Gustavus was greatly excited by the French Revolution, and sought to form an alliance with Russia, Prussia, and Austria for the restoration of Louis XVI. But the diet refused to support his wild schemes. Several nobles, desiring to avenge the supposed wrongs of their order, entered into a conspiracy against him, and in 1792 he was mortally wounded by an assassin who acted as their agent.

Gustavus IV. (1792-1809) was not quite fourteen years old when his father was murdered, and during his minority the government was carried on by his uncle the duke of Södermanland. Gustavus began to exercise royal authority in 1796. His reign was remarkable chiefly for the obstinacy with which he clung to his own ideas, no matter how far they might conflict with the obvious interests of his country. He had a bitter detestation of Bonaparte, and in 1803 went to Carlsruhe in the hope that he might induce the emperor and some of the German princes to act with him in support of the Bourbons. His enmity led to an open rupture with France, and even after the peace of Tilsit, when Russia and Prussia offered to mediate between him and the French emperor, he refused to come to terms. The consequence was that he lost Stralsund and the island of Rügen. He displayed so much friendship for England that Russia and Denmark, acting under the influence of France, declared war against him; and the whole of Finland was soon held by Russian troops. Gustavus attacked Norway, but his army was driven back by the Danes and Norwegians. He still declined to make peace, and he even alienated England when she attempted to influence him by moderate counsels. The Swedish people were so enraged by the consequences of his policy that in 1809 he was dethroned, and the claims of his descendants to the crown were also repudi­ated. He was succeeded by the duke of Södermanland, who reigned as Charles XIII.

Charles XIII. (1809-1818) concluded peace with Russia, Denmark, and France, ceding to Russia by the treaty of Frederikshamm (1809) the whole of Finland. The loss of this territory, which had been so long associ­ated with the Swedish monarchy, was bitterly deplored by the Swedes, but it was universally admitted that under the circumstances the sacrifice was unavoidable. Charles assented to important changes in the constitution, which were intended to bring to an end the struggle between the crown and the aristocracy and to provide some security for the maintenance of popular rights. The king was still to be at the head of the executive, but it was arranged that legislative functions and control over taxation should belong to the diet, which was to consist of four orders— nobles, clergymen, burghers, and peasants.

As Charles XIII. was childless, the diet elected as his successor Prince Christian Augustus of Holstein-Sonder- burg-Augustenburg. In 1810, soon after his arrival in Stockholm, this prince suddenly died ; and Sweden aston­ished Europe by asking Marshal Bernadotte to become heir to the throne. Bernadotte, who took the name of Charles John, was a man of great vigour and resource, and soon made himself the real ruler of Sweden. Napoleon treated Sweden as almost a conquered country, and com­pelled her to declare war with England. Bernadotte, associating himself heartily with his adopted land, resolved to secure its independence, and entered into an alliance with Russia. In 1813 he started with an army of 20,000 Swedes to co-operate with the powers which were striving finally to crush the French emperor. The proceedings of the Swedish crown prince were watched with some suspicion by the allies, as he was evidently unwilling to strike a decisive blow at France; but after the battle of Leipsic he displayed much activity. He blockaded Hamburg, and by the peace of Kiel, concluded in January 1814, he

forced Denmark to give up Norway. He then entered France, but soon returned, and devoted his energies to the conquest of Norway, which was very unwilling to be united with Sweden. Between the months of July and November 1814 the country was completely subdued, and Charles XIII. was proclaimed king. The union of Sweden and Norway, which has ever since been maintained, was recognized by the congress of Vienna ; and it was placed on a sound basis by the frank adoption of the principle that, while the two countries should be subject to the same crown and act together in matters of common interest, each should have complete control over its internal affairs. The new relation of their country to Norway gave much satisfaction to the Swedes, whom it consoled in some measure for the loss of Finland. It also made it easy for them to transfer to Prussia in 1815 what remained of their Pomeranian territories.

In 1818 Bernadotte mounted the throne as Charles XIV., and he reigned until he died in 1844. Great material improvements were effected during his reign. He caused new roads and canals to be constructed ; he encouraged the cultivation of districts which had formerly been barren ; and he founded good industrial and naval schools. He was not, however, much liked by his subjects. He never mastered the Swedish language, and he was so jealous of any interference with his authority that he sternly punished the expression of opinions which he dis­liked. To the majority of educated Swedes the constitu­tion seemed to be ill-adapted to the wants of the nation, and there was a general demand for a political system which should make the Government more directly respon­sible to the people. In 1840 a scheme of reform was submitted to the diet by a committee which had been appointed for the purpose, but the negotiations and dis­cussions to which it gave rise led to no definite result.

Charles XIV. was succeeded by his son Oscar I. (1844- 1859). Oscar had always expressed sympathy with liberal opinions, and it was anticipated that the constitutional question would be settled during his reign without much difficulty. These expectations were disappointed. The diet met soon after his accession, and was asked to accept the scheme which had been drawn up in 18i0. The measure received the cordial approval of the burghers and peasants, but was rejected by the nobles and the clergy. In 1846 a committee was appointed to prepare a new set of proposals, and late in the following year the discussion of its plans began. While the debates on the subject were proceeding some excitement was produced by the revolutionary movement of 1848, and a new ministry, pledged to the cause of reform, came into office. The scheme devised by this ministry was accepted by the committee to which it was referred, but the provisions of the existing constitution rendered it necessary that the final settlement should depend upon the vote of the next diet. When the diet met in 1850 it was found that the difficulties in the way were for the time insuperable. The proposals of the Government were approved by a majority of the burghers, but they were opposed by the nobles, the clergy, and the peasantry. The solution of the problem had, therefore, to be indefinitely postponed.

Although the constitution was not reformed, much was done in other ways during the reign of Oscar I. to pro­mote the national welfare. The criminal law was brought into accordance with modern ideas, and the law of inherit­ance was made the same for both sexes and for all classes of the community. Increased freedom was secured for industry and trade ; the methods of administration were improved ; and the state took great pains to provide the country with an efficient railway system. The result of the wise legislation of this period was that a new spirit of