his brother-in-law the emperor. On hearing this intelli­gence, Norby retired with his whole fleet to the island of Gothland, leaving but a slender garrison in Calmar. Gus­tavus did not fail to improve this opportunity to his own advantage, and quickly made himself master of the town. In the mean time Stockholm continued closely invested, but he thought proper to protract the siege till he should be elected king. Having for this purpose called a general diet, he first filled up the vacancy in the senate occasioned by the massacres of Christiern. He had the address to procure the nomination of such as were in his interest. The assembly was no sooner met, than one of his partisans made a speech, containing the highest encomiums on Gustavus, setting forth in the strongest terms the many eminent ser­vices which he had rendered to his ∞untry, and concluding that thc states would show themselves equally ungrateful and blind to their own interest if they did not immediately elect him king. This proposal was acceded to by such tumultuous acclamations that it was impossible to collect the votes ; so that Gustavus himself acknowledged, that their affection exceeded his merit, and was more agreeable to him tlian the effects of their gratitude. He was urged to have the ceremony of his coronation immediately performed ; but this he delayed, in consequence of some designs which he had formed to reduce the exorbitant power of the clergy. He had himself embraced the doctrines of the reformed religion, and did all in his power to establish the reformation in his new kingdom. His design could not fail to raise against him the enmity of the clergy, and of all the more supersti­tious part of his subjects. The first years of his reign were accordingly embittered by internal disturbances and revolts, which were aided and fomented by the deposed Christiern, who was at one time very near regaining possession of the Swedish dominions.

Christiern having established a powerful interest in Nor­way, once more made an attempt to recover his kingdoms, and was joined by the Dalecarlians; but being defeated by the Swedish forces, he was compelled to return to Norway, where, being obliged to capitulate with the Danish gene­rals, he was detained in captivity during the remainder of his life.

In 1542, Gustavus having happily extricated himself out of all his troubles, prevailed on the states to make the crown hereditary in his family ; after which he applied himself to the en∞uragement of learning and commerce. A treaty was set on foot for a marriage between his eldest son Eric and the princess Elizabeth of England ; but this négociation failed of success.

Gustavus Vasa died in 1560, and was succeeded by his son Eric XIV. The new king was possessed of all the ex­terior ornaments which gave an air of dignity to the per­son, but he had neither the prudence nor the penetration, of his father. He created the first nobility that were ever known in Sweden ; but this he had no sooner done than he quarrelled with them, by passing some act which they thought derogatory to their honour and dignity. The whole course of his reign was disturbed by wars with Denmark and dis­putes with his own subjects. In the former he was unfor­tunate, and towards the latter he behaved with the great­est cruelty. At last, he is said to have become mad. He afterwards recovered his senses, but was soon dethroned by his brothers ; one of whom, named John, succeeded him in the kingdom.

This revolution took place in the year 1568, but with no great advantage to Sweden. Disputes about religion be­tween the king and his brothers, and wars with Russia, threw matters into the utmost confusion. Prince Sigis­mund, the king’s son, was chosen king of Poland, which proved the source of much trouble to the kingdom. In 1590 King John died, and as Sigismund was at a dis­tance, public affairs fell into the utmost confusion ; the

treasury was plundered, and the royal wardrobe spoiled, even before Duke Charles could come to Stockholm to undertake the administration till King Sigismund should return. This however was far from being the greatest disaster which befell the nation at this time. It was known that the king had embraced the popish religion, and it was with good reason suspected that he would attempt to re­store it upon his arrival in Sweden. Sigismund was also obliged, on leaving Poland, to promise that he would remain no longer in Sweden than was necessary to regulate his affairs. These circumstances served to alienate the minds of the Swedes from their sovereign, even before they saw him; and thc universal dissatisfaction was increased by seeing him attended on his arrival in Sweden in 1593 by the pope’s nuncio, to whom he made a present of 30,000 ducats to defray the expenses of his journey to Sweden.

What thc people had foreseen was too well verified. The king refused to confirm the protestants in their reli­gious privileges, and showed such partiality on all occasions to the papists, that a party was formed against him, at the head of which was Duke Charles, his uncle. Remon­strances, accompanied with threats, took place on both sides. Sigismund was apparently reconciled to his uncle, and promised to comply with the inclinations of the people, though without any inclination to perform what he had pro­mised. The agreement indeed was scarcely made, before Sigismund conceived the horrid design of murdering his uncle at the Italian comedy acted the night after his coro­nation. The duke, however, having notice of the plot, found means to defeat it. This enraged the king so much, that he had resolved to accomplish his designs by force; and he therefore commanded a Polish army to march to­wards the frontiers of Sweden, where they committed all the ravages that could be expected from an enraged and cruel enemy. Complaints were made by the protestant clergy to the senate ; but no other answer was returned than that, till the king’s departure, they should abstain from those bitter invectives and reproaches, which had provoked the Catholics, and that during his absence they would be at more liberty.

In 1595 Sigismund set sail for Dantzig, leaving the ad­ministration in the hands of Duke Charles. The conse­quence of this was, that the dissensions which had already taken place being continually increased by the obstinacy of the king, Charles assumed the sovereign power ; and in 1604 Sigismund was formally deposed, and his uncle Charles IX. raised to the throne. He proved a wise and brave prince, restoring the tranquillity of the kingdom, and car­rying on a war with vigour against Poland and Denmark. He died in 1611, leaving the kingdom to his son, the cele­brated Gustavus Adolphus.

Though Charles IX. by his wise and vigorous conduct had in some measure retrieved the affairs of Sweden, they were still in a very bad condition. The finances of the kingdom were entirely drained by a series of wars and re­volutions ; powerful armies were preparing in Denmark, Po­land, and Russia, while not only the Swedish troops were in­ferior in number to their enemies, but the government was destitute of resources for their payment. Though the Swedish laws required that the prince should have attained his eighteenth year before he was of age, yet such striking marks of the great qualities of Gustavus appeared, that he was allowed by the states to assume the administration be­fore this early period. His first act was to resume all the crown-grants, in order that he might be enabled to carry on the wars in which he was engaged, and to fill all places, both civil and military, with persons of merit. At the head of domestic and foreign affairs was placed the chan­cellor Oxenstiern, a person every way equal to the import­ant trust, and the choosing of whom impressed Europe with the highest opinion of the young monarch’s penetration.