in his thirty-eighth year—all this has elsewhere been described (sec Charles X., king of Sweden; Czarniecki [Stephen] ; Frederick III., king of Denmark). Suffice it to say that, immediately after his death, the regency appointed to govern Sweden during the minority of his only son and successor, Charles XI., a child four years old, hastened to come to terms with Sweden’s numerous enemies, which now included Russia, Poland, Brandenburg and Denmark.

The Peace of Oliva (May 3, 1660), made under French mediation, put an end to the long feud with Poland and, at the same time, ended the quarrel between Sweden on the one side, and the emperor and thc elector of Brandenburg on the other. By this peace, Sweden’s possession of Livonia, and the elector of Brandenburg’s sovereignty over east Prussia, were alike confirmed; and thc king of Poland renounced all claim to the Swedish crown. As regards Denmark, the Peace of Oliva signified the desertion of her three principal allies, Poland, Brandenburg and the emperor, and thus compelled her to reopen negotiations with Sweden direct. The differences between the two states were finally adjusted by the peace of Copenhagen (May 27, 1660), Denmark ceding the three Scanian provinces to Sweden but receiving back the Norwegian province of Trondhjem and the isle of Bornholm which she had surrendered by the peace of Roskilde two years previously. Denmark was also compelled to recog­nize, practically, the independence of the dukes of Holstein- Gottorp. The Russian War was terminated by the Peace of Kardis (July 2, 1661), confirmatory of the Peace of Stolbova, whereby the tsar surrendered to Sweden all his Baltic provinces —Ingria, Esthonia and Kexholm.

Thus Sweden emerged from the war not only a military power of the first magnitude, but also one of the largest states of Europe, possessing about twice as much territory as modern Sweden. Her area embraced 16,800 geographical square miles, a mass of land 7000 sq. m. larger than the modern German Empire. Yet the Swedish Empire was rather a geographical expression than a state with natural and national boundaries. Modern Sweden is bounded by the Baltic; during the 17th century the Baltic was merely the bond between her various widely dispersed dominions. All the islands in the Baltic, except the Danish group, belonged to Sweden. The estuaries of all the great German rivers (for the Niemen and Vistula are properly Polish rivers) debouched in Swedish territory, within which also lay two-thirds of Lake Ladoga and one-half of Lake Peipus. Stock­holm, the capital, lay in the very centre of the empire, whose second greatest city was Riga, on the other side of the sea. Yet this vast empire contained but half the population of modern Sweden—being only 2,500,000, or about 140 souls to the square mile. Further, Sweden’s new boundaries were of the most insecure description, inasmuch as they were anti-ethnographical, parting asunder races which naturally went together, and behind which stood powerful neighbours of the same stock ready, at the first opportunity, to reunite them.

Moreover, the commanding political influence which Sweden had now won was considerably neutralized by her loss of moral prestige. On Charles X.’s accession in 1655, Sweden’s neigh­bours, though suspicious and uneasy, were at least not adver­saries, and might have been converted into allies of the new great power who, if she had mulcted them of territory, had, any­how, compensated them for the loss with the by no means con­temptible *douceur* of religious liberty. At Charles X.’s death, five years later, we find Sweden, herself bled to exhaustion point, surrounded by a broad belt of desolated territory and regarded with ineradicable hatred by every adjacent state. To sink in five years from the position of the champion of Protestantism to that of the common enemy of every Protestant power was a degradation not to he compensated by any amount of military glory. Charles’s subsequent endeavour, in stress of circum­stances, to gain a friend by dividing his Polish conquests with the aspiring elector of Brandenburg was a reversal of his original policy and only resulted in the establishment on the southern confines of Sweden of a new rival almost as dangerous as Denmark, her ancient rival in the west.

In 1660, after five years of incessant warfare, Sweden had at length obtained peace and with it the opportunity of organizing and developing her newly won empire. Unfor­tunately, the regency which was to govern her during thc next fifteen years was unequal to the difficulties of a situation which might have taxed the resources of the wisest statesmen. Unity and vigour were scarcely to be ex­pected from a many-headed administration composed of men of mediocre talent whose contrary opinions speedily gave rise to contending factions. There was the high-aristocratic party with a leaning towards martial adventure headed by Magnus de la Gardie (*q.v.*), and the party of peace and economy whose ablest representative was the liberal and energetic Johan Gyllenstjerna (*q.v.*). After a severe struggle, de la Gardie’s party prevailed; and its triumph was marked by that general decline of personal and political morality which has given to this regency its unenviable notoriety. Sloth and carelessness speedily invaded every branch of the administration, destroying all discipline and leading to a general neglect of business. Another characteristic of the de la Gardie government was its gross corruption, which made Sweden the obsequious hireling of that foreign power which had the longest purse. This shame­ful “subsidy policy” dates from the Treaty of Fontainebleau, 1661, by a secret paragraph of which Sweden, in exchange for a considerable sum of money, undertook to support the French candidate on the first vacancy of the Polish throne. The com­plications ensuing from Louis XIV.’s designs on the Spanish Netherlands led to a bid for the Swedish alliance, both from the French king and his adversaries. After much hesitation on the part of the Swedish government, the anti-French faction pre­vailed; and in April 1668 Sweden acceded to the Triple Alliance, which finally checkmated the French king by bringing about the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. For the next four years Sweden remained true to the principles of the Triple Alliance; but, in 1672, Louis XIV. succeeded in isolating the Dutch republic and regaining his ancient ally, Sweden. By the Treaty of Stockholm (April 14, 1672), Sweden became, for the next ten years, a “mercenarius Galliae,” pledging herself, in return for 400,000 crowns per annum in peace and 600,000 in war-time, to attack, with 16,000 men, any German princes who might be disposed to assist Holland. In

1674 Louis XIV. peremptorily called upon Sweden to fulfil her obligations by invading Brandenburg. In the course of May 1675 a Swedish army advanced into the Mark, but on the 18th of June was defeated at Fehrbellin, and hastily retreated to Demmin. The Fehrbellin affair was a mere skirmish, the actual casualties amounting to less than 600 men, but it rudely divested Sweden of her nimbus of invincibility and was the signal for a general attack upon her, known as the Scanian War. In the course of the next three years her empire seemed to be crumbling away everywhere. In

1675 Pomerania and the bishopric of Bremen were overrun by the Brandenburgers, Austrians and Danes. In December 1677 the elector of Brandenburg captured Stettin. Stralsund fell on the 15th of October 1678. Greifswald, Sweden’s last possession on the Continent, was lost on the 5th of November. A defensive alliance with Sobieski (August 4, 1677) was rendered inoperative by the annihilation of Sweden’s sea-power (battle of Öland, June 17, 1676; battle of Fehmarn, June 1677) and the difficulties of the Polish king.

Two accidents at this crisis alone saved Sweden from ruin—the splendid courage of the young king who, resolutely and success­fully, kept the Danish invaders at bay (see Charles XL, king of Sweden), and the diplomatic activity of Louis XIV. In March 1677 a peace congress began its sessions at Nijmwegen; and in the beginning of April 1678 the French king dictated the terms of a general pacification. One of his chief conditions was the complete restitution of Sweden. A strong Sweden was necessary to the accomplishment of his plans. He suggested, however, that Sweden should rid herself of her enemies by