which for the first time legally regulated the system of four houses formerly adopted. In the 16th century the nobility, having been endowed with extensive domains by the crown, again won an ascendency that was very dangerous to the lower classes, but it was crushed when Charles XI., by the diminution of their property (1680), for ever put an end to the supremacy of the nobility and the council in the state. By this act the power of the king was greatly strengthened, so much so as to endanger even the most essential rights of the riksdag,—those of giving laws and levying taxes. But after the death of Charles XII. the despotic system was abolished, and all power was lodged in the hands of the riksdag by the constitutions of 1719 and 1720. During the following period, which is called “ the time of liberty,” it was the riksdag that had the function of appointing and dismissing the councillors of state, and by this means was able to dominate the administration so completely as to make the power of the king of little more significance than an empty word. Different political parties defeated each other, and sold their services to foreign states without any regard to the interests of their own country. This state of affairs, which might eventually have proved exceedingly disastrous, was altered by a revolution effected by Gustavus III. (1772), which restored to the king his former power. In the new constitution, however, neither the authority of the king nor that of the people was clearly limited, and this soon led to collisions by which the king succeeded in considerably increasing his ascendency (1789), though he cannot be said to have gained despotic power. Gustavus IV., however, abused his great authority, so that he was dethroned by a revolution. New constitutional laws were now made, in which, guided by the experience of former times, an effort was made clearly to define the respective powers of the king and the representatives of the people, to prevent encroachment from either side. The effort was crowned with success, and the new constitution of June 6, 1809, is still in great measure in force. The old division, however, into four houses has been abolished, and the influence of the representatives of the people has been in­creased by the new Riksdagsordning of 1866. The other constitutional laws are the “Successionsordning” (“law of succession”) of 1810 and the “ Tryckfrihetsordning ” (“law regulating the liberty of the press”) of 1812.

The executive power is vested in the king alone. The legislative power he shares with the riksdag, both par­ties having the rights of initiative and veto. The king has, besides, a legislative power, not precisely defined, in certain economic matters. The right of levying taxes belongs to the riksdag alone ; but the king may in cer­tain cases (as, for example, through his right of lowering the custom duties) exercise a certain influence. He can declare war and make peace, and has the supreme com­mand of the army.

The king is irresponsible, but all his resolutions must be taken in the presence of responsible councillors (“statsrâd”). These, who form the council of state, are ten in number, of whom seven are also the heads of departments of the administration (justice, foreign affairs, army, navy, internal affairs, finance, and ecclesiastical affairs, including both church and schools). For the advice they give the coun­cillors of state are responsible to the riksdag, which re­vises the record of their proceedings through an annually appointed board, which has power also to indict the coun­cillors before a special tribunal, the “ riksrätt,” formed for the occasion, of which certain high functionaries have to be members. One of the councillors of state is, as prime minister, the head of the administration.

The riksdag meets every year on January 15, and consists of two houses. The members of the first house,

one for every 30,000 inhabitants (143 in 1887), are elected by the “ landsting ” in the counties, or by the municipal councils of the larger towns, for a period of nine years. They receive no payment. Any Swede is eligible who is at least thirty-five years of age, who possesses, and for three years before the election has possessed, real pro­perty to the value of 80,000 crowns, or who, during the same period, has paid taxes on an annual income of 4000 crowns. The members of the second house (one or two for every district of judicature in the country, according as the population exceeds or falls short of 40,000, and one for every 10,000 inhabitants in the towns) receive a salary of 1200 crowns, and are elected for a period of three years by electors, or directly, according to the resolution of the electoral district. If a member retires during that period, his successor is elected for the remainder of the three years, and thus the house is wholly renewed at regular intervals, which is not the case with the first house. The franchise is possessed by every one who owns landed property to the value of 1000 crowns, or who has farmed for at least five years lands worth 6000 crowns, or pays taxes on an annual income of 800 crowns. All electors are eligible. The number of electors is about 6·5 per cent. of the population. The towns elect their representatives separately. Both houses have in theory equal power. Before bills are discussed they are prepared by boards, whose members are elected by half of each house. When the houses differ on budget questions, the matter is settled by a common vote of both houses, which arrangement gives the second house a certain advantage from the greater number of its members. By revisers elected annually the riksdag controls the finances of the kingdom, and by an official (“ justitieombudsman”) elected in the same way the administration of justice is controlled ; he can indict any functionary of the state who has abused his power. The bank of the kingdom is superintended by trustees elected by the riksdag, and in the same way the public debt is administered through an office (“Riksgäldskontoret”), the leader of which is appointed by the riksdag.

*Administration, Law, and Justice.—*The administration consists partly of a centralized civil service, arranged under different departments, partly of local authorities. Each of the twenty-four counties has a governor (“ landshöfding”) who presides over the local offices (the “ landskansli,” the “ landskontor ”), and is assisted by subordinate local officers (“ kronofogdar,” “ häradsskrifvare,” “ länsmän ”). There is, moreover, in each county a representation (the “ landsting ”), elected by the people, that deliberates on the affairs of the county and has a right to levy taxes. Each county is divided into parishes, which, like the towns, have a very strong communal self-government. The law of Sweden dates from 1736, but it has of course under­gone a great many alterations and additions, the most important being the new penal law of 1864. Justice is administered by tribunals of three instances :—(1) the “ häradsrätter ” in the country, consisting of a judge and seven to twelve assessors elected by the people, who, if they are unanimously of an opinion different from that of the judge, can outvote him, and the “ rådhusrätter ” (boards of magistrates) in the towns ; (2) three “hofrätter” (higher courts) in Stockholm, Jönköping, and Christian­stad ; and (3) the royal supreme court, which passes sen­tence in the name of the king, and two members of which are present in the council of state when law questions are to be settled ; this tribunal has, moreover, to give its opinion upon all proposed changes of the law. A jury is never summoned in Sweden except in cases affecting the liberty of the press.

*Union with Norway.—*Sweden has been united to Nor­way since 1814. The union is regulated by the “ Riksakt”