the jolt came when, in 1558-60, floods of Muscovites poured over the land, threatening the whole province with destruction. In his despair the last master of the order, Gotthard von Kettler, appealed to all his more civilized neighbours to save him, and his dominions were quickly partitioned between Poland, Denmark and Sweden. Sweden’s original share of the spoil was Reval, which, driven to extremities, placed itself beneath the protection of the Swedish crown in March 1561. From the moment that Sweden got a firm footing in Esthonia by the acquisition of Reval she was committed to a policy of combat and aggrandisement. To have retreated 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 her long- outstanding differences with Denmark by the Treaty of Stettin on the 13th of December 1570 (see Denmark: *History),* which put an end to the Dano-Swedish war of 1563-1570, the chief political event of the reign of Eric XIV. (1560-1568), the eldest son and successor of Gustavus Vasa, was therefore a judicious act on the part of the new king of Sweden, John III. (1568-1592). Equally judicious was the anti-Russian league with Stephen Bathory, king of Poland, concluded in 1578. The war between Russia and Sweden for the possession of Esthonia and Livonia (1571-77) had been uninterruptedly disastrous to the latter, and, in the beginning of 1577, a countless Russian host sat down before Reval, Sweden’s last stronghold in those parts. The energetic intervention of Bathory, however, speedily turned the scales in the opposite direction. Six months after his humiliating peace with the Polish monarch, Ivan IV. was glad to conclude a truce with Sweden also on a *uti possidetis* basis at Pliusa (Aug. 5, r582).

The amicable relations between Sweden and Poland promised, at first, to be permanent. Sixteen years before his accession to the throne, John III., then duke of Finland, had wedded Catherine Jagiellonica, the sister of Sigis­mund II., king of Poland (Oct. 4, 1562). Duke Sigismund, the fruit of this union, was brought up by his mother in the Catholic religion, and, on the 19th of August 1587, he was elected king of Poland. Sixteen days later the Articles of Kalmar, signed by John and Sigismund, 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 in perpetual alliance, 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 of releas­ing 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 his uncle Duke Charles of Sudermania, the leader of the Swedish Protestants. No new tax was to be levied in Sweden during the king’s absence, but Sweden was never 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 senate and the gentry of Sweden.

The endeavours of Swedish statesmen to bind the hands of their future king were due to their fear of the rising flood of the Catholic reaction in Europe. Under Eric XIV. the Reformation in Sweden had proceeded on much the same lines as during the reign of his father, retaining all the old Catholic customs not considered con­trary to Scripture. 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 obvious; and in many countries a middle party arose which aimed at a compromise by going back to the Church of the Fathers. King John III., the most learned of the Vasas, and somewhat of a theological expert, was largely influenced by these “ middle ” views. As soon as he had mounted the throne he took measures to bring the Swedish Church back to “ the primitive Apostolic Church and thc 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. In February 1575 a new Church ordinance, approximating still more closely to the patristic Church, was presented to another synod, and accepted thereat, but very unwillingly. In r576 a new liturgy was issued on the model of the Roman missal, but with consider­able modifications. To a modern High Anglican these innova­tions seem innocent enough, and, despite the opposition of Duke Charles and the ultra-Protestants, they were adopte<i by the Riksdag of 1577. These measures greatly encouraged the Catholic party in Europe, and John III. was ultimately persuaded to send an embassy to Rome to open negotiations for the reunion of the Swedish Church with the Holy See. But though the Jesuit Antonio Possevino was sent to Stockholm to complete John’s “ conversion,” John would only consent to embrace Catholicism under certain conditions which were never kept, and the only result of all these subterraneous negotia­tions was to incense the Protestants still more against the new liturgy, the use of which by every congregation in the realm without exception was, nevertheless, decreed by the Riksdag of 1582. At this period Duke Charles and his Protestant friends were clearly outnumbered by the promoters of the *via media.* Nevertheless, immediatcly after King John’s death, a synod summoned to Upsala by Duke Charles rejected the new liturgy and drew up an anti-Catholic confession of faith (March 5, 1593). Holy Scripture and the three primitive creeds were declared to be the true foundations of Christian faith, and the Augsburg Confession was adopted. That Sigismund, now the lawful king of Sweden, should regard the summoning of the synod of Upsala without his previous knowledge and consent as a direct infringement of his pre­rogative was only natural. On his arrival in Sweden, how­ever, he tried to gain time by provisionally confirming what had been done; but the aggressiveness of the Protestant faction and the persistent usurpations of Duke Charles (the Riksdag of 1595 proclaimed him regent though the king had previously refused him that office) made a civil war inevitable. The battle of Stångåbro (Sept. 25, 1598) decided the struggle in favour of Charles—and Protestantism. Sigismund fled from Sweden, never to return, and on the 19th of March 1600 the Riksdag of Linköping proclaimed the duke king under the title of Charles IX. Sigismund and his posterity were declared to have forfeited the Swedish crown which was to pass to the heirs male of Charles.

Not till the 6th of March 1604, however, after Duke John, son of John III., had formally renounced his hereditary right to the throne, did Charles IX. begin to style himself king. At the Riksdag of the same year, the estates committed themselves irrevocably to Protestantism by excluding Catholics from the succession to the throne, and prohibiting them from holding any office or dignity in Sweeden. Henceforth, too, every recusant was to be deprived of his estates and banished the realm.

It was in the reign of Charles IX. that Sweden became not only a predominantly Protestant, but also a predominantly military monarchy. This momentous change, which was to give a martial colouring to the whole policy of Sweden for the next hundred and twenty years, dates from a decree of the Riksdag of Linköping establishing, at the urgent suggestion of Charles, a regular army; each district in the country being henceforward liable to provide and maintain a fixed number of infantry and cavalry for the service of the state. Th\*e immediate enemy was Poland, now dynastically as well as territorially opposed to Sweden. The struggle took the shape of a contest for the possession of the northern Baltic provinces. Esthonia was recovered by the Swedes in 1600, but their