determined efforts (1601-9) to gain a foothold in Livonia were frustrated by the military ability of the grand hetman of Lithuania, Jon Karol Chodkicwicz. In 1608 hostilities were transferred to Russian territory. At the beginning of that year Charles had concluded an alliance with Tsar Basil IV. (*q.v.*) against their common foe, the Polish king; but when, in 1611, Basil was deposed by his own subjects and the whole tsardom seemed to be on the verge of dissolution, Sweden’s policy towards Russia changed its character. Hitherto Charles had aimed at supporting the weaker Slavonic power against the stronger; but now that Muscovy seemed about to disappear from among the nations of Europe, Swedish statesmen naturally sought some compensation for the expenses of the war before Poland had had time to absorb everything. A beginning was made by the siege and capture of Kexholm in Russian Finland (March 2, 1611); and, on the 16th of July, Great Novgorod was occupied and a convention concluded with the magistrates of that wealthy city whereby Charles IX.’s second son Philip was to be recognized as tsar, unless, in the meantime, relief came to Great Novgorod from Moscow. But now, when everything depended on a concentration of forces, Charles’s imprudent assumption of thc title of “ King of the Lapps of Nordland,” which people properly belonged to the Danish Crown, involved him in another war with Denmark, a war known in Scandinavian history as the war of Kalmar because the Swedish fortress of Kalmar was the chief theatre of hostilities. Thus the Swedish forces were diverted from their real objective and transferred to another field where even victory would have been comparatively unprofitable. But it was disaster, not victory, which Charles IX. reaped from this fool­hardy enterprise. Still worse, the war of Kalmar, prudently concluded by Charles’s son, Gustavus Adolphus, in the second year of his reign, by the peace of Knäred (Jan. 20, 1613) imposed such onerous pecuniary obligations and such intense suffering upon Sweden as to en­kindle into a fire of hatred, which was to burn fiercely for the next two centuries, the long smouldering antagonism between the two sister nations of Scandinavia which dated back to the bloody days of Christian II.

The Russian difficulty was more easily and more honourably adjusted. When Great Novgorod submitted provisionally to the suzerainty of Sweden, Swedish statesmen had believed, for a moment, in the creation of a Trans- baltic dominion extending from Lake Ilmen north­wards to Archangel and eastwards to Vologda. The rallying of the Russian nation round the throne of the new tsar, Michael Romanov, dissipated, once for all, this ambitious dream. By the beginning of 1616, Gustavus had become convinced of the impossibility of partitioning reunited Muscovy, while Muscovy recognized the necessity of buying off the invincible Swedes by some cession of territory. By the Peace of Stolbova (Feb. 27, 1617), the tsar surrendered to the Swedish king the provinces of Kexholm and Ingria, including the fortress of Nöteborg (the modern Schlüsselburg), the key of Finland. Russia, furthermore, renounced all claims upon Esthonia and Livonia, and paid a war indemnity of 20,000 roubles. In return for these concessions, Gustavus restored Great Novgorod and acknowledged Michael Romanov as tsar of Muscovy.

The same period which saw the extension of the Swedish Empire abroad, saw also the peaceful development of the Swedish constitution at home. In this, as in every other matter, Gustavus himself took the initiative. Nominally the Senate still remained the dominant power in the state; but gradually all real authority had been transferred to the crown. The Riksråd speedily lost its ancient character of a grand council representing the semi- feudal landed aristocracy, and became a bureau­cracy holding the chief offices of state at the good pleasure of the king. The Riksdag also changed its character at the same time. Whilst in every other European country except England, the ancient popular representation by estates was about to disappear altogether, in Sweden under Gustavus Adolphus it grew into an integral portion of the constitution. The Riksdag ordinance of 1617 first converted a turbulent and haphazard mob of “ riksdagmen,” huddling together like a flock of sheep “ or drunken boors,” into a dignified national assembly, meeting and deliberat­ing according to rule and order. One of the nobility (first called the *Landlmarskalk),* or marshal of the Diet, in the Riksdag ordinance of 1526) was now regularly appointed by the king as the spokesman of the *Riddarhus,* or House of Nobles, while the primate generally acted as the *talman* or president of the three lower estates, the clergy, burgesses and peasants, though at a later day each of the three lower estates elected its own *talman.* At the opening of every session, the king submitted to the estates “ royal propositions,” or bills, upon which each estate proceeded to deliberate in its own separate chamber. The replies of the estates were delivered to the king at a subse­quent session in congress. Whenever the estates differed amongst themselves, the king chose whatever opinion seemed best to him. The rights of the Riksdag were secured by the *Konungaförsäkran,* or assurance given by every Swedish king on his accession, guaranteeing the collaboration of the estates in the work of legislation, and they were also to be consulted on all questions of foreign policy. The king possessed the initiative; but the estates had the right of objecting to the measures of the government at the close of each session. It is in Gustavus’s reign, too, that we first hear of the *Hemliga Utskott,* or “ secret committee ” for the transaction of extra­ordinary affairs, which was elected by the estates themselves. The eleven Riksdags held by Gustavus Adolphus were almost exclusively occupied in finding ways and means for supporting the ever-increasing burdens of the Polish and German wars. And to the honour of the Swedish people be it said that, from first to last, they showed a religious and patriotic zeal which shrank from no sacrifice. It was to this national devotion quite as much as to his own qualities that Gustavus owed his success as an empire-builder.

The wars with Denmark and Russia had been almost exclu­sively Scandinavian wars; the Polish war was of world-wide significance. It was, in the. first place, a struggle for the Baltic littoral, and the struggle was intensified by the knowledge that the Polish Vasas denied the right of Gustavus to the Swedish throne. In the eyes of the Swedish king, moreover, the Polish War was a war of religion. Gustavus regarded the Scandinavian kingdoms as the two chief pillars on which the Evangelical religion reposed. Their disunion, he argued, would open a door in the north to the Catholic league and so bring about the destruction of Den­mark and Sweden alike. Hence his alliance with Denmark to defend Stralsund in 1628. There is much of unconscious exaggeration in all this. As a matter of fact the Polish republic was no danger whatever to Protestantism. Sigismund’s obsti­nate insistence upon his right tö the Swedish crown was the one impediment to the conclusion of a war which the Polish Diet heartily detested and very successfully impeded. Apart from the semi-impotent Polish court, no responsible Pole dreamed of aggrandisement in Sweden. In fact, during the subsequent reign of Wladislaus IV. (1632-1648), the Poles pre­vented that martial monarch from interfering in the Thirty Years’ War on the Catholic side. Gustavus, whose lively imagination was easily excited by religious ardour, enormously magnified clerical influence in Poland and frequently scented dangers where only difficulties existed.

For eight years (1621-29) the exhausting and expensive Polish war dragged on. By the beginning of 1626 Livonia was conquered and the theatre of hostilities was transferred to the Prussian provinces of Poland (see Gustavus II. Adolphus; Koniecpolski [Stanislaus]). The fertile and easily defensible delta of the Vistula was now occupied and Gustavus treated it as a permanent conquest, making his great minister Axel Oxen- stjerna its first governor-general. But this was the limit of the Swedish advance. All Gustavus’s further efforts were frustrated by the superior strategy of the Polish grandhetman Koniecpolski,