he expressed it. Frankfort on Main opened her gates at the first threat; and the Swedish host marched through. At Oppenheim Gustavus crossed the Rhine, and on December 20 he entered Mainz in triumph, after clearing the Palatinate of its Spanish garrisons. Simultaneously the Elector of Saxony and Arnim invaded Bohemia, and in the beginning of November occupied Prag. The front of the combined Protestant armies now extended from the Rhine to the Moldau.

At Mainz, the most important strategical position in western Germany, Gustavus established his winter quarters in an entrenched camp capable of holding 20,000 men. His position was unprecedented and extraordinary, and has been well compared to that of Napoleon at Erfurt. All the Protestant princes and nobles of Germany, all the leading diplomatists of Europe, flocked to the court of the Swedish king, in “the golden city on the Rhine.” His plan was to form a “Corpus Evangelicorum,” or Union of all the Protestant princes, under the protection and leadership of Sweden, which was to be guaranteed the possession of the German Baltic coast, to complete that Baltic empire which he regarded as the basis of her future stability. France, as much surprised by the Swedish victories of 1631 as she was to be by the Prussian victories in 1866, and alarmed for her own influence in Germany, now attempted to bring about an understanding between Gustavus and the Catholic League of southern Germany, with which she was also allied; but, when Gustavus refused to surrender his conquests until the princes of the League had disarmed, Maximilian of Bavaria, the leader of the League, broke off the negotiations and renewed his alliance with the Emperor. This of itself was tantamount to a declaration of war.

As the most effectual means of bringing about the general peace he so earnestly desired, Gustavus now proposed to take the field with an overwhelming numerical superiority. He

never, indeed, reached his proposed maximum of 200,000; yet so numerous were the newly enlisted recruits that the Swedish nucleus of his forces dwindled down to a fifth; and, besides the royal army, he could form three independent army corps under Gustavus Horn, Johan Banér, and Åke Tott, to say nothing of his co-operating German auxiliaries. The signal for Gustavus to break up from the Rhine was the sudden advance of Tilly from the Danube against Gustavus Horn, whom he compelled to evacuate the bishopric of Bamberg. Proceeding by way of Frankfort to Nürnberg, where he was received enthusiastically, Gustavus pursued Tilly into Bavaria, forced the passage of the Danube at Donauwörth and the passage of the Lech in the face of Tilly's strongly entrenched camp at Rain, and pursued the flying host to the fortress of Ingolstadt, where Tilly died of his wounds a fortnight later. Turning aside from Ingolstadt, Gustavus liberated and garrisoned the long-oppressed Protestant cities of Augsburg and Ulm, and, thence proceeding into Bavaria, occupied München in May, 1632. He was now at the height of his power; and Germany lay at his feet. His dominion extended from the Alps to the Arctic Ocean. The Alpine passes were in his hands. Italy was trembling at the prospect of another northern invasion. But, while still in Bavaria, the clouds which were to eclipse his glory had already appeared upon the horizon.

After the collapse of Tilly and the League, the Emperor, in his extremity, had appealed once more to the disgraced Wallenstein to save him; and once more Wallenstein had stamped an army out of the earth. In the very week in which Gustavus had entered München, the great dictator had chased John George from Prag and manoeuvred the Saxons out of Bohemia. Then, armed as he was with plenipotentiary powers, both military and political, he offered the Elector of Saxony peace on his own terms. Gustavus suddenly saw himself exposed to unheard-of peril. He saw not only his southern plan of campaign annihilated, but his most important and most

unstable ally exposed to an almost irresistible temptation. If Tilly had made John George such an offer as Wallenstein was now empowered to make, the Elector would never have become Gustavus's ally: would he remain Gustavus's ally now? Hastily quitting his quarters in Upper Swabia, whither he had gone to crush a dangerous Catholic rising, Gustavus hastened towards Nürnberg on his way to Saxony, but, finding that Wallenstein and Maximilian of Bavaria had united their forces, which now amounted to 60,000 men, to which, for the moment, he could oppose only 18,000, he was constrained, for his own safety as well as to save Nürnberg from the fate of Magdeburg, to abandon the attempt to reach Saxony and remain where he was. Both armies, therefore, confronted each other at Nürnberg, whose colossal walls and bastions furnished Gustavus with a point of support of the first order. He quickly converted the town into an entrenched and fortified camp, from the walls and bastions of which 300 cannon gaped upon the enemy. Wallenstein followed the king's example, and entrenched himself on the western bank of the Redwitz in a camp twelve English miles in circumference, including in its immense sweep rivers, towns, and forests. His object was to pin Gustavus fast to Nürnberg and cut off his retreat northwards. Throughout July and August the two armies faced each other immovably, voluntarily exposing themselves to all the hardships of a regular siege in order to tire each other out. At last, when the distress in Nürnberg had grown so great that people died of hunger in the streets, Gustavus, who had in the meantime summoned to him the army corps of Oxenstjerna, Gustavus Horn, Banér, and the dukes of Saxe-Weimar, led out his forces and offered battle, which Wallenstein obstinately declined. A fortnight later, after an unsuccessful attempt on August 24 to storm Alte Veste, the key of Wallenstein's position, the Swedish host retreated southwards.

For the second time Gustavus had plainly been out-manceuvred. He intended to draw Wallenstein after him by



threatening the Austrian crown-lands ; but again Wallenstein showed his superiority as a strategist by invading Saxony with the intention of collecting the whole Imperial army into another entrenched camp on the Elbe. Seeing his line of retreat again menaced, Gustavus immediately returned, by forced marches, from the Danube to the Elbe, crossed the Thüringerwald on the night of October 22 and 23, and, after uniting with Bernard of Weimar, proceeded to Erfurt, where he saw his consort, Maria Eleonora, for the last time. Wallenstein, meantime, after savagely devastating Saxony, to force the Elector to abandon his alliance with the Swedes, had sent Pappenheim away to the Rhine with 10,000 men, and prepared to go into winter quarters at Lützen, under the impression that Gustavus was about to do the same. The king, thereupon, resolved to surprise his enemy, and hastened in full battle array, by way of Weissenfels, towards Lützen. On the afternoon of November 5 he overtook Wallenstein as he was crossing the Rippach ; and a rearguard action, favourable to the Swedes, ensued. Indeed, but for nightfall, the scattered forces of the duke of Friedland might have been routed. During the night, however, Wallenstein succeeded in collecting and marshalling his forces, and sent an express to call back Pappenheim.

On November 6, at daybreak, while an autumn mist still lay over the field, the battle began. The king, as usual, commanded the Swedish right wing, and began the attack simultaneously with Niels Brahe, the only Swedish general present. It was obviously Gustavus's plan to drive Wallenstein away from the Leipsic road, north of which he had posted himself, and thus, in case of success, to isolate, and subsequently, with the aid of the Saxons in the Elbe fortresses, annihilate him. The king succeeded in driving the enemy from the trenches and capturing his cannon ; but Niels Brahe was less fortunate, and fell, mortally wounded. The same fate befell Pappenheim, the Murat of the Thirty Years' War, as, with his usual *elan*, he flung himself upon the Swedes at the head of his horsemen.

What happened after that is mere conjecture, for a thick mist now obscured the autumn sun; and the battle became a colossal *mêlée*, the details of which are indistinguishable. It was in the midst of that awful obscurity that Gustavus met his death—how or where is not absolutely certain; but it seems that he lost his way in the darkness as he was leading the Småland horse to the assistance of his infantry, and was despatched, as he lay severely wounded on the ground, by a hostile horseman. The sudden appearance of his riderless steed first told the Swedes that their leader was dead, and inspired them forthwith with a furious lust for vengeance which carried everything before it, and made Lützen one of the bloodiest battles of the Thirty Years' War. Finally Wallenstein was compelled to evacuate the battlefield and retreat southwards; but the victors were too much exhausted to pursue him.

For a moment Sweden reeled beneath the shock of this terrible catastrophe. In the flower of his age and vigour—he was but thirty-eight—the great monarch had been cut off; and his successor was a girl six years old. The Emperor and the Catholics openly rejoiced: Sweden's friends, nay Sweden's own statesmen, feared that Gustavus's work had finished with him. But it was only for a moment. The world was quickly to perceive that the hero-king had bequeathed to his country not only a difficult task, but also the men capable of performing it. Foremost among these illustrious pupils was the chancellor Axel Oxenstjerna. Indispensable even while Gustavus was still alive, all eyes turned instinctively towards him now that Gustavus was dead. He did not seek preeminence; it was thrust upon him by the unanimous voice of his country. Overwhelmed as he was personally by the great calamity, not for an instant did he lose his presence of mind. Recognising that his proper place was in Germany, to keep Sweden's allies in heart and control Sweden's foreign policy, all the threads of which were in his hands, he exhorted the government at home to be steadfast and united. The news of the king's death,

which reached Sweden a month after the event, naturally caused the utmost consternation ; but it also evoked a noble outburst of courageous public spirit, and a determination "to pursue the war against the Emperor and all his adherents, till the policy of his late Majesty of blessed memory hath been consummated, and a sure peace obtained." The Råd thereupon appointed the chancellor "legate-plenipotentiary of the Swedish crown in the Roman Empire and with all our armies," and summoned a Riksdag, which (February 1, 1633) did homage to the child queen and appointed the five great officers of state *ad interim* regents. A second Riksdag assembled in June, 1634, and sanctioned a new constitution (July 29), which gave Sweden a strong and well-ordered administration with its centre in the crown and Råd, and its executive distributed among the *Kollegier* or departments of state. But the constant and indispensable adviser of the home government was the absent chancellor ; every novel or difficult point was at once submitted to and generally decided by him ; and for the next twelve years he was undoubtedly the real ruler of Sweden.

Abroad in Germany the urgent difficulties of a situation, always hovering on the verge of the desperate, taxed even his genius and courage to the uttermost. It is difficult to admire enough the unshakeable firmness, the many-sided, all-sufficing ability of Axel Oxenstjerna at this crisis, which made him the one great principle of cohesion amidst a score of jarring wills and contrary ambitions, ready at the first stroke of misfortune to fly asunder. To him both warriors and statesmen invariably appealed as their natural and infallible arbiter. Less original but more sagacious than the king, he had a firmer grasp of the realities of the situation. Gustavus would not only have magnified Sweden, he would have transformed the German Empire. Oxenstjerna wisely abandoned these vaulting ambitions. His country's welfare was his sole object. All his efforts were directed towards procuring for the

Swedish Crown adequate compensation for its sacrifices; and he worked for this object with a patience, a tenacity, a disinterestedness which extorted the admiration of friends and foes alike. Richelieu, baffled by an astuteness superior to his own, declared that the Swedish chancellor was "an inexhaustible source of well-matured counsels." Mazarin said that if all the diplomatists of Europe were in a boat together, they would unhesitatingly entrust the rudder to Oxenstjerna. It was a fortunate thing for Sweden that her destinies, at the crisis, were in the hands of so great a statesman.

The situation was already sufficiently alarming. The Swedish armies held, it is true, the best half of Germany; but they were composed, for the most part, of foreign mercenaries, and the differences between the Swedish generals and their confederates, the German princes, threatened to burst into open discord now that the restraining presence of the great king was withdrawn. Moreover a continuation of the war demanded fresh sacrifices, which the Riksdag was unable or unwilling to make. It was only the audacious firmness of the Swedish chancellor which succeeded in saving appearances and sustaining Sweden's newly won reputation as a great power. Few but himself perceived on what flimsy foundations it rested. His first act was to summon a meeting of the representatives of sixty South German states at Heilbronn (March, 1633), which resulted in the formation on April 23 of the so-called Evangelical Union, with Oxenstjerna himself as its director. The Union was to raise and maintain another army in South Germany, in the Protestant interest. A subsequent most dangerous mutiny of the officers of the Swedish army was appeased by the distribution of fiefs in Germany, under the Swedish Crown, to the value of about 5,000,000 rix-dollars. Simple to austerity in his own tastes, the Swedish chancellor recognised the political necessity of impressing his allies and confederates by an almost regal show of dignity; and the abortive congress held at Frankfort in March, 1634, for

the purpose of forming a union of all the German Protestants, Oxenstjerna appeared in a carriage drawn by six horses, with German princes attending him on foot.

Not the least of Oxenstjerna's many cares was the supreme direction of Sweden's numerous armies in Germany, on the Weser and the Upper Rhine, in Swabia and Silesia, amounting together to about 120,000 men. The war at this period, owing to the wilful inaction of Wallenstein, a difficulty overcome by his assassination (Feb. 25, 1634), was conducted slackly and with varying success. In June, 1633, the Swedes, by the victory of Oldendorf, cleared Westphalia of the Imperialists; but, on Sept. 6, 1634, a terrible disaster befell them at Nördlingen, where the army of Gustavus Horn and Bernard of Saxe-Weimar was virtually wiped out by the new Imperialist commander-in-chief, Gallas, losing 6000 killed and wounded and 6000 prisoners.

Even more serious than the military were the moral and political consequences of this disaster. The nimbus of invincibility with which the arms of Sweden had hitherto been invested instantly vanished; and both foes and confederates ventured to treat her as they had never treated her before. The Elector of Saxony at once took the opportunity of reopening negotiations with the Emperor, and concluded a separate peace with him at Prag (May, 1635). By the end of the same year Hesse-Cassel was Sweden's sole remaining ally in North Germany, while Poland and Denmark simultaneously assumed a threatening attitude. In a fit of panic, the Swedish home government, against the express advice of the indignant chancellor, bought a twenty-six years' truce (Treaty of Stuhmsdorf, Sept. 12, 1635) with Poland, by relinquishing, at this very time when they were most wanted, the Prussian tolls, secured by Gustavus Adolphus in the truce of Altmark six years before—tolls nine times as lucrative as all the Swedish and Finnish tolls put together. Isolated amidst failing friends and active foes, Oxenstjerna sought to gain time

by cautiously opening negotiations for a closer alliance with France. Well aware that Richelieu needed the Swedish armies as much as he himself needed French money, he resolutely refused to bind his hands in the future for the sake of some slight present relief, though he went all the way to Compiègne personally to meet Louis XIII and Richelieu, and was received there with the utmost distinction, Louis XIII even addressing him as "mon cousin." A fresh subsidy treaty with France, signed at Wismar in 1636, meanwhile relieved his temporary pecuniary embarrassments; and presently the good sword of Johan Banér somewhat retrieved the military prestige of Sweden.

Appointed commander-in-chief by Oxenstjerna after the rout of Nördlingen, and finding South Germany hopelessly lost, Banér bent all his efforts to reestablish the influence of Sweden in the north. After quelling a dangerous mutiny in the long-disorganised army, and receiving reinforcements, he invaded Saxony, whose weathercock Elector, now the ally of the Emperor, was threatening Pomerania. This attack recalled him to the defence of his own territories; and on Oct. 4, 1636, with only 16,000 men, Banér routed the Saxon army, 23,000 strong, at Wittstock, compelling them to retreat with the loss of 7000 men. This victory obliterated the impression of the Nördlingen disaster, and restored the supremacy of the Swedes in northern Germany. But since the Peace of Prag the war had entirely changed its character. Religious questions had fallen into the background; and the intervening powers, France and Sweden, now only aimed at obtaining an adequate compensation for their past sacrifices, so as to be able to withdraw honourably from the contest. But so many important interests were involved, and the Protestants were so hopelessly divided, that peace seemed to be further off than ever. Moreover the victory of Wittstock gave the Swedes only a temporary respite. Banér was too weak to follow up his success; and the Imperial forces were concen-

trated from all parts of Germany to crush the victor, whose position soon became extremely critical. He was beleaguered on all sides by hostile armies; and only if he succeeded in breaking through the iron circle enclosing him ever more narrowly was a more durable triumph conceivable.

In mid-winter Banér took Erfurt, laid siege to Leipsic, and was about to storm it (a breach had already been opened) when, under pressure from the combined Imperial forces, he was obliged to entrench himself within a fortified camp at Torgau. Thence, for four months, he defied the enemy's fourfold larger army, and lived on the surrounding country. Meanwhile his colleague, Gustavus Vrangél, after capturing Frankfort and Berlin from the now hostile Elector of Brandenburg, was compelled by Marazini's superior forces to fall back into Pomerania. Thus everywhere it was only with the utmost difficulty that the Swedes could keep the enemy at bay. In June, 1637, Banér at last quitted Torgau for fear of being cut off by four Imperialist armies advancing simultaneously against him from the north, west, south, and south-east. With only 14,000 to oppose to 60,000, he first attempted to fight his way back to Pomerania and there join Vrangél. He crossed the Elbe and Oder without opposition, and was preparing to cross the Warthe also at Landsberg, when he suddenly encountered the combined forces of Gallas and Marazini, who had cut him off by taking the shorter route. The little Swedish army, caught between the rivers Oder and Warthe, in the face of overwhelming numbers, now seemed hopelessly lost. But Banér did not lose his head. Outwitting the enemy by feigning a retreat into Poland, he suddenly doubled back, crossed the Oder without losing a man, joined Vrangél, and was saved. All Europe, expecting his imminent destruction, was amazed by such a combination of luck and audacity. After this masterly retreat, one of the most brilliant exploits in the military history of Sweden—Banér himself used to say of it that Gallas had got him into the sack but forgotten to pull the

strings—the Swedish general was entrusted with the defence of Pomerania, now Sweden's last possession on German soil. Driven back to the sea with an exhausted, famished army, constantly harassed by vastly superior forces, Banér nevertheless doggedly defended his dangerous post of honour all through the winter of 1637 and the spring of 1638, till Gallas's army, worn out by want and sickness, was compelled to retire, whereupon Banér followed close upon his heels and established himself in Mecklenburg.

Never had the position of Sweden been so desperate as during these two years. Her material resources seemed exhausted; her military resources were reduced to a single army corps. But Banér's iron grip upon Pomerania never once relaxed; and in the meantime the crisis passed away. Henceforward Sweden, as a military power, was safe; very shortly she was to be triumphant. Encouraging signs of the growing exhaustion of the Imperialists were also not wanting. Moreover, under pressure from the chancellor, the Swedish Estates made a supreme effort and again opened their purses; fresh subsidies were simultaneously obtained from France; and Banér, provided at last with adequate reinforcements, was able to assume the offensive. In the winter of 1638 he quitted his quarters in Mecklenburg, advanced to Meissen, and in the spring of 1639 defeated the Imperialists in a pitched battle at Chemnitz. Then, after advancing to the gates of Prag, he turned westwards, drove Hatzfeld before him into Franconia, and, returning to Bohemia, went into winter quarters there and sucked the country dry. For the first time the Habsburg crown-lands were to feel the full burden of the war. Nor was this all. Banér's victories enabled the French armies simultaneously to advance to the Rhine, conquer Elsass, and invade Swabia; and in May, 1640, a French army corps, under Guébriant, united with Banér's forces at Erfurt, so that the Swedish commander was now at the head of 36,000 men. In January, 1641, he suddenly appeared before Regensburg.



where the Emperor and the Reichstag were assembled, only a sudden thaw, which flooded the Danube, saving them from falling into his hands. The desertion of the Weimar princes, and the rapid rallying of all the Imperialist forces, compelled him, however, to hurry back towards Saxony, with the enemy hard upon his heels. Thence he directed his march northwards to Halberstadt, where, on May 10, 1641, Sweden's greatest general died of exhaustion in his forty-fifth year.

His successor, Lennart Torstensson, found the long-suffering army in an acute state of mutiny and misery; but his authority and firmness speedily restored order, and he was destined to lead them to even greater feats of arms than those of Banér. But it was Banér who had borne all the burden and heat of the day; it was his victories which had broken the strength of the Imperialists and made his successor's triumphs comparatively easy. Moreover the political situation of Sweden had now distinctly improved. Saxony, after the defeats of Wittstock and Chemnitz, was powerless; the new Elector of Brandenburg, Frederick William, who succeeded his father in 1641, had concluded a truce with Sweden; and in 1638 the subsidy treaty with France had been renewed. After reorganising his army in its new quarters in the Altmark, Torstensson, in the spring of 1642, invaded Silesia, stormed the fortress of Gross-Glogau, defeated the Imperialists at Scheidnitz, and captured that fortress together with Olmütz. Too weak to press on to Vienna, he prudently retraced his steps, taking the Oder fortresses of Kosel and Oppeln on his way, and on Nov. 2, 1642, forced the Imperialists to fight the second battle of Breitenfeld under unfavourable conditions, defeating them with a loss of 5000 killed and wounded and 4500 prisoners. A month later Leipsic surrendered. The victory of Breitenfeld completely reestablished the military supremacy of Sweden, which she had lost since the defeat of Nördlingen. Thenceforth, to the end of the war, she was to be the aggressor, while the Emperor could, only with the utmost

difficulty, defend even his hereditary lands. In the spring of 1643 Torstensson again invaded Moravia and relieved Olmütz. He was projecting an advance upon Vienna when, at the command of Oxenstjerna, he set off for the other end of Europe to execute the chancellor's designs against Denmark, and accomplished the brilliant feat of arms which extorted the humiliating Peace of Brömsebro from Christian IV (pp. 171-174). Henceforth, for the next twenty-five years, Sweden was justly regarded as the greatest military power in Europe.

It now remains for us to cast a glance at what was not the least difficult of the Swedish chancellor's manifold cares—his domestic administration.

During his absence in Germany the policy of the other regents had often been vacillating to the verge of cowardice; but on his return all branches of the administration awoke to new life. This is especially observable in the attitude of the government towards the Estates of the realm. The chancellor, a born aristocrat, with all the virtues but some of the prejudices of his class at its best, distrusted popular government, especially during the German war, which was a heavy drain upon the limited resources of a poor country. He especially doubted the expediency of consulting the Estates too often on questions of foreign policy, and he preferred to negotiate with the representatives of the various provinces through carefully selected delegates, local assemblies being, in his opinion, more manageable than Riksdags. Yet he never ruled over the heads of the people as the contemporary French ambassador at Stockholm more than once suggested. During the ten years of his administration he summoned no fewer than five Riksdags; and on every occasion his authority proved amply sufficient to quell the impatient murmurings of the Estates at the grievousness of the public burdens. It is undeniable that Oxenstjerna somewhat favoured his own order at the expense of the lower Estates; and, while the by no means unreasonable complaints of the peasant deputies were some-

times severely rebuked as savouring of sedition, the gentry had their privileges not only confirmed but increased. Yet, though the chancellor occasionally carried through economical questions with a very high hand, he invariably took the opinion of the Estates in all important matters. The whole administration, moreover, assumed a more stable and regular character than it had ever had before. Oxenstjerna always presided at the frequent meetings of the Råd; his strong hand and watchful eye influenced every branch of the administration; and anything like slackness, disorder, or venality was impossible during his sway. Many useful reforms, too, were inaugurated. A committee of experienced jurists was appointed to improve and simplify the course of legal procedure; trade and industry, especially the fabrication of iron and copper wire, were vigorously promoted and flourished exceedingly so long as Sweden held control of the estuaries of all the principal rivers of Germany. The regular army was reorganised and raised to 40,000 men, an enormous force for a nation with a population of only 1,500,000; while the fleet in 1640 consisted of no fewer than forty men-of-war and forty galleys with 1300 guns, besides the *skärgårdsflotta*, or skerry-flotilla of 150 galleys for special service among the fiords of Sweden and Finland. Despite the inevitable jealousy of his numerous personal and political enemies, the authority of the great chancellor to the very end of the queen's minority continued undiminished. His crowning work was the Peace of Brömsebro, for which the young Queen Christina promptly rewarded him with a countship and the rich estate of Södra Möra. But the day of his supremacy was now over. A new era had begun in which the grey-haired statesman was to take a lower place.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SWEDEN AS AN IMPERIAL POWER, 1644-1660.

CHRISTINA, who inherited her father's sceptre in her eighteenth year (Dec. 8, 1644), seemed born to rule a great Empire. From the moment when she took her seat at the head of the council-board she impressed her veteran counsellors with the conviction of her superior genius. In many things she resembled her still revered father. She possessed his blonde hair, ample forehead, hooked nose, and large, blue eyes. Like him she was naturally eloquent, acute, provident, courageous, energetic, equally devoted to art and science, and infinitely more learned. With an astounding memory, a lively curiosity, and quick apprehension, her love of knowledge knew no bounds. She would rise at five in the morning, to converse for a couple of hours with Descartes in her library; and she delighted to listen to the disputations of Vossius, Salmasius, and Schefferus, all of them her *protégés* and pensioners. Her collection of books was renowned throughout Europe. Latin she had thoroughly mastered; the Greek classics she could read in the original; French and Italian she spoke better than her mother-tongue; while astronomy and mathematics were her favourite recreations. Yet she was much more of an Amazon than a pedant. Athletic exercises irresistibly appealed to her. In all Sweden there was not a more skilful hunter or a more daring rider; she could remain in the saddle for ten hours at

a time without fatigue. Indeed her whole temperament was masculine rather than feminine. Axel Oxenstjerna himself said of her when she was only fifteen, "Her Majesty is not like women-folk, but is stout-hearted and of a good understanding, so that if her Majesty be not corrupted we have good hopes of her."

Unfortunately these brilliant and commanding qualities were vitiated by a strange combination of defects generally considered incompatible: a cold callousness and a hot, imperious temper. It is hardly too much to say that Christina was, perhaps, the most heartless sovereign who ever sat upon a throne. Other monarchs have been as selfish, but the most egoistical of them have at least loved someone or something. Christina seems to have cared for absolutely nobody but herself. Her own sex she hated and despised with an intensity which was scarcely sane; yet her pride—pride of intellect even more than pride of station—revolted at the idea of affectionate submission to any member of the opposite sex. Marriage she regarded as an insupportable yoke; and, though her hand was sought for by almost every important prince in Europe, she resolutely remained single to the last. Favourites she had in abundance, and she sometimes permitted herself a freedom of intercourse with them which the French ambassador, Chanut, considered highly indecorous; but her habitual aloofness was an insuperable barrier to the least attempt at familiarity on their part; never, for a moment, was the most highly favoured of them permitted to forget that, after all, he was only a subject. On the other hand she dispensed her largess with a prodigality utterly regardless of the necessities of the State. Indeed contempt for public opinion was perhaps the most salient, as it was the most offensive form which her pride and egoism assumed. She seemed to consider Swedish affairs as far too petty to occupy her full attention; while her unworthy treatment of the great chancellor, Axel Oxenstjerna, was mainly due to her jealousy of his extraordinary reputation, and to the

uneasy conviction that, so long as he was alive, his influence must be at least equal to her own. Hence her growing dislike of the aged statesman, a dislike which she gradually extended to every member of his numerous family. Recognising that he would be indispensable so long as the war lasted, she used every effort to bring it to an end; and her impulsive interference seriously hampered the diplomacy of the chancellor, and materially reduced the ultimate gains of Sweden.

The German war was gradually dying of exhaustion. Even the Emperor, with his superior resources, could barely defend his hereditary domains. In the spring of 1645, Torstensson, with an army of 15,000 men, invaded Bohemia, proposing, in conjunction with George Rakoczy, prince of Transylvania, to extort a peace at the gates of Vienna, whilst Turenne prevented the Bavarians from assisting the Emperor by crossing the Rhine. On March 6 Torstensson routed Hatzfeld at Jan-kovich, south-east of Prag, capturing Hatzfeld himself with six of his generals, all his artillery, and 4000 men—a crushing victory which opened the way to Vienna. Torstensson actually penetrated to the Danube, and captured the bridge-head facing the city; but the bridge had been burnt, and, with only 10,000 men, he was too weak to storm the place. In the summer he was joined by Rakoczy with 25,000 undisciplined Transylvanians; but that prince speedily made his own terms with the Emperor, after infecting the army of his Swedish ally with the plague, so that Torstensson was obliged to abandon his plans against Vienna, and go into winter quarters in Bohemia. In December, broken down with fatigue and racked with gout, he resigned his command to a younger colleague, Karl Gustaf Wrangel, who proceeded westwards, and, in August, 1646, united his forces with those of Turenne. Disagreements between the two commanders resulted in a barren campaign; and, in 1647, each of them went his own way with next to no result. Reuniting again in the spring of 1648, they ravaged Bavaria, defeated the Imperialists at Züsmarshausen,

and pressed forward to the Inn; while another Swedish army, under Königsmark, invaded Bohemia and sacked Prag, on which occasion the famous Mæsogothic manuscript, Codex Argenteus, was sent to Upsala amongst the spoils of war. Shortly afterwards the Count Palatine, Charles Gustavus, superseded Königsmark, and was about to march westwards to join Vrangél when the tidings came that peace had at last been concluded.

The negotiations for terminating the Thirty Years' War had begun as far back as December, 1641, at Hamburg, when it was arranged that a general peace congress should meet, in March, 1642, at Osnabrück and Münster. Sweden was to negotiate with the Emperor at the former, and France to negotiate with him at the latter place, so as to avoid all disputes as to precedence between the representatives of the two confederate powers; while the little intermediate town of Lengerich was fixed upon as a place for mutual consultation. Venice and the Pope were the intermediaries between France and Germany, while Sweden negotiated with the Emperor direct. These preliminaries were not confirmed, however, till March, 1643; and the general congress was not opened till April, 1645, Torstensson's successes finally compelling the reluctant Emperor to treat. Representatives from every European state assembled at the congress, the Catholics frequenting Münster, the Protestants Osnabrück. The Swedish plenipotentiaries were senator Johan Oxenstjerna, the chancellor's son, and Adler Salvius. From the first the relations between them were strained. Young Oxenstjerna, haughty and violent, claimed, by right of birth and rank to be "caput legationis," and regarded the incomparably abler Salvius as a middle-class upstart. The chancellor at home naturally took his son's part, while Salvius was warmly supported by Christina, who privately assured him of her exclusive favour, and encouraged him to hold his own. So acute did the quarrel become that there was a violent scene in full Senate between the queen

and the chancellor; and, though even Christina durst not proceed to extremities against the Oxenstjernas, she urged Salvius to accelerate the negotiations, against the judgment of the chancellor, who hoped to get more by holding out longer.

Sweden's original demands were Silesia (she held most of the fortresses there), Pomerania, which had been in her possession for nearly twenty years, and a war-indemnity of twenty millions of rix-dollars; but, after three years of negotiations, a compromise was arrived at, and on October 24, 1648, the treaty generally known as the Peace of Westphalia was signed simultaneously at Osnabrück and Münster. By this convention Sweden obtained (1) Upper Pomerania, with the islands of Rügen and Usedom, and a strip of Lower Pomerania on the right bank of the Oder, including the towns of Stettin, Garz, Damm, and Gollnow, and the isle of Wollin, with right of succession to the rest of Lower Pomerania in case of the extinction of the house of Brandenburg; (2) the town of Wismar with the districts of Poel and Neukloster; (3) the secularised bishoprics of Bremen and Verden; and (4) 5,000,000 rix-dollars. The German possessions were to be held as fiefs of the Empire; and in respect thereof Sweden was to have a vote in the Reichstag, and to "direct" the Lower Saxon Circle alternately with Brandenburg. Full civil and religious liberty was, at the same time, conceded to the German Protestants, the provisions of the Peace of Augsburg being now, for the first time, extended to the Calvinists. France and Sweden moreover became joint guarantors of the treaty with the Emperor, and were entrusted with the carrying out of its provisions, which was practically effected by the execution-congress of Nürnberg, June, 1650.

It must be confessed that Sweden's reward for the exertions and sacrifices of eighteen years was meagre, nay almost paltry. Her newly won possessions were both small and scattered, though, on the other hand, she had now obtained the practical



control of the three principal rivers of North Germany—the Oder, the Elbe, and the Weser—and reaped the full advantage of the tolls levied on those great commercial arteries. The jealousy of France and the impatience of Christina were the chief causes of the inadequacy of her final recompense. Yet, though the immediate gain was small, she had not dissipated her blood and her treasure altogether in vain. Her vigorous intervention in the Thirty Years' War had saved the cause of religious liberty in Europe; and this remains, to all time, her greatest historical exploit. Henceforth, till her collapse, seventy years later, she was the recognised leader of continental Protestantism. A more questionable benefit was her rapid elevation to the rank of a great, an imperial power, an elevation which imposed the duty of remaining a military monarchy armed *cap-à-pied* for every possible emergency. Everyone recognises now that the poverty and the sparse population of Sweden unfitted her for such a tremendous destiny. It was like investing a dwarf in the armour of a giant. But in the middle of the seventeenth century the incompatibility was by no means so obvious; and besides, to extend the metaphor, if Sweden was politically a dwarf, she was at least a sturdy dwarf in the midst of cripples and paralytics. All her neighbours—Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Moscovy—were either decadent or exhausted states; and France, the most powerful of the western powers, was her firm ally.

For the moment Sweden held the lead. Everything depended on the policy of the next few years. Careful statesmanship might mean permanent dominion, but there was not much margin for blundering. Unfortunately, just at this crisis, her destiny was in the hands of the most capricious and incalculable of women. The longer Christina ruled, the more anxious for the future fate of her empire grew the men who had helped to build it up. It is true that her country owes her something. In the beginning of her reign she seems to have taken a lively interest in both the material and the spiritual prosperity of

Sweden. She gave fresh privileges to the towns; she encouraged trade and manufactures, especially the mining industries of the Dales; in 1649 she issued the first school-ordinance for the whole kingdom; she erected new gymnasia at Hernösand and Gothenburg; she encouraged foreign scholars to settle in Sweden; and native science and literature, under her liberal encouragement, flourished as they had never flourished before. In one respect, too, she showed herself wiser than her wisest counsellors. The Senate and the Estates, naturally anxious about the succession to the throne, had repeatedly urged her Majesty to marry, and had indicated her cousin, Charles Gustavus, as her most befitting consort. Wearied at last by their importunities, determined to put an end to them once for all, and, at the same time, desirous to compensate her cousin for the loss of her half-promised hand, she resolved to have him proclaimed her successor. "After all, *Krona*<sup>1</sup> is a pretty girl too," she said laughingly. Accordingly, when the Riksdag of 1649 renewed its matrimonial petition, Christina surprised the Senate next day (Feb. 24) by announcing her decision. The senators protested warmly, but the queen persisted in her resolution and prevailed, though only with the utmost difficulty could Oxenstjerna, who distrusted Charles Gustavus, be persuaded to consent thereto. Christina was undoubtedly right in thus obviating the danger of a disputed succession in the near future; and her firmness claims both our admiration and respect. At the following Riksdag, 1650, the throne was declared hereditary in Charles Gustavus and his heirs male.

Christina's anxiety to settle the succession was intimately connected with a secret resolution to resign the crown. In the summer of 1651 a committee of the Riksdag was actually summoned to receive her abdication; but the urgent supplications of a deputation of the Senate and the Estates,

<sup>1</sup> *Krona*, a crown, feminine in Swedish.

headed by the aged chancellor, induced the queen to reconsider her resolution. Yet, though she yielded for a time to the entreaties of her subjects, she never really abandoned the idea of abdication. Many were the causes which pre-disposed her to what was after all anything but an act of self-renunciation. First, she could not fail to remark the increasing discontent with her arbitrary and wasteful ways. Upon her numerous favourites, especially upon the handsome and brilliant trifler, Count Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, and, after his disgrace in 1653, upon her French physician, Pierre Michon Bourdelot, and the Spanish ambassador, Antonio Pimentelli, who is supposed to have undermined her religious faith, she scattered gifts in money and land with such reckless prodigality that the revenue of the State was seriously impaired. Within ten years she created 17 Counts, 46 Barons, and 428 lesser nobles; and, to provide these new peers with adequate appanages, she sold or mortgaged crown property representing an annual income of 1,200,000 rix-dollars. Most of these beneficiaries, whom she also raised to the highest offices of the State, were insignificant and even worthless persons who had done nothing to deserve their emoluments. This extravagance was carried so far that at last it became difficult to decide what did and what did not belong to the Crown; and the queen had to make her donations of land subject to the proviso that she had not already bestowed them on someone else.

Towards the end of her reign the general discontent with her government became loud and menacing; and in 1650 the storm burst. At the Riksdag held in that year a deputation from the lower Estates presented to the queen "a protestation for the restitution of crown property," in which the dilapidated state of the kingdom and the usurpations of the excessively privileged nobility were painted in the darkest colours. The queen received the deputation graciously, though she would not pledge herself to anything; but the question of the restitution

of the alienated crown-lands had at least been raised, and was not allowed to fall out of sight again. Still more significant was the so-called Messenian conspiracy. In November, 1651, Arnold Messenius, a son of the recently ennobled royal historiographer, Arnold Johan Messenius, wrote a virulent squib against the queen and the nobility, and, in the frankest language invited the heir to the throne to place himself at the head of a rebellion. The Messenii, father and son (though the former protested his ignorance and innocence), were seized forthwith, tried, condemned, and executed two days after the passing of the sentence. The hasty process and the cruel judgment cast a dark shadow over Christina's memory, though she speedily repented of her harshness, and, for the sake of the implicated families, forbade any further investigations. But the whole affair was a blow to her vanity, showing her, as it did, that a large section of her subjects detested her. She might, indeed, have regained her popularity by taking the popular side and opposing the aggrandisement of the aristocracy; but this would have been a reversal of her previous policy, to which her pride would not submit.

Signs are also not wanting that Christina was growing weary of the cares of government; while the importunity of the Råd and the Riksdag on the question of her marriage was a constant source of irritation. In retirement she could devote herself exclusively to art and science; and the opportunity of astonishing the world by the unique spectacle of a great queen, in the prime of life, voluntarily resigning her crown, strongly appealed to her vivid imagination. Each of these motives may have contributed something to her otherwise inexplicable conduct; anyhow it is certain that towards the end of her reign she behaved as if she were determined to do everything in her power to make herself as little missed as possible. From 1651, when she first publicly announced her intention of resigning the crown, there was a noticeable change in her behaviour. Her prodigality now knew no bounds. She cast away every regard

for the feelings and the prejudices of her people. She ostentatiously exhibited her contempt for revealed religion, especially the Protestant form of it. Her foreign policy was flighty to the verge of foolishness. She contemplated an alliance with Spain, a state quite outside the orbit of Sweden's influence, the first-fruits of which were to have been an invasion of Portugal. She openly snubbed the Senate by never attending its deliberations, and utterly neglected affairs in order to plunge into a whirl of costly dissipations with her foreign favourites.

At last, when the situation had become impossible, and even the chancellor admitted that if the step were to be taken at all it should be taken at once, a Riksdag was summoned to Upsala, in May, 1654, to receive the queen's abdication. The solemn act took place on June 6, 1654, at the castle of Upsala, in the presence of the Estates and the great dignitaries of the realm. After surrendering the regalia, and divesting herself of her royal robes, the queen slowly descended to the last step of the throne, and thence delivered a parting address to the Senate and the Estates, with that natural dignity which was always at her command. Both she and her hearers were deeply affected. On the afternoon of the same day her cousin was crowned king in the cathedral under the title of Charles X Gustavus. Shortly afterwards Christina quitted Sweden. She had forfeited the affections of her subjects long before she abandoned them.

Christina's departure from Sweden resembled a flight. She travelled in masculine attire, under the name of Count Dohna, to Brussels and thence to Italy. At Innsbruck she openly joined the Catholic Church, and was re-christened Alexandra. In 1656, and again in 1657, she visited France, on the second occasion ordering the assassination of her major-domo, Monaldeschi, a mysterious crime still unexplained. Twice she returned to Sweden (in 1660 and 1667) in the vain hope of recovering the succession, finally settling at Rome, where she died, on April 19, 1689, poor, neglected, and forgotten.

The new king, the eldest son of John Casimir, Count Palatine of Zweibrücken, and Catharine, the sister of Gustavus Adolphus, was born at Nyköping Castle, on November 8, 1622. He owed much to the careful training of an excellent mother, and after studying at Upsala made the usual grand tour. In 1640 he returned to Sweden, eager to place his abilities at the service of his adopted country. Oxenstjerna offered him a high place in the army; but the young man, modestly declining to command till he had learnt to obey, entered, as a volunteer, the army of the great Torstensson, from whom he learnt the art of war. In 1646-1647 we find him at Christina's court as her suitor; but the fastidious queen, who could not look without laughing at the thickset little man with the long black locks, who, even at twenty-five, was the fattest member of her court, unable to return his love, at least gratified his ambition by appointing him (Jan. 1648) generalissimo of her armies on the continent. The conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia prevented him from winning the military laurels he so ardently desired, but, as the Swedish plenipotentiary at the execution-congress of Nürnberg, he had an unrivalled opportunity of learning diplomacy, in which science he speedily became a past master. As the recognised heir to the throne, his position on his return to Sweden was not without danger, for the growing discontent with the queen turned the eyes of thousands upon him as possible deliverer. He therefore withdrew to the isle of Öland, and there, far from the intrigues of the court, patiently bided his time till the abdication of Christina called him to the throne in his thirty-second year.

A strong hand was needed to repair the dilapidation, and correct the abuses, of the last reign. To begin with, the State was on the verge of bankruptcy. Its revenue in those days was mainly derived from crown property; and Christina's reckless dealings with that national asset had not only depleted the exchequer, but struck at the very root of Sweden's resources.

There was not enough money to pay the salaries of the chief officials and provide for the wants of the royal household. And the financial difficulty had superinduced a serious political agitation. Throughout the land, noble and non-noble faced each other in fierce antagonism. The general discontent was growing louder every day; and the mass of the Swedish people was penetrated by a justifiable fear that the external greatness of their country might in the long run be purchased with the loss of their civil and political liberties. In a word, the natural equilibrium of Swedish society was seriously threatened by the preponderance of the nobility; and the people at large looked to the new king to redress the balance. A better arbiter between the various Estates than Charles X it would have been difficult to find. It is true that, primarily a soldier, his whole ambition was directed towards military glory; but he was also an unusually sharp-sighted politician, with no abstract theories to misguide him, and no prejudices in favour of birth or ancestry. It was his firm belief that only by force of arms could Sweden retain the dominion which by force of arms she had won; but he also grasped the fact that there must be no disunion at home if she were to be powerful abroad. Personally persuaded of the superiority of a strong monarchy to every other form of government, he was equally opposed to aristocratic and to popular pretensions. "I should be a big fool," he said on one occasion, "if I fancied I could rule a democratised people"; while his contempt for "the puppet kings of Sparta," and "the Greek republics who ate each other up," was unbounded. But he rejected the idea of an oligarchy with equal energy; and once, when his friend Per Brahe showed him a treatise by Professor Gyldenstolpe exalting the attributes of the nobility, and differentiating them from the other subjects of the Crown, Charles dashed the book against the wall with the blunt remark that it might suit their Excellencies, but it would not do for him at all.

The beginning of his reign, therefore, was devoted to the

healing of domestic discords, and the rallying of all the forces of the nation round his standard for a new policy of conquest. First of all he contracted a political marriage (Oct. 24, 1654) with Hedwig Leonora, the daughter of Frederick III, duke of Holstein-Gottorp, by way of securing a future ally against Denmark—a momentarily prudent measure, but infinitely mischievous in the long run by intensifying the unnatural hatred which already divided the sister nations of Scandinavia. As regarded his own people, Charles laid it down as a rule, from which he never swerved, that a sovereign should have neither favourites nor enemies among his own subjects. He took counsel of all alike, treated Axel Oxenstjerna, his most inveterate antagonist, with filial respect, and, when the aged chancellor died on August 28, 1654, appointed the most capable of his sons, Count Eric, chancellor in his stead.

The two great pressing national questions, war and the restitution of the alienated crown-lands, were duly considered at the Riksdag which assembled at Stockholm in March, 1655. The war question was decided in three days by a secret committee, selected by and presided over by the king himself, who easily persuaded the delegates that a war with Poland was necessary and might prove very advantageous to the State; but long and acrimonious were the debates on the subject of the aids and subsidies to be granted to the Crown for military purposes. The king proposed that the holders of crown property should either pay an annual sum of 200,000 rix-dollars, to be allowed for out of any further crown-lands subsequently falling in to them, or should surrender a fourth of the expectant property itself to the estimated amount of 600,000 rix-dollars. After some murmuring at the indignity of being taxed at all, the nobility yielded to pressure from above; but they attempted to escape as cheaply as possible by stipulating that November 6, 1632, the day of Gustavus Adolphus's death, should be the extreme limit of any retrospective action on the part of the Crown in regard to alienated crown property, and that the



present subsidy should be regarded as "a perpetual ordinance" unalterably to be observed by all future sovereigns—in other words that there should be no further restitution of alienated crown property. Against this interpretation of the subsidy bill, the already over-taxed lower Estates protested so energetically that the marshal of the Diet had to suspend the session of the houses; and the king had to intervene personally, not to quell the Commons, as the Råd had insisted, but to compel the nobility to give way. He proposed that the whole matter should be thoroughly investigated by a special committee before the meeting of the next Riksdag, and that in the meantime a contribution should be levied on all classes proportionately. This equitable arrangement was accepted by the Estates; and on June 25, 1655, the Riksdag broke up.

The Polish War on which Charles X had resolved to embark has been justified by more than one Swedish historian as a political necessity, the second unavoidable step, in fact, in the policy of conquest inaugurated by Gustavus Adolphus, with the object of uniting all the Baltic lands under Swedish rule by way of a bulwark against Sweden's enemies. Polish historians naturally take another and a very different view. In their eyes the Swedish invasion was a flagrant breach of international law, an inexcusable rupture with a pacific neighbour. On the whole, the Polish historians seem to be in the right. There can be little doubt that the love of glory and the spirit of adventure were the chief motives of Charles X, when, in 1655, he kindled the flames of a war which was speedily to embrace the whole of northern Europe. The usual justification that Sweden was obliged by her situation to anticipate the hostility of jealous neighbours will scarcely bear investigation. At Charles X's accession in 1655 those jealous neighbours were at least not adversaries, and might have been converted into the allies of the new great power which, if she had mulcted some of them of territory, had at least compensated them for the loss with the by no means con-

temptible gift of religious liberty. At Charles X's death, five years later, we find Sweden herself bled to exhaustion point, surrounded by a broad belt of desolated territory, and regarded with ineradicable hatred by every adjacent state. To sink in five years from the position of the champion of Protestantism to that of the common enemy of every Protestant power was a degradation not to be compensated by any amount of military glory. Nor is this all. The imposing figure of Charles X has so long been exclusively regarded from its military, heroic side, that we are apt to lose sight of its political aspect. Charles X was not only a great soldier, he was also a great statesman; but his statesmanship was of a baser alloy than that of Axel Oxenstjerna. He contributed, more than any other contemporary diplomatist, to lower the political morality of his age, and he was the originator of those infamous partition projects which culminated in the obliteration of the Polish republic at the end of the eighteenth century. His own differences with Poland were insignificant and easily adjustable. He could have obtained peace practically on his own terms had not his sense of justice been blinded by his lust of conquest.

But, whatever may be thought of the morality of the Polish War, it must be admitted that the occasion could not have been better chosen. The immense but headless and amorphous Polish republic was just then in the throes of one of those chronic catastrophes to which a more highly vitalised organism must inevitably have succumbed. A seven years' war of unexampled ferocity with her rebellious Cossacks, which had cost her millions of gulden, thousands of lives, the loss of the Ukraine, and the devastation of the best third of her territories, had become merged in a fresh war with the Moscovite who had occupied her exhausted and unresisting eastern provinces, and captured the hitherto impregnable fortress of Smolensk after a siege of only seventeen days. Humbled to the dust, demoralised, panic-stricken, economically on the verge of ruin, with a king, John Casimir Vasa, whose blunders and

misfortunes had deprived him of the respect and confidence of his subjects, Poland seemed an easy prey to the first aggressor ; and Charles X resolved to win a cheap triumph by attacking her forthwith, and wresting from her what still remained of her Baltic provinces, to prevent them from falling into the hands of Russia.

The political situation in Europe was highly favourable for such an undertaking. None of Sweden's numerous enemies was just then in a position to injure her ; and Charles X's skilful diplomacy did its utmost to allay the uneasiness provoked by the rumour of his far-reaching plans. But if he had no opponents, he also had no allies. France would not assist an enterprise from which she could derive no profit ; and both Oliver Cromwell and the Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg, whom the Swedish king tried to win at the outset, preserved an expectant neutrality. But Charles X's own resources were by no means contemptible. At the rumour of the impending war thousands of seasoned desperadoes, ex-soldiers of fortune of the 'Thirty Years' War, rallied with alacrity to his standard ; and, by the time war was declared, he had at his disposal 50,000 men, and 50 war-ships. But he trusted as much to intrigue as he did to arms. Poland itself had already been well manipulated by a whole army of well-paid spies ; and, by the king's side, to guide his steps and point out the nakedness of his mother-country, stood the fugitive Polish vice-chancellor, Hieronymus Radziejowski, the first of that long line of traitors who did more to ruin Poland than all her enemies put together. The king of Sweden's plan was to attack Poland from three sides simultaneously. One army, under Magnus De la Gardie, was to advance from the east and occupy Lithuania, another, under Arvid Vittenberg, was to proceed from Hither Pomerania into Great Poland, while the king himself, after effecting his junction with De la Gardie, was to seize Polish Prussia. On July 10 Charles quitted Sweden, after abruptly rejecting equitable conditions

of peace presented to him by an extraordinary Polish embassy sent to Stockholm at the last moment to offer him his own terms; and when, on the same day, Charles hoisted sail, and one of the senators asked him, "Where shall we next meet?" he replied with haughty self-assurance, "At Warsaw."

Hostilities had already begun with the occupation of Dünaburg in Polish Livonia by the Swedes (July 1, 1655); and on July 4 Vittenberg's army advanced through the marshy basin of the Nitze to the Uszez, where lay in an almost impregnable position 15,000 hastily mustered and dispirited Polish levies under Christopher Opalinski. This general, at the first invitation from his outlawed countryman, concluded a convention (July 25) with Vittenberg, whereby the Palatinates of Posen and Kalisz placed themselves beneath the protection of the Swedish king. Thereupon the Swedes crossed the Notec, entered Warsaw without opposition, and occupied the whole of Great Poland. Too weak to offer any resistance, John Casimir fled to Silesia. The whole republic now seemed to be in the throes of dissolution; nearly every province was in the possession of a different enemy. The Moscovites, still advancing from the east, leisurely occupied Wilna and Minsk; and a vast Cossack host from the south sat down before Lemberg. The princely Protestant house of Radziwill, by the Compact of Kiejdani (Aug. 28), made common cause with the Swedes on condition that they should drive the Russians out of Lithuania. It seemed as if the ruin of Catholic Poland had at length been compassed by the unnatural union of orthodox Moscovites, schismatical Cossacks, Calvinists and Lutherans.

Meanwhile the king of Sweden, after effecting his junction with De la Gardie, pressed on towards Cracow, the defence of which had been entrusted to the valiant and capable Stephen Czarniecki. For nearly two months he held the Swedish army at bay beneath the walls of the Coronation City, when, seeing no prospect of assistance, he capitulated on his own terms,

and was allowed to march out with all the honours of war. The fall of Cracow extinguished the last hope of the boldest Poles. The Hetmans, threatened in the south by the Cossacks, hastened to surrender to the less barbarous Swedes. The republic ceased to exist. The fugitive king, John Casimir, from his exile at Glogau, vainly implored the diplomatic intervention of France and Austria. He succeeded, however, in detaching the Cossacks and Tatars, grown jealous of the successes of the Moscovites, from the league against him; and, before the end of the year, an extraordinary reaction had begun in Poland itself. On October 18 the Swedes invested the fortress monastery of Czechstochowa, the Lourdes of Poland; but the place was heroically defended by the prior, Augustin Kordecki; and, after a seventy days' siege, the besiegers were compelled to retire with great loss.

This success, so astounding that it was popularly attributed to divine intervention, sent a thrill through Poland, and elicited a burst of popular enthusiasm which spread through all ranks of the population, and gave the war a national and religious character. The tactlessness of Charles X, the rapacity of his generals, the barbarity of his mercenaries, his ostentatious protection of Calvinists like the Radziwills and Arians like Jacob Niemcewicz, added fuel to the general combustion; while his refusal to legalise his position by summoning the Sejm, his negotiations for the partition of the very state he affected to befriend, and the ruinous contributions levied upon the nobility and gentry, awoke the long slumbering public spirit of the country. The first visible sign of this general reaction was the Confederation of Tyszowiec (Dec. 29, 1655) formed by the Hetmans, Stanislaus Potocki and Lankoronski, for the defence of "the king, the Faith, and freedom." Another simultaneous confederation in Lithuania, under Sapieha and Gasiowski, besieged and captured the leader of the Lithuanian Calvinists, Janus Radziwill, in his fortress of Tykocin, where he died on the last day of the year. Thus when, in the beginning

of 1656, John Casimir returned from his Silesian exile, he was able to attract all the patriotic elements in the country to his standard. In April, 1656, he entered Lemberg in triumph, and, at a solemn service held in the cathedral, placed himself and his country beneath the protection of the Blessed Virgin. The Polish army was then reorganised; and Stephen Czarniecki was appointed its commander-in-chief.

By this time Charles X had discovered that it was easier to defeat the Poles than to conquer Poland. Difficulties multiplied around him at every step. His chief object, the conquest of Prussia, was still unaccomplished; and a new foe, the Elector of Brandenburg, alarmed by the ambition of the Swedish king, opposed its accomplishment. A rapid march upon Königsberg, where he besieged the Elector, and compelled him, at the point of the sword, to become his ally and vassal (Treaty of Königsberg, Jan. 17, 1656), averted the more pressing danger; but the tidings of the national rising in Poland itself, and the return of the Polish king, now imperatively demanded his presence in the south. Accordingly in January, 1656, Charles X broke up from Königsberg at the head of 15,000 men. For weeks he scoured the interminable, snow-covered plains of Poland, pursuing and defeating Czarniecki whenever he could bring that adroit guerilla chieftain to an engagement, and penetrating as far as Jaroslaw in Galicia, by which time he had lost two-thirds of his little army with no apparent result. His retreat from Jaroslaw, with the fragments of his host, amidst three converging armies, in a marshy forest region, intersected in every direction by well-guarded rivers, was one of his most brilliant achievements. More than once, notably at the passage of the San, absolute ruin seemed inevitable; but his genius, his audacity, and the superiority of his artillery, combined to save him; and, in the beginning of April, he was back again at Warsaw. After him, like a deluge, swept the Polish forces, exterminating all the small Swedish garrisons in their way, and recovering province after province.

On June 21, Vittenberg, after an heroic resistance, which reduced his forces from 4000 to 510, was forced to surrender Warsaw itself to the Polish king. Charles X was powerless to relieve it. Poverty had all along been a drag upon his triumphal car; and all around him the political horizon was visibly darkening. A Dutch fleet had entered the Baltic to relieve Dantzic; and the court of Vienna was urging the Moscovite against him. He was obliged to look around for serviceable allies, and his glance fell upon Frederick William of Brandenburg, who promised, by the Treaty of Marienburg, June 25, 1656, to aid him instantly with 4000 men, and ultimately, if necessary, with the whole of his forces in return for promises of Polish territory. On July 18—20 the combined Swedes and Brandenburgers, 18,000 strong, after a three days' battle defeated John Casimir and Czarniecki's army of 100,000 at Warsaw, and reoccupied the Polish capital; but this brilliant feat of arms was altogether fruitless, and the subsequent victories of the indefatigable Czarniecki at Radom and Rawa, and the suspicious attitude of Frederick William, compelled the Swedish king at last to open negotiations with the Polish republic through the French ambassador, Des Lumbres. The Poles, however, encouraged by the manifest difficulties of the Swedes, naturally refused their terms; and the war was resumed.

In the beginning of November John Casimir entered Dantzic, whereupon Charles concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with the Elector of Brandenburg (Treaty of Labiau, Nov. 20) whereby it was agreed that Frederick William and his heirs should henceforth possess the full sovereignty of East Prussia. This was an essential modification of Charles's Baltic policy; but the alliance of the Elector had now become indispensable under almost any terms. Another proof of Charles's desperate position was his treaty with Francis Rakoczy, prince of Transylvania, Dec. 16, 1656, who was attracted to the Swedish alliance by the promise of all

Poland's south-eastern provinces. In the spring of 1657, Rakoczy, with a horde of 60,000 semi-barbarians, joined the 17,000 Swedish veterans near Sandomir; but the solitary success of the raid was the capture of the fortress of Bresc Litewsk; and, on the departure of the king, Rakoczy was driven headlong out of Poland by Czarniecki. Meanwhile Sweden's Baltic provinces had been suffering all the horrors of a Moscovite invasion. Tsar Alexius, who would not share with Sweden a booty he had reserved for himself, ravaged Ingria, Carelia, and Livonia in the course of 1656, inflicting incalculable misery on the country folks, but failing to capture any important fortress. Fortunately in December, 1658, the Tsar consented to a truce of three years, which enabled the Swedish king to turn his arms against yet another foe who had suddenly declared war against him. This foe was Denmark.

In Denmark the death of Christian IV (p. 176) had been followed by a four months' interregnum. Not till July 6, 1648, did his son and successor, Frederick III, receive the homage of his subjects, and only after he had signed a Haandfæstning, or charter, by which the already diminished royal prerogative was still further curtailed. The new king was regarded by the Rigsraad and the nobility generally with suspicion. It had been doubtful at first whether he would be allowed to inherit his ancestral throne; but, if the Senate feared him much, they feared the party of Christina Munk still more; and Frederick himself removed their last scruple by unhesitatingly accepting the conditions imposed upon him by them. Frederick III was a reserved, enigmatical prince, who spoke little and wrote less—a striking contrast to Christian IV. But, if he lacked the brilliant qualities of his impulsive, jovial father, he possessed in a high degree the compensating virtues of moderation, sobriety, and self-control. He was, indeed, a prudent, circumspect prince, highly educated, even learned, with considerable political experience, and a latent reserve of courage; and by his side stood his energetic and masterful consort, Sophia



ix] *Fall of "Son-in-law" Party in Denmark* 239

Amelia, the daughter of Duke George of Brunswick-Lüneburg, whose ambition it was to vindicate the authority of the Crown against the usurpations of Korfits Ulfeld and his wife Leonora Christina, the former of whom was rightly regarded by Frederick III as the spokesman of the oligarchs, while the latter, as being the daughter of the late king, all but disputed the precedence of the new queen as the first lady in the land.

This antagonism, which began, on the very day of Frederick III's recognition as king, with an unseemly wrangle between the queen and Leonora Christina, was complicated by the revelation of an alleged plot (ultimately proved to be false, but believed at the time to be true) on the part of a former mistress of Ulfeld, to poison the royal family; and culminated in the flight of Ulfeld and his wife from Denmark to Holland on July 14, 1651, to avoid being summoned before the Rigsraad at the instance of the king on only too well-grounded charges of speculation and other high misdemeanours. A few weeks previously Hannibal Sehested, the next most prominent son-in-law of Christian IV, had been brought before the Senate on a similar charge, and, after freely confessing his offence, had compromised matters by resigning his senatorship, and surrendering appropriated property of the value of £400,000, in return for which submission he received a royal letter of pardon. The disgrace and effacement of the two wealthiest and most capable of the Danish magnates, signified, in the first instance, the political collapse of the long dominant "Son-in-law Party," and an increase of the royal power and prestige at the expense of the aristocracy. But it was to have other and far-reaching consequences, especially affecting the foreign policy of Denmark. Down to 1651, Ulfeld, as minister for foreign affairs, had controlled that policy; after 1651 Frederick III was alone responsible for it. Fear and hatred of Denmark's hereditary eastern enemy, Sweden, and the never abandoned hope of recovering the lost provinces, animated

king and people alike. There was no difference of opinion as to the aim of Denmark's policy, but as to the means and the proper time for action no two opinions agreed; and unfortunately it was the king who decided at the last moment, and decided disastrously. It was Denmark's crowning misfortune that she possessed at this difficult crisis no statesman of the first rank, no one even approximately comparable with such competitors as Charles X, Eric Oxenstjerna, or the Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg. If Griffenfeld had been born a generation earlier, he, and he alone, might successfully have steered his country through her difficulties; for the whole situation, with its complications and entanglements, would have given full play to his extraordinary suppleness and perspicacity. As it was, Denmark had to depend on Frederick III alone; and unfortunately Frederick III was not the man to take a clear view of the political horizon, or even to recognise his own and his country's limitations.

The succession of Charles X was rightly regarded in Denmark as a fresh source of danger. It was felt that temperament and policy would combine to make Charles an aggressive warrior-king: the only uncertainty was, in which direction would he turn his arms first. His invasion of Poland came as a distinct relief to the Danes, though even the Polish war was full of latent peril for Denmark, inasmuch as Sweden's successes would at the very least mean fresh embargoes on the eastern Baltic trade, and a consequent diminution of the Sound tolls. Moreover the triumphal progress of Charles in Poland, and especially his levying of tolls upon the shipping in the Baltic ports, had aroused the Netherlands and caused them to abandon the pacific policy hitherto followed by the Grand Pensionary, Jan de Witt. In May, 1656, a strong Dutch fleet appeared in Danish waters to maintain the freedom of the Baltic; and in August a Danish squadron was sent to assist the Dutch to defend Dantzic against the Swedes. Simultaneously an embassy from Tsar Alexius, who had already

IX] *Frederick III declares war against Sweden* 241

broken with Sweden and invaded Ingria, arrived at Copenhagen with the offer of an offensive and defensive alliance, the Tsar promising not to conclude peace with Sweden till the latter had restored to Denmark all her former territory. From that moment Frederick III was resolved upon a rupture at the first convenient opportunity; and that too despite the tidings of the Convention of Elbing (Sept. 1, 1656) between Sweden and the Netherlands, whereby Charles X astutely disarmed the hostility of the Dutch by placing them in the position of the most favoured nation. Disappointed by the Netherlands, it was to the Emperor, Sweden's natural enemy, that Frederick III now had recourse. The intermediary was Count Rebolledo, the Spanish minister at Copenhagen; and in the beginning of December an extraordinary embassy was sent by the Danish government to Vienna, to negotiate an alliance. But in Vienna the peace party proved to be in the ascendant; while a simultaneous embassy to the Netherlands, with a similar object, foundered on the reserved and cautious neutrality of the Grand Pensionary.

With no immediate prospect of foreign allies, a wary and expectant policy was incumbent upon the Danish government; but unfortunately Frederick III was now, more than ever, bent upon war, while the nation was, if possible, even more bellicose than the king. The Rigsdag, which assembled at Odense on February 23, 1657, willingly granted considerable subsidies for mobilisation and other military expenses, leaving it to the government to decide whether the impending war was to be offensive or defensive. The Estates of Norway and the Landtag of the Duchies proved equally complaisant; and in March there was some improvement in the political situation abroad. Franz von Lisola, the Austrian ambassador at John Casimir's court, hastened to Vienna to throw all the weight of his influence into the scales of war, and persuaded the new Emperor, Leopold I, to send an army corps to help the Poles against the Swedes, and declare his willingness to

contract a defensive alliance with Denmark, provided that the war was kept as far as possible from German territory to avoid a breach of the Peace of Westphalia. This very qualified promise of support was decisive. On April 15, Frederick III desired, and on April 23 he received, the assent of the majority of the Senate to a declaration of war against Sweden. The apparently insuperable difficulties of Sweden in Poland, and the disinclination of the Danish government to waste its costly armaments in a mere demonstration, were the real causes of this gratuitous rupture with the greatest military power in Europe. In the beginning of May the still pending negotiations with Sweden were broken off; and on June 1, 1657, Frederick III signed the manifesto justifying a war which was never formally declared. Denmark, ill equipped at home and unsupported abroad, had lightly taken a step which was to bring her to the very verge of ruin.

It was with extreme satisfaction that Charles X received the tidings of the rupture. The hostile action of Denmark enabled him honourably to emerge from the hopeless and now inglorious Polish imbroglio, and win fresh laurels in unwasted regions nearer home; and he was certain of the zealous support of his people, with whom a Danish war was always popular. He had learnt from Torstensson that Denmark was most vulnerable if attacked from the south, and, imitating the strategy of his master, he fell upon her with a velocity which paralysed resistance. At the end of June, 1657, at the head of 8000 seasoned veterans, he broke up from Bromberg in Prussia, and, marching rapidly through Pomerania and Mecklenburg, reached the borders of Holstein on July 18. During his march he sent for Korfits Ulfeld, then residing at Barth in Pomerania, who gladly seized this opportunity of gratifying his vengeance and his ambition at the same time, by entering the service of his country's deadliest foe, for the express purpose of humiliating his sovereign and enriching himself. A Danish army had already invaded Sweden's German possessions,

captured the fortress of Bremervörde, and gained some other trifling successes, when the alarming intelligence of the unexpected arrival of the Swedish king in Holstein forced it to retreat; and the retreat speedily became a panic when a slight skirmish north of Hamburg convinced the Danes of the superiority of the Swedish troops. The Danish army thereupon dispersed, the infantry being sent to reinforce the fortresses of Glückstadt and Krempe, while the cavalry fled precipitately to the new fortress of Fredriksodde recently erected to guard the Little Belt. Thus the Danish first line of defence had completely broken down. The duchy of Bremen was quickly recovered by the Swedes, who in the early autumn swarmed over Jutland and firmly established themselves in the Duchies. Finally the duke of Gottorp, for the first time, openly joined the enemies of Denmark (Treaty of Kiel, Sept. 10).

The cowardice of the Danish troops and the incompetence of their commanders had opened the way of Charles X into the very heart of the Danish realm; but the fortress of Fredriksodde, a quite unlooked-for obstacle, held his little army at bay from the middle of August to the middle of October; while the Danish fleet, her one effective arm, after a stubborn two days' battle (Sept. 12-14) between Moen and Falster, compelled the Swedish fleet to abandon its projected attack on the Danish islands, and put into Wismar for repairs. The position of the Swedish king was now becoming critical. In July an offensive and defensive alliance was concluded between Denmark and Poland; and in the same month an Austrian army entered Poland, compelled the Swedes to abandon Cracow, and even threatened Prussia. Still more ominously, the Elector of Brandenburg, perceiving Sweden to be in difficulties, joined the league against her by contracting alliances with John Casimir (Treaty of Wehlau, Sept. 1657) and with Denmark (Treaty of Copenhagen, Oct. 20). The formation of this powerful league against him induced Charles to abandon his original intention of partitioning Denmark, and

accept the proffered mediation of Cromwell and Mazarin, both of whom desired peace between the two Scandinavian kingdoms, the former because he feared a *rapprochement* between Denmark and the Catholic powers, the latter because he desired to employ the arms of Sweden in Germany against the house of Habsburg. The negotiations foundered, however, upon the refusal of Sweden to refer the points in dispute to a general peace congress, and upon the rising hopes of Denmark, which expected much from the assistance of Brandenburg and Poland, and anticipated, not unreasonably, that the fortress of Fredriksodde, with its 6000 defenders, could easily wear out the little army of 4000 besiegers who had already wasted three months outside its walls.

But now a fresh catastrophe occurred. On the night of October 23-24 the Swedish commander, Gustavus Vrangell (under urgent orders from the king, who had gone to Wismar to be nearer the fleet and, if possible, make a descent upon Copenhagen, a design frustrated, as we have seen, by the victory of the Danes off Moen) stormed and took Fredriksodde, capturing the whole garrison with all its guns and stores in an hour and a half. This calamity had far-reaching consequences in Denmark, where it was attributed to the nobility and gentry who comprised the larger part of the garrison, and were openly accused not only of pusillanimity but of treachery and treason; but it did not crush the spirit of the Danish government, which still had no thought of surrender. Additional fortifications were thrown up round Copenhagen; and vigorous measures were taken for putting Fünen in a state of defence. Finally, in January, 1658, a triple alliance was formed against Sweden by the Emperor, the Elector of Brandenburg, and the king of Poland, who agreed to put at least 23,000 men in the field against the common foe. But, before the tidings of this new alliance had reached Copenhagen it was already too late to save Denmark; for meanwhile the king of Sweden had also found a confederate in the powers of nature, and the

struggle between the two Scandinavian kingdoms was already over.

After the capture of Fredriksodde Charles X began to make preparations for conveying his troops over to Fünen in transport vessels ; but soon another and cheaper expedient presented itself. In the middle of December, 1657, began the great frost which was to be so fatal to Denmark. In a few weeks the cold had grown so intense that even the freezing of an arm of the sea, with so rapid a current as the Little Belt, became a conceivable possibility ; and henceforth meteorological observations formed an essential part of the strategy of the Swedes. On January 28, 1658, Charles X arrived at Haderslev in Jutland, by which time the wind had begun to blow steadily from a cold quarter ; and it was estimated that in a couple of days the ice of the Little Belt would be firm enough to bear even the passage of a mail-clad host. It was proposed to make for that part of Fünen where a broad tongue of land, on which lay the manor of Iversnæs, projects into the Belt, and where the little isle of Brandsö, midway between Fünen and Jutland, might be a support. On January 29 Charles X moved his headquarters to the village of Hejls, almost opposite the island. He had collected around him 12,000 men ; and the passage was fixed for the following day. The Danes were not unaware of their enemy's design. But the mobilisation of their army on the west coast of Fünen and the lesser isles was not yet completed ; and, as most of the troops were concentrated between Meddelfast and Strib, to prevent a passage where the Belt was narrowest, only about 4000 men were left at Iversnæs, for the most part raw recruits.

The cold during the night of January 29 was most severe ; and early in the morning of the 30th the Swedish king gave the order to start. Brandsö was occupied without resistance ; and then the march proceeded over the ice to the broad Bay of Tybring, the horsemen dismounting where the ice was weakest, and cautiously leading their horses as far apart as

possible by their bridles, till the most dangerous spot was passed, when they swung into their saddles again, closed their ranks, and made a dash for the shore. The Danish troops, extending from Iversnæs to Föns, Skog, or Wood, were quickly overpowered and captured; and the whole of Fünen was won with the loss of only two companies of cavalry which disappeared under the ice while fighting with the Danish left wing. An attempt, however, to capture four Danish ships of war in Nyborg Firth was frustrated by the presence of mind of Captain Peter Bredal, who by pumping water over the vessel's sides made them inaccessible, and ultimately succeeded in withdrawing them beyond the range of the Swedish guns.

This, however, was the one bright point in an Egyptian darkness of pusillanimity and disaster. Pursuing his irresistible march, Charles X, with his eyes fixed steadily on Copenhagen, resolved to cross the frozen Great Belt as he had already crossed the frozen Little Belt. After some hesitation, he adopted the advice of his chief engineer officer, Eric Dahlberg, who acted as pioneer throughout, and chose the more circuitous route from Svendborg, by the islands of Langeland, Laaland and Falster, in preference to the direct route from Nyborg to Korsör, which would have been across a broad, almost uninterrupted expanse of ice. Yet this second adventure was not embarked upon without much anxious consideration. It was late on the evening of February 9 that Dahlberg returned to head-quarters from a preliminary tour of investigation. "I am certain, with God's help," said he, "that I can safely convey your Majesty and the army over to Laaland." A council of war, which met at two o'clock in the morning, was instantly summoned; and Dahlberg's proposal was laid before the generals, who at once dismissed it as criminally hazardous. Even the king wavered for a moment; but, Dahlberg persisting in his opinion, Charles overruled the objections of Vrangal and the other commanders. On the night of February 5 the transit began, the cavalry leading



the way through the snow-covered ice, which quickly thawed beneath the horses' hoofs so that the infantry which followed after had to wade through half an ell of sludge, fearing every moment lest the rotting ice should break beneath their feet. At three o'clock in the afternoon, Dahlberg leading the way, the army reached Grimsted in Laaland without losing a man; and the keys of Nakskov, the one fortress of the island, were surrendered to the traitor Korfits Ulfeld, who did his best to convince his countrymen that resistance was hopeless. On February 8 Charles X reached Falster, where he bestowed Langeland upon Ulfeld and his descendants. On the 11th the Swedish king stood safely on the soil of Sjælland, where he was presently joined by Vrangel and the rest of the army. Not without reason did the medal struck to commemorate "the glorious transit of the Baltic Sea" bear the haughty inscription: *Natura hoc debuit uni*. An exploit unique in history had indeed been achieved.

Upon the Danish government the effect of this unheard-of achievement was crushing. Frederick III at once sent his ambassadors to Charles X at Vordingborg in Sjælland to sue for peace. Yielding to the persuasions of the English and French ministers, Charles finally agreed to be content to mutilate instead of annihilating the prostrate Danish monarchy; but his conditions were so hard that the Danish plenipotentiaries durst not accept them; and negotiations were reopened, on February 16, at Taastrup parsonage, between Roskilde and Copenhagen. The preliminaries were signed on the 18th, whereby Denmark consented to cede the three Scanian provinces, the island of Bornholm, and the Norwegian provinces of Badhus and Trondhjem; to transfer 2000 cavalry and 2000 infantry to Sweden; to renounce all anti-Swedish alliances; to prevent, as far as possible, all war-ships hostile to either power from passing through the Sound and the Belt; to exempt Swedish vessels, even when carrying foreign goods, from all tolls; and, most humiliating of all, to restore all his estates and

dignities to the traitor Korfits Ulfeld, who had actually been one of the two Swedish negotiators. On the other hand—and this was looked upon as a great concession—Denmark and the duke of Gottorp were to be left to settle their disputes between themselves. The Taastrup Convention, with a few trifling modifications, was confirmed by the Peace of Roskilde (Feb. 26, 1658).

The conclusion of peace was followed by a remarkable episode. Frederick III expressed the desire to make the personal acquaintance of his conqueror; and Charles X consented to be King Frederick's guest for three days (March 3-5) at the castle of Frederiksborg. Splendid banquets lasting far into the night, private and intimate conversations between two princes who had only just emerged from a life-and-death struggle, seemed to point to nothing but peace and friendship in the future; and complimentary salvos were fired from the Kronborg as Charles X embarked on the ship which was to convey him to the ancient Danish provinces on the other side of the Sound, which now belonged to him. It is also certain that during the next few months Charles had no intention of picking a fresh quarrel with Denmark: Austria and Poland were rather the foes with whom he was preparing to cope. But it is equally true that he meant to utilise the presence of his army in Denmark to extort from that kingdom still further concessions; and the negotiations proceeding at Copenhagen for a closer alliance between the two Scandinavian states were conducted on the part of the Swedes in a spirit which pointed only too plainly to a desire completely to subject the weaker to the stronger power. Moreover the difficulties of the situation were complicated by the determined efforts of Austria and the Netherlands to prevent any conjunction of Sweden and Denmark; while domestic difficulties in Denmark itself, where the ill-will of the unprivileged Estates against the gentry was growing more and more vehement, and the king was suspected of encouraging the popular discontent in order to make himself

absolute, imposed the utmost caution upon the Danish government.

All through March and April, 1658, the negotiations were protracted without coming any nearer to a solution, till Charles X, fearful of the intervention of foreign powers, grew anxious and, at last, menacing. On April 22, indeed, he ordered Vrangél to transport the Swedish troops from Sjælland to Fünen; but Vrangél was not to budge from the latter island or from Fredriksodde till he had received further orders. On the 23rd Charles formally abandoned the idea of an alliance with Denmark, but imperiously requested a definite answer to the fresh demands he had raised during the course of the negotiations; and the uneasy Danish government submissively yielded on every point. In May it conceded to the duke of Holstein-Gottorp and his heirs male absolute sovereignty over the ducal part of Sleswick. In June it agreed to surrender the island of Hven and the Norwegian province of Romsdal to Sweden, and at the same time consented to assist Sweden to exclude all foreign ships of war from the Baltic. But these tardy concessions came too late. Impatient of tergiversation in a conquered and humiliated foe, Charles, at a council held at Flensburg, at the end of June, resolved to attack Denmark once more, and, this time, obliterate her from the map of Europe.

Swedish historians have emphasised the want of straightforwardness of the Danish plenipotentiaries, and their unwillingness to "stand side by side with Sweden in brotherly concord," as if the Danes were not fully justified in endeavouring to obtain the best terms they could from their despoiler; and it should never be forgotten that, however she may have hesitated, Denmark actually gave way on all points at last. On an impartial review of the facts, it seems quite evident that no fear of foreign intervention, no resentment against Denmark's natural unwillingness to accept a "Scandinavianism" invented and interpreted by her extortionate conqueror, but military

ambition and greed of conquest, moved Charles X to what, divested of all its pomp and circumstance, was an outrageous act of political brigandage. The final resolution was taken at a council held at Gottorp on July 7. On July 18 Vrangell received orders to ship his cavalry from Kiel to Korsör in Sjælland, and march straight upon Copenhagen. On August 6 the king himself embarked at Kiel; and on the following day the Swedish fleet ran into Korsör harbour. Without any reasonable cause, without warning, without a declaration of war, in defiance of all international equity, Charles X prepared to despatch an inconvenient neighbour.

Terror was the first feeling produced at Copenhagen by the landing of the Swedes at Korsör. Well-informed persons had suspected that something was amiss, but none had anticipated the possibility of such a sudden, such a brutal attack; and everyone knew that the capital was very inadequately fortified and garrisoned. Fortunately for Denmark, Frederick III, who had never been deficient in courage, and who now saw his realm, his crown, his liberty, and the future of his House in jeopardy, rose at once to the level of the emergency, and displayed a vigour, a heroism, which astonished even those who knew him best. "I will die in my own nest," were the memorable words, borrowed from the Book of Job, with which he rebuked those craven councillors who advised him to seek safety in flight. On August 8 representatives from every class in the capital, summoned to meet the king next morning at the castle, urged the necessity of a vigorous resistance and adequate sacrifices; and the burgesses of Copenhagen protested their unshakable loyalty to the king, and their determination to defend Copenhagen to the last. The fate of the whole monarchy now depended upon the constancy of the capital.

The Danes had only three days' warning of the approaching danger to their capital; and its vast, and, in many places, incomplete and dilapidated line of defence, had at first but 2000 regular defenders. But the government and the people

displayed a memorable and exemplary energy. The suburbs beyond the walls were voluntarily abandoned and destroyed; the ramparts were repaired by gangs of officers and men, working night and day under the personal supervision of the king and queen; bullets were cast, cattle were driven in from the surrounding country, money was freely contributed; the roll of the recruiting drums was heard at the corner of every street; and hundreds of peasants, tempted by the promise of freedom from feudal service, flocked to the colours. By the beginning of September 7000 men were under arms.

It was on August 11, 1658, that Charles X stood before Copenhagen with his army. Clouds of smoke from the burning suburbs were the first thing which met his eye as he surveyed the position from Valby Hill, and made it clear that he must expect a vigorous resistance. Abandoning his original intention of carrying the place by assault, he began a regular siege, and detached Vrangél with 3000 men to take the castle of Kronborg, which dominated the northern entrance of the Sound. Frederick III had strictly charged the commandant, Colonel Paul Bunfeld, to blow the fortress into the air rather than surrender it. He disobeyed his sovereign's command by capitulating without any serious attempt at resistance. The fall of Kronborg was the last act in the drama of Denmark's humiliation; and its consequences were speedily visible when the guns of the fortress were turned against Copenhagen. But in the capital itself there was no thought of surrender; and, before the end of October Copenhagen received effectual assistance from abroad.

The tidings of the second Swedo-Danish War had produced a violent commotion in the Netherlands. By the treaty of 1649 the States General were bound to help Denmark in case of attack; but far more operative than any treaty obligations was the lively fear of Denmark's annihilation, and the consequent establishment of the Swedish empire in the north to the detriment of Dutch trade. The old grudge against the

master of the Sound tolls was completely forgotten. To save Denmark was now the sole consideration of the Dutch statesmen; and the States General at once despatched a fleet of forty war-vessels and twenty-eight transports, with an army of 2200 men and ample provisions on board, under Wassenaer, to the relief of Copenhagen. On October 23 the Dutch fleet cast anchor a little north of Elsinore; on the 29th it ran the gauntlet of the guns of Kronborg in safety, and on the same day attacked the Swedish fleet of forty-four sail in the Sound, defeating it after a severe six hours' contest, and compelling it to retire to Landskrona. The same afternoon the transports with the provisions and reinforcements ran into Copenhagen harbour. On the following day Charles X raised the siege, and retired to an entrenched camp a mile and a half from the Danish capital. In the course of the next few weeks the province of Trondhjem was recovered by the Danes. Bornholm was lost through a revolt of its inhabitants; there was a serious rising in Scania; Thorn in Prussia was stormed by a combined host of Poles, Brandenburgers, and Austrians under the Elector Frederick William and Montecuculli; while Czarniecki burst into Holstein (Sept. 22) and compelled the diminutive Swedish army there to fall back upon Fredriksodde. By the end of December the whole of Jutland was recovered for Denmark; and on January 21, 1659, a new alliance for the continuation of the war was signed at Ribe between Denmark and Brandenburg. The relative positions of the belligerents were now reversed; and it was the turn of the Swedish statesmen to be anxious.

Nevertheless Charles X had not yet abandoned the hope of capturing Copenhagen, a success which would enable him to prescribe conditions of peace instead of receiving them. An assault was gallantly made on the night of February 10-11, 1659, but was repulsed at all points with the loss of 1500 killed and wounded. Even now the Swedish king did not abandon his plans. He rooted himself still more firmly on

the Danish islands, reckoning besides on the help of England, whose fleet of 43 sail with 2000 guns, under Montague, entered the Sound in April, 1659. The sudden intervention of England was due to the so-called Guarantee Treaty signed between France and the new Protector Richard Cromwell, in January, 1659, for the purpose of bringing about peace between Sweden and all her enemies (except the house of Habsburg, against whom Mazarin, the prime mover in the affair, wished to employ the Swedish armies), and at the same time compelling the Netherlands to accede to the political system of the two other western powers. The Dutch government, fearful of a breach with England in case it continued the war with Sweden, was now desirous of peace, provided that an equilibrium were established in the North, and, at the same time, the interests of the Dutch Baltic trade were secured. The first result of these diplomatic negotiations was the treaty known as the first Hague Concert (May 11, 1659) whereby England, France, and the Netherlands agreed to co-operate in order to terminate the war between Denmark and Sweden, on the basis of the Treaty of Roskilde. The situation was still further complicated by the presence in the same waters of two Dutch fleets and an English fleet. Meanwhile the negotiations had been transferred to the Hague; where, on July 14, 1659, the second Hague Concert was signed, by the terms of which England and the Netherlands contracted to employ their fleets to compel either, or both, of the Scandinavian kings to accept the conditions of the first Hague Concert within a fortnight. But Mazarin, unwilling to use actual force against a contingent ally like Sweden, refused to accede to the second Hague Concert.

The first effect of this external pressure was to irritate and bring together both belligerents; but fresh negotiations proved abortive. On August 26 Montague's fleet returned to England; and Wassenaer was recalled by the States General for economical reasons, leaving De Ruyter's fleet behind to co-operate with the Danes. A combined attack from Kiel and Kolding, made

by the Dutch, Polish, Austrian, and Danish troops upon the small Swedish army-corps of 5000 men still in Fünen, resulted in the victory of Nyborg (Nov. 14, 1659) and the unconditional surrender of the whole force on the following day. The moral and political consequences of this victory were considerable. The Danish government no longer felt itself bound by the Hague Concerts; while Charles X vainly sought a reconciliation with his most dangerous enemy, the United Provinces, by proposing a partition between them of the Danish dominions. Finally negotiations were reopened with Denmark, the Swedish king proposing to exercise pressure upon the Danes by a simultaneous winter campaign in Norway. Such an enterprise necessitated fresh subsidies from his already impoverished people, and obliged him, in December, 1659, to cross over to Sweden to meet the Estates whom he had summoned to Gothenburg. The lower Estates murmured at the imposition of fresh burdens; and Charles had need of all his adroitness to persuade them that his demands were reasonable and necessary. At the very beginning of the Riksdag, in Jan. 1660, it was noticed that the king was ill; but he spared himself as little in the council chamber as in the battle-field, till death suddenly overtook him on the night of February 13, 1660, in his thirty-eighth year. The abrupt cessation of such an inexhaustible fount of enterprise and energy was a distinct loss to Sweden; and signs are not wanting that, in his latter years, Charles had begun to feel the need and value of repose. Had he lived long enough to overcome his martial ardour, and develop and organise the empire he helped to create, Sweden might perhaps have remained a great power to this day. Even so, she owes her natural frontiers in the Scandinavian peninsula to Charles X.

The regency appointed to govern Sweden during the minority of Charles XI, who was but four years old on his father's death, at once opened negotiations with all Sweden's enemies. The Peace of Oliva, May 3, 1660, made under French



mediation, put an end to the long feud with Poland, and, at the same time, ended the quarrel between Sweden on the one side, and the Emperor and the Elector of Brandenburg on the other. By this peace Sweden's possession of Livonia, and the Elector of Brandenburg's sovereignty over Prussia, were alike confirmed; and the king of Poland renounced all claim to the Swedish crown. As regards Denmark, the Peace of Oliva signified the desertion of her three principal allies, Poland, Brandenburg, and the Emperor, and thus compelled her to reopen negotiations with Sweden direct. The differences between the two states were finally adjusted by the Peace of Copenhagen, May 27, 1660, which confirmed the chief points of the Treaty of Roskilde with the important modifications that Sweden now surrendered the province of Trondhjem and the isle of Bornholm, and released Denmark from the obligation of excluding hostile fleets from the Baltic. Grievous as was the loss of the fertile and populous Scanian provinces, which had belonged to Denmark from time immemorial, humiliating as was the establishment of the duke of Gottorp as a sovereign prince within the confines of the Danish kingdom, the Peace of Copenhagen came as a relief in a long series of disasters and humiliations, and, at any rate, confirmed the independence of the Danish state.

But if Denmark had emerged from the war with her dignity and independence unimpaired, she had tacitly surrendered the dominion of the North to her Scandinavian rival. Sweden was now not only a military power of the first magnitude, but also one of the largest states in Europe, possessing about twice as much territory as modern Sweden. Her area embraced nearly 16,800 geographical square miles, a mass of land 7000 square miles larger than the modern German empire. Yet the Swedish empire was rather a geographical expression than a state with natural and national boundaries. Modern Sweden is bounded by the Baltic: during the seventeenth century the Baltic was merely the bond between her various widely

dispersed dominions. All the islands in the Baltic, except the Danish group, belonged to Sweden. The estuaries of all the great German rivers, except the Niemen and the Vistula, debouched in Swedish territory, within which also lay two-thirds of Lake Ladoga and one-half of Lake Peipus. Stockholm, the capital, lay in the very centre of the empire, whose greatest city was Riga on the other side of the sea. Yet this vast empire contained but half the population of modern Sweden. Even after the acquisition of the Scanian and Baltic and Swedish provinces, the total population of seventeenth century Sweden was only 2,500,000, or about 140 souls to the square mile; and more than half of it consisted of distinct and clashing nationalities, Finns, Esthonians, Letts, Lapps, Slavs, and German. Nay, far from possessing natural boundaries, Sweden's new frontiers were of the most insecure description, inasmuch as they went together, and cal, parting asunder races which naturally were of the same stock behind which stood powerful neighbours of Livonia, where ready at the first opportunity to reunite them. This was the case not only in her German provinces, but in Livonia, where her boundary, running along the Polish border, cut the Letts into two equal parts, and in Ingria, where the Russians dwelt within her borders. There was no benefit which Swedish empire but the unity of the State; and this unity was only upheld by force of arms. The one durable advantage which Sweden derived from her military triumphs was her enlarged boundaries and her national unity within the Scania peninsula itself. When her territorial conquests on the east side of the Baltic vanished, as they were bound to, Sweden proper stood behind the great collapsing empire in the safe within her proper confines.

Yet evanescent as it was, the creation of the Swedish empire was not without its salutary effects on the national character. Politically it was a mistake; but the effort to maintain such an empire intact stimulated a strenuous

a vigilance, a sense of duty, a spirit of enterprise and self-sacrifice, which produced a whole series of monarchs, statesmen, and heroes, the like of which the world has seldom seen. Had Sweden been able from the first to live within her natural boundaries, her material prosperity might perhaps have been far greater, and her material sufferings far less ; but her history would have lacked that quality of greatness which always waits upon true heroism, and morally she herself would have been the poorer.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE DANISH REVOLUTION AND PETER GRIFFENFELD, 1660-1676.

"DENMARK," says Hannibal Sehested, "went back because her nobility grew unwarlike, and preferred disaster and territorial diminution to any curtailment of their privileges." It was therefore only a just retribution that the Danish nobility should emerge from the war impotent and discredited, hated by the other classes and feared by none. The Rigsraad, the focus of aristocratic authority, suffered a proportionate loss of dignity and power. Henceforth it had little to say for itself, and, while feeling the necessity of reform without daring to initiate it, drifted helplessly towards its ruin. On the other hand, Copenhagen, proudly conscious of its intrinsic importance and of its inestimable services during the war, now openly claimed to have a voice in public affairs. Still higher had risen the influence of the crown. The courage and resource displayed by Frederick III in the extremity of the national danger had won for the 'least expansive of monarchs' an extraordinary popularity.

The first to experience the consequences of the change in the political atmosphere were Korfits Ulfeld and Leonora Christina. Ulfeld's treason had been rewarded by Charles X with the countship of Solvitsborg in Bleking; but the discontented intriguer, imagining himself neglected, apparently began intriguing against his new master, and, in May 1659, he was

imprisoned and condemned to death. The Swedish regents, on July 7, amnestied him; and he returned to Copenhagen to make his peace with his lawful sovereign, who promptly arrested and imprisoned him and his consort. This step was dictated as much by political motives as by a desire of personal vengeance. It would have been highly imprudent if Frederick III, on the eve of a life and death contest with the nobility, had allowed their natural leader, who was also his most dangerous enemy, to remain at large.

For Frederick III had now determined to enlarge the royal power at the expense of the nobility. The events of the war had tended to ripen his absolutist plans, though it cannot certainly be said how far he originally intended to go. One of his chief counsellors at this time was his secretary Christopher Gabel, a man with no ancestral prejudices to prevent him from going all lengths in his own and the king's interests. Of still greater importance were his colleagues Burgomaster Hans Nansen and Bishop Hans Svane. Nansen, born in Flensborg in 1598, had begun life as a trading-skipper, travelled far and wide, amassed a considerable fortune, and, in 1644, was elected burgomaster of Copenhagen. He was a self-made man in the best sense of the word, a shrewd practical fellow, not without a tincture of letters, a persuasive speaker, personally courageous, very determined, yet withal wary and circumspect, and decidedly ambitious. In him Frederick III could reckon upon a devoted adherent, ready to answer for the uncompromising loyalty of the citizens of Copenhagen. The primate, Hans Svane, born in 1606, was himself the son of a burgomaster. After studying theology and oriental languages abroad, he returned to Copenhagen with a great reputation for learning, and, in 1655, was appointed bishop of Sjælland. He also was a man of strong character, resolute alike in speech and action, with all a high-churchman's veneration for the monarchy, with all an able commoner's dislike and suspicion of an incompetent and unjustly privileged aristocracy.

On September 10, 1660, the Rigsdag, which was to repair the ravages of the war and provide for the future, was opened with great ceremony in the Riddersal of the castle of Copenhagen. One hundred noblemen were present, besides the bishops, and the representatives of the towns. The first bill laid before the Estates by the government was to impose an excise tax on the principal articles of consumption, together with subsidiary taxes on cattle, poultry, stamped paper, &c., in return for which the abolition of all the old direct taxes was promised. The nobility at first claimed exemption from taxation on behalf of themselves and their soccagers, while the clergy and burgesses insisted upon an absolute equality of taxation. There were sharp encounters between the presidents of the contending orders; but the position of the Lower Estates was considerably prejudiced by the dissensions of its various sections. Thus the privileges of the bishops, and of the cities of Copenhagen and Kristianshavn, profoundly irritated the lower clergy and the unprivileged lesser towns, and made a cordial understanding impossible till Hans Svane and Hans Nansen, who now openly came forward as the leaders of the reform movement, proposed that the privileges which divided the non-noble Estates should be abolished. In accordance with this proposal, the two Lower Estates, on September 16, subscribed a memorandum addressed to the Rigsraad, declaring their willingness to renounce their privileges, provided the nobility and the University did the same, which was tantamount to a declaration that the whole of the clergy and burgesses had made common cause against the nobility. The opposition so formed took the name of the "Conjoined Estates." The presentation of the memorial of the Conjoined to the Rigsraad provoked an outburst of indignation. The Senate made the cause of the nobility its own; and its chief spokesman, Otto Krag, asked the bearers of the memorial if they really imagined that there ought to be no distinction between a gentleman and a boor. But the nobility

soon perceived the necessity of complete surrender. On September 30 the First Estate abandoned its former standpoint, and renounced its privileges with one unimportant reservation.

The struggle now seemed to be over; and the financial question having also been settled, the king, had he been so minded, might have dismissed the Estates. But the still more important question of reform was now raised. On September 17 the burgesses introduced a bill proposing the establishment of a new constitution including local self-government in the towns, the abolition of serfdom, and the formation of a national army. It fell to the ground for want of adequate support; but another proposition, the fruit of secret discussion between the king and his confederates, which placed all fiefs under the control of the crown as regards taxation, and provided for selling and letting them to the highest bidder, was accepted by the Estate of Burgesses on September 25. The significance of this ordinance lay in the fact that it shattered the privileged position of the nobility in the State by abolishing its exclusive right to the possession of fiefs. What happened next is not quite clear. Our sources fail us, and we are at the mercy of doubtful rumours and more or less unreliable anecdotes. We have a vision of intrigues, mysterious conferences, threats and bribery, dimly discernible through a mist of shifting tradition.

The first glint of light is a letter, dated September 23, from Frederick III to Svane and Nansen, authorising them to communicate the arrangements already made to reliable men, and act quickly, as "if the others gain time they may possibly gain more." The first step was to make sure of the captain of the city train-bands: of the garrison of Copenhagen the king had no doubt. The second step was to provide against defection; and this was done at a meeting of the Sjælland clergy at Roskilde on October 4, when Dean Peder Villadsen, Svane's right hand, persuaded the clergy to give their representatives at Copenhagen unlimited powers. The headquarters of the conspirators was the bishop's palace near Vor Frue

Church, between which and the court messages were passing continually, and where the document to be adopted by the Conjoined Estates took its final shape.

On October 8, at the Copenhagen town-hall, the two burgomasters, Hans Nansen and Kristoffer Hansen, proposed that the realm of Denmark should be made over to the king as an hereditary kingdom, without prejudice to the privileges of the Estates; whereupon they proceeded to Brewers' Hall, and informed the Estate of Burgesses there assembled of what had been done. A fiery oration from Nansen dissolved some feeble opposition; and, simultaneously, Bishop Svane carried the clergy along with him at the House of Assembly in the Silkegade. The so-called *Instrument*, now signed by the Lower Estates, offered the realm to the king and his house as an hereditary monarchy, by way of thank-offering, mainly for his courageous deliverance of the kingdom during the war; and the Rigsraad and the nobility were urged to notify the resolution to the king, and desire him to maintain each Estate in its due privileges, and to give a written counter-assurance that the revolution now to be effected was for the sole benefit of the State. Rumours of what had happened spread rapidly through the town. On the following day Senator Otto Krag and Hans Nansen had their memorable encounter on Castle Bridge, when Krag pointed to the fortress-prison of the Blue Tower and asked the burgomaster if he knew what it was, whereupon Nansen, by way of answer, raised his hand towards the alarm-bell in the steeple of Vor Frue Church, which could at any moment call the burgesses to arms in defence of the king and their privileges against the tyranny of the nobles.

Events now moved forward rapidly. On October 10 a deputation from the clergy and burgesses proceeded to the Council House, where the Raad were deliberating, to demand an answer to their propositions. After a tumultuous scene the Raad rejected the Instrument altogether; whereupon the deputies proceeded to the palace, and were graciously received



by the king, who promised them an answer next day. The same afternoon the guards in the streets and on the ramparts were doubled; on the following morning the gates of the city were closed, a boom was thrown across the harbour, powder and bullets were distributed among the city trainbands, who were bidden to be in readiness when the alarm-bell called them, and cavalry was massed in the environs of the city. Simultaneously orders were sent to all the chief military officers in the country to be on their guard and adopt all such measures as might be necessary to prevent domestic disorder or foreign interference. The same afternoon the king sent a message to the Rigsraad urging them to declare their views quickly, as he could no longer hold himself responsible for what might happen. After a feeble attempt at a compromise, the Raad gave way. On October 13 it signed a declaration to the effect that it associated itself with the other Estates in the making over of the kingdom, as an hereditary monarchy, to His Majesty and his heirs male and female, provided that the kingdom remained undivided, and the privileges of all the Estates continued unimpaired. The same day the king received the official communication of this declaration, and the congratulations of Hans Hansen and Hans Svane. Thus the ancient constitution was transformed; and Denmark became a monarchy hereditary in Frederick III and his posterity.

But, though hereditary sovereignty had been introduced, the laws of the land had not been abolished. The monarch was now an unfettered over-lord, but he had by no means been absolved from his obligations towards his subjects. Hereditary sovereignty *per se* was not held to signify unlimited dominion, still less absolutism. On the contrary, the magnificent gift of the Danish nation to Frederick III was made under express conditions. The "Instrument" drawn up by the Lower Estates implied the retention of all due privileges; and the king, in accepting the gift of an hereditary crown, did not repudiate

the implied inviolability of the privileges of the donors. These were, to a large extent, the sentiments of many of the promoters of the Revolution, especially of the burgesses of Copenhagen, who had emancipated the crown from the influence of the nobility, the better to secure their own privileges. Unfortunately everything was left so vague, that it was an easy matter for the ultra-royalists to ignore the privileges of the Estates, and even the Estates themselves.

On October 14, a committee of four senators, four nobles, three bishops and six burgomasters, was summoned to the palace, to organise the new government. The discussion mainly turned upon two points, (1) whether a new oath of homage should be taken to the king, and (2) what was to be done with the *Haandfæstning*, or royal charter. The first point was speedily decided in the affirmative: as to the second there was considerable difference of opinion. Bishop Svane spoke vehemently in favour of leaving everything to the king's good pleasure: ultimately it was decided that he should be released from his oath and the charter returned to him; but a rider was added suggesting that His Majesty should, at the same time, promulgate a recess providing for his own and his people's welfare. Thus the idea of dictating a new constitution to the king was abandoned. Supreme authority was placed in his hands; and he was to be the official mediator between the Estates. Yet Frederick III was not left absolutely his own master; for the provision regarding a recess, or new constitution, showed plainly enough that such a constitution was expected, and, once granted, would of course have limited the royal power.

It now only remained to execute the resolutions of the committee. On October 17, the charter, which the king had sworn to observe twelve years before, was solemnly handed back to him at the palace, in the presence of the delegates, Frederick III thereupon promising to rule as a Christian king to the satisfaction of all the Estates of the Realm. On the following day,

the king, seated on the topmost step of a lofty tribune surmounted by a baldaquin, erected in the midst of the principal square of Copenhagen, received the public homage of his subjects of all ranks in the presence of an immense concourse, on which occasion he again promised to rule "as a Christian hereditary king and gracious master," and, "as soon as possible, to prepare and set up" such a constitution as should secure to his subjects a Christian and indulgent sway. Then everyone, in order of precedence, kissed and shook the hands of the king and queen, the ceremony concluding with a grand banquet at the palace. After dinner the queen and the clergy withdrew; but the king remained. An incident now occurred which made a strong impression on all present. With a brimming beaker in his hand, Frederick III went up to Hans Nansen, drank with him, and drew him aside. Presently they were joined by Hannibal Sehested; and the three men conversed together in a low voice for some time, till the burgomaster, succumbing to the influence of his potations, fumbled his way to his carriage with the assistance of some of his civic colleagues. Whether Nansen, intoxicated by wine and the royal favour, consented on this occasion to sacrifice the privileges of his order and his city, it is impossible to say; but it is significant that from henceforth we hear no more of the "recess" or representative constitution which the more liberal of the leaders of the lower orders had hoped for when they released Frederick III from the obligations of the *Haand-fæstning*. The Estates continued in session, indeed, till the beginning of December, when the deputies went home of their own accord; but, though they voted a whole series of new taxes, they got no privileges in return. Even before they had dispersed, a new act of homage was rendered to the king (Nov. 15) at the palace by those who had not been present at the former act; on which occasion the royal family assumed an attitude of dignified hauteur, and there was neither hand-kissing, nor hand-shaking, nor banquet. Nevertheless nobody

outside court circles had the remotest conception that the Estates of the Realm were not to meet again in Denmark for close upon two hundred years.

How or when it first occurred to Frederick III to follow up his advantage, we do not know. But we can follow pretty plainly the stages of the progress from a limited to an absolute monarchy. By an Act dated January 10, 1661, entitled "Instrument, or pragmatic sanction, of the king's hereditary right to the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway," and circulated throughout the country for general subscription, it was declared that all the prerogatives of majesty, and "all regalia as an absolute Sovereign Lord," had been made over to the king by the signatories. Yet, even after the issue of this Instrument, there was nothing, strictly speaking, to prevent Frederick III from voluntarily conceding to his subjects, as a royal gift, some share in the administration. Unfortunately the king was bent only upon still further emphasising the plenitude of his power. In March 1661 he consulted his trusted Sleswick jurists on the subject; and they advised him to promulgate a *lex regia perpetua*. But, at Copenhagen, the king's advisers were simultaneously framing other drafts of a *Lex Regia*, both in Latin and Danish; and the one which finally won the royal favour and ultimately became the famous *Kongelov*, or "King's Law."

This document was in every way unique. In the first place it is remarkable for its literary excellence. Compared with the barbarous macaronic jargon of the contemporary official language, it shines forth as a masterpiece of pure, pithy, and original Danish. Still more remarkable are the tone and tenour of this Royal Law. The *Kongelov* has the highly dubious honour of being the one written law in the civilised world which fearlessly carries out absolutism to its last consequences. The monarchy is declared to owe its origin to the surrender of the supreme authority by the Estates to the king. The maintenance of the indivisibility of the realm, and of the Christian

faith according to the Augsburg Confession, and the observance of the *Kongelov* itself, are now the sole obligations binding upon the king. The supreme spiritual authority also is now claimed; and it is expressly stated that it becomes none to crown him; the moment he ascends the throne, crown and sceptre belong to him by right. Moreover, paragraph 26 declares guilty of *lèse-majesté* whosoever shall in any way usurp or infringe the king's absolute authority.

The *Kongelov* is dated and subscribed November 14, 1665, but was kept a profound secret, only two initiated persons knowing of its existence until after the death of Frederick III. Of these two persons, one was Christopher Gabel, already mentioned as the king's chief counsellor during the Revolution. Gabel's elevation had a political as well as a personal significance. For the first time a man of the middle classes had been raised to the highest position in the State, which meant that the new system was non-aristocratic in principle, and would in future seek its instruments among the *bourgeoisie*. Yet Gabel's supremacy was contested and insecure; and his future successor was already at hand to supersede him, when necessary, in the person of the author and custodian of the *Kongelov*, Secretary Schumacher.

Peter Schumacher, Denmark's one great statesman since the Middle Ages, was born at Copenhagen, on August 24, 1635, of a wealthy trading family connected by numerous ties with the leading civic, clerical, and learned circles in the Danish capital. As a child he was preternaturally precocious. His tutor, Jens Vorde, who prepared him, in his eleventh year, for the University, praises his extraordinary gifts, his mastery of the classical languages, his almost disquieting diligence, which needed restraint rather than incitement. The brilliant way in which he sustained his preliminary examination won him the friendship of the examiner, Bishop Jasper Brokman, at whose palace, which now became his second home, he first met Frederick III. The king was struck by the lad's bright grey

eyes and pleasant humorous face ; and Brokman, proud of his pupil, made him translate a chapter from a Hebrew Bible first into Latin and then into Danish, for the entertainment of the scholarly monarch. In 1654, young Schumacher went abroad for eight years to complete his education at the continental universities. From Germany he proceeded to the Netherlands, staying at Leyden, Utrecht, and Amsterdam, and passing from thence in 1657 to Queen's College, Oxford, at which place he resided three years. The epoch-making events which occurred in England while he was at Oxford profoundly interested him, and, coinciding as they did with the Revolution in Denmark, which threw open a career to the middle classes, convinced him that his proper sphere was politics. In the autumn of 1660, Schumacher visited Paris shortly after Mazarin's death, when the young Louis XIV first seized the reins of power. He seems to have been profoundly impressed by the administrative superiority of a strong centralised monarchy in the hands of an energetic monarch who knew his own mind ; and, in politics, France ever afterwards was his model European state. The social charm and polite culture of French society also attracted him ; and he appropriated its quintessence in an incredibly short time. The last year of his travels was spent in Spain, where he added a thorough knowledge of the Castilian language and literature to his other accomplishments. On the other hand, his travels, if they enriched his mind, at the same time relaxed his character. From the levity of his correspondence, it is probable that at this time he was a somewhat indiscriminate admirer of the fair sex ; and he certainly brought home with him easy morals as well as exquisite manners.

On his return to Copenhagen, in 1662, Schumacher found the monarchy firmly established on the ruins of the aristocracy, and eager to buy the services of every man of the middle classes who had superior talents to offer. Conscious of his ability, and determined to make his way in this new "Pro-

mised Land," the young adventurer contrived to secure the protection of Gabel; and, in 1663, was appointed the royal librarian and record-keeper, in which double capacity he had unrivalled opportunities of appealing to the best side of Frederick III's character, his love of literature and learning. A romantic friendship contracted about the same time with the king's bastard, Count Ulrik Frederick Gyldenlöve, consolidated his position. In 1665 Schumacher obtained his first political post as the king's secretary, and the same year composed the *Kongelov*. In 1666 we find him secretary in the chancellery. He was now a personage at court, where he won all hearts (including the hearts of more than one married lady) by his amiability and gaiety; and in political matters his influence was beginning to be felt.

Meanwhile the monarchy had had time effectually to organise a new and complete system of government. The administration was based upon what was then called the collegiate system; in other words it was a bureaucracy consisting of the various *Kollegier*, or departments of state, each with its president and assistant secretaries. The most important and dignified of these departments was the Statskollegium, which took over the legislative authority of the now defunct Rigsraad, besides the direction of foreign affairs. Yet the status of the colleges was vague and insecure, all real power being in the hands of the king, who was not even obliged to follow the advice or suggestion of the colleges. Another new institution was the *Gehejmeraad*, or Privy Council, in which the king was supposed to transact business, though he generally preferred to consult its individual members separately according to his good pleasure. The programme of equality, the original "platform" of the new absolutism, was limited to taxation and the admission of all three Estates to the highest administrative and judicial functions; and this equalisation of the nobility, clergy, and burgesses explains the undoubted popularity of the Revolution at the time when it took place. These common

privileges were promulgated on June 24, 1661, as a free gift from the crown.

That the nobility should have regarded the extension of their peculiar privileges to the lower orders unfavourably, was only natural; and there can be no doubt that, during the earlier years of the new absolutism, the majority of the Danish nobility was in secret opposition to the usurping government. Of this feeling the monarchy was well aware; and its nervous apprehension of a possible aristocratic reaction made it peculiarly sensitive to the faintest semblance of treason. Frederick III's treatment of Korfits Ulfeld and his wife may be taken as a typical instance of his attitude towards the nobility generally. Ulfeld and Leonora Christina were, in the summer of 1660, conveyed to Hammershus in Bornholm, as prisoners of state. Their captivity was severe to brutality; and they were only released (in Sept. 1661) on the most humiliating terms. Maddened with rage and shame, the fallen magnate, who in the meantime had fled the country, henceforth dreamed of nothing but revenge, and in the course of 1662, during his residence at Bruges, so far forgot himself as to offer the Danish crown to the Elector of Brandenburg, proposing to raise a rebellion in Denmark for that purpose. Frederick William betrayed Ulfeld's treason to Frederick III. The panic-stricken Danish government at once impeached the traitor; and on July 24, 1663, he and his children were degraded, his property was confiscated, and he was condemned to be beheaded and quartered. He escaped from the country, but the sentence was actually carried out on his effigy; and a pillory was erected on the ruins of his mansion at Copenhagen. Every society has the right to defend itself against the treachery of its members; and for years Ulfeld had striven to injure his country and even destroy its independence. His condemnation, therefore, was perfectly just. His death at Basel, in February 1664, was a distinct relief to the Danish court.

The Revolution of 1660 was certainly beneficial to Norway,



With the disappearance of the Rigsraad, which, as representing the Danish crown, had hitherto exercised sovereignty over both kingdoms, Norway ceased to be a subject principality. The sovereign hereditary king stood in exactly the same relations to both kingdoms; and thus, constitutionally, Norway was placed on an equality with Denmark, united with but not subordinate to it. It is pretty clear that the majority of the Norwegian people hoped that the Revolution would give them an administration independent of the Danish government; but these expectations were not realised. Till the cessation of the union in 1814, Copenhagen continued to be the headquarters of the Norwegian administration; both kingdoms had common departments of state; and the common chancellery continued to be called the Danish chancellery. Norway did not even obtain a university of her own till 1811. On the other hand, the condition of Norway was now greatly improved. In January, 1661, a Land Commission was appointed to investigate the financial and economical conditions of the kingdom; the fiefs were transformed into counties; the gentry was deprived of its immunity from taxation; the public officials were paid fixed salaries; and in July, 1662, the Norwegian towns received special privileges, including the monopoly of the lucrative timber trade. Epoch-making for Norway was the governor-generalship (1664-1679) of Frederick Ulric Gyldenlöve, an ardent reformer and an administrator of considerable ability, who laid the foundations of the Norwegian fleet, and would have re-organised the finances on a far more enlightened basis, but for the obstruction which his plans met with at Copenhagen.

Denmark's foreign policy, from 1660 to 1670, was cautious and expectant. Europe, since 1658, had been divided into two hostile camps. In that year the anti-Imperial Rhenish Union had been formed between France, Sweden, and several of the North German princes; and when, in 1661, Louis XIV personally took over the government of France, he proposed

to use the Union for his own political purposes. The natural opponents of France were the Emperor and Spain, who had formed a counter-league; and it was the object of both combinations to attract the neutral powers into their respective orbits. The Danish government, distracted by contrary opinions, long remained irresolutely neutral. Hannibal Sehested and Gabel were for an alliance with France as being the only power from whom considerable subsidies were to be expected, and as the best guarantee against an attack from Sweden. By the Treaty of Paris (July 1663) Denmark finally acceded to the Union of the Rhine, thereby obtaining a promise of help from France in case she was attacked by Sweden while her troops were engaged in the French interest in Germany. The Anglo-Dutch War of 1665 still further complicated matters. Sweden, chagrined at the Franco-Danish *rapprochement*, had, in 1665, contracted an alliance with England; and Charles II desired to secure Denmark also as a confederate against the Dutch, and thus form a triple alliance between Great Britain and the Scandinavian powers. It was a difficult situation for Denmark, uncertain as she was which of the two coalitions would prevail, especially as her new ally, France, was closely bound to the Netherlands; and there was a fresh shifting of alliances when France, in June 1666, declared war against England. But the Peace of Breda (1667) terminated hostilities; and, in the following year, a Triple Alliance was formed between England, Sweden, and the Netherlands as a counterpoise to the growing influence of Louis XIV, an alliance to which Denmark resolutely refused to accede in the hope of supplanting Sweden as the Scandinavian ally of France.

All this time young Schumacher's influence had been steadily increasing. On the death of Frederick III (Feb. 9, 1670) he was the most trusted of the royal counsellors. He alone was aware of the existence of the new throne of walrus ivory embellished with three silver life-size lions, and of the new regalia, wrought by the royal goldsmith, Paul Kurtz, both of

which treasures he had, by the king's command, concealed in a vault beneath the royal castle. Frederick III had also confided to him a sealed packet containing the *Kongelov*, which was to be delivered to his successor alone; and Schumacher was bound by oath to disclose the secret to no one else.

The new king, Christian V, who ascended the throne in his twenty-fourth year, resembled his grandfather rather than his father. He had the popular manners, the warlike and athletic tastes, and the preference for all things Danish, which had distinguished Christian IV. He was also naturally good-natured and kind-hearted, but, possessing neither intellect nor character, he was very much at the mercy of his environment. A weak despot with an exaggerated opinion of his dignity and his prerogatives—such was Christian V, and his inherent instability and vanity were to do the monarchy infinite harm. Almost his first act on ascending the throne was publicly to insult his consort, the amiable Charlotte Amelia of Hesse Cassel, by introducing into court, as his officially recognised mistress, Amelia Moth, a girl of sixteen, the daughter of his former tutor.

Ministerial changes were the speedy and inevitable consequences of the advent of a new king. A struggle for power now began to rage around the throne. The fall of Gabel, its first outcome, was brought about by a combination between Schumacher, Gyldenlöve, and Frederick Ahlefeld. All three of them stood high in the royal favour. Schumacher had been recommended to his son by Frederick III on his death-bed. "Make a great man of him but do it slowly," said Frederick, who thoroughly understood the characters both of his son and of his minister. Christian V was moreover deeply impressed by the trust which his father had shown in Schumacher, by confiding to him, and him alone, the care of the new throne, the new regalia, and the *Kongelov*. When therefore, on February 9, 1670, Schumacher acquitted himself of his charge, Christian V bade all those about him withdraw, and, after