with the panes, he then invaded the Swediſh dominions : many places of importance were reduced ; and, in 1676, Sweden received a moſt destructive blow by the defeat of her fleet in an engagement with the combined fleets of Den­mark and Holland. Soon after this the king took the go­vernment into his own hands, and in ſome degree reſtored the fortune of Sweden ; but though matters went on in a more proſperous way where the king commanded in perſon, the ſame losses and disgrace attended the Swediſh arms in every other quarter. In Pomerania, count Konigſmark loſt every place of importance excepting Stralſund, Stetin, and Gripswald. In 1678, the Swediſh fleet was defeated in two engagements. At Landſcroon a moſt obſtinate battle was fought from ten in the morning till six at night ; when both parties were obliged, by their fatigue, to retire to their reſpective camps. At Oldeval in Norway, the Swedes were defeated ; and the Danes laid deſolate the islands of Oeland, Smaaland, Unno, and Kuno ; while the electoral troops and Imperialiſts reduced count Konigſmark to the utmoſt diſtreſs in the neighbourhood of Stralſund.

In this deplorable ſituation of affairs count Konigſmark found an opportunity of attacking his enemies to ſuch ad­vantage, that he obtained a complete victory ; aſter which he ravaged the duchy of Mecklenburg. Yet notwithſtanding this ſucceſs, he could not prevent the elector from re­ducing Stralſund ; aſter whieh he was obliged to evacuate Pomerania ; and, to complete his diſtreſs, the fleet which tranſported the Swediſh army from Pomerania was wrecked on the coaſt of Bornholm ; by which accident 2000 perſons were drowned, and the remainder plundered and taken priſoners by the Danes, though they had been furniſhed with paſſports from king Frederic.

In this unproſperous ſituation of affairs a peace was con­cluded at St Germain’s between France and her enemies, by which the Swedes and Danes were left to decide their quarrel by themſelves. Denmark was by no means a match for Sweden, even in the diſtressed ſituation to which ſhe was reduced : for which reaſon a treaty was inſtantly concluded, on terms much more favourable to Sweden than could have been expected ; and the peace was confirmed by a marriage between Charles and Ulrica Eleonora, daughter to the king of Denmark. From this time the Swediſh monarch applied himſelf to the reformation of the ſtate ; and by artfully ma­naging the diſputes between the nobility and peaſants, he obtained a decree of the ſtates empowering him to alter the conſtitution as he pleaſed. Being thus inveſted with abſolute power, he proceeded to take ſome very extraordinary meaſures. In 1685 it was projected to liquidate the public debts by raiſing the nominal value of money, without adding any thing to its intrinſic value. This was put in execution the following year, by which the creditors of the govern­ment loſt upwards of nine millions of crowns. This, with ſome other arbitrary ſteps taken about the ſame time, diſ guſted all the nobility, merchants, and crown-creditors. In Livonia they were highly relented ; and remonſtrances were repeatedly ſent by the hands of deputies, who had orders to insist upon their privileges confirmed by many acts of the king’s predecessors. The deputies could obtain nothing, ſo that the diet was assembled. On their report the body of nobility resolved to draw up a ſtronger remonſtrance than any of the former, to be preſented to the king by captain Patkul one of the deputies, who had already diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his boldneſs and attachment to liberty. His public ſpirit, however, produced no other effect than to pro­cure his own deſtruction. An accuſation was drawn up againſt all the remonſtrants, but eſpecially Patkul. He was sentenced to loſe his right hand, then to be deprived of his life, honours, and eſtates ; to have the latter confiſcated to the crown, and his papers burnt by the hands of the com­mon executioner. The accuſation was declared unjuſt by the univerſity at Leipſic ; but notwithſtanding this, Patkul was obliged to fly his country, to avoid the execution of his rigorous ſentence ; which, however, fell upon him with re­doubled fury in the ſubſequent reign, of which an account is given under the article Patkul.

On the 15th of April 1697, died Charles XI. leaving his crown to his ſon, the celebrated Charles XII. at that time a minor. On his acceſſion he found himſelf under the tuition of his grandmother Eleonora, who had governed the kingdom during the minority of the late king. Though Charles was at that time only 15 years of age, he inſtantly ſhowed a deſire of taking the government into his own hands. His counſellors, count Piper and Axel Sparre, ſignified his deſire to the queen-regent. They were by her referred to the ſtates ; and there all were unanimous : ſo that the queen, finding that oppoſition would be vain, reſigned her power with a good grace ; and Charles was in­veſted with abſolute authority in three days after he had expressed his deſire of reigning alone. He was ſcarce ſeated on the throne when a powerful combination was form­ed againſt him. King Auguſtus of Poland formed deſigns on Livonia ; the king of Denmark revived the diſputes he had with the duke of Holſtein, as a prelude to a war with Sweden ; and Peter the Great of Muſcovy began to form deſigns upon Ingria, formerly a province of Ruſſia. In 1699 the king of Denmark marched an army into Holſtein. Charles ſent a conſiderable body of troops to the duke’s aſſiſtance ; but before their arrival the Danes had ravaged the country, taken the caſtle of Gottorp, and laid cloſe ſiege to Tonningen. Here the king of Denmark commanded in perſon ; and was aſſiſted by the troops of Saxony, Bran­denburg, Wolfenbuttle, and Heſſe-Cassel. England and Holland, as guarantees of the laſt treaty with Denmark, in concert with Sweden, joined Charles againſt this confedera­cy, and ſent fleets to the Baltic. They propoſed a termination of the war upon equitable terms ; but theſe were haughtily refilled by the Daniſh monarch, who despised the youth and inexperience of Charles, and relied too much up­on the alliance he had formed with Saxony, Brandenburg, Poland, and Ruſſia. The town of Tonningen, however, reſiſted all his efforts ; and when he ordered the place to be ſtormed, he had the mortification to see his troops driven headlong from the walls by a handful of Swedes under *ge­neral* Bannier.

In the year 1700, Charles, having entruſted the affairs of the nation with a council choſen out of the ſenate, ſet out on the 8th May from his capital, to which he never afterwards returned. He embarked at Carlscroon, and defeat­ed the fleet of the allies. Having made a deſcent on the island of Zealand, be defeated a body of cavalry that oppoſed his march, and then proceeded to inveſt Copenhagen by ſea and land. The king of Denmark then ſaw the neceſſity there was either of having his capital deſtroyed, or oſ doing juſtice to the duke of Holſtein. He choſe the latter ; and a treaty was concluded in eleven days, upon much the ſame terms as formerly. Charles, being thus at liberty to turn his arms againſt the other princes who had conſpired his deſtruction, reſolved to lead his army againſt Auguſtus king of Poland ; but on his way he received intelligence that the czar of Muſcovy had laid ſiege to Narva with 100,000 men. On this he immediately embarked at Carlſcroon, though it was then the depth of winter, and the Baltic ſcarce: navigable ; and ſoon landed at Pernaw in Livonia with part of his forces, the rest being ordered to Reval. His army did not exceed 20,000 men ; but they were the beſt ſoldiers in Europe, while the Russians were ∙ only an undiſciplined