treated to change his Ration ; but he remained obſtinate, as if he had been proof againſt cannon-bullets. At laſt he was ſeen to fall on the parapet with a deep groan. A ſmall cannon-ball had ſtruck him on the temple, beat in the left eye, and forced the right eye quite out of its ſocket ; his right hand in the mean time graſped the hilt of his ſword, as if he had meant to revenge the blow @@(c).

Charles XII. was ſucceeded by his ſiſter the princess Ulrica Eleonora, wife to the hereditary prince of Hesse. On this occasion the states took care to make a previous ſtipulation for the recovery of their liberties, and obliged the princeſs to ſign a paper to this purpoſe before entering on the government. Their firſt care was to make a peace with Great Britain, which the late king intended to have invaded. The Swedes then, to prevent their farther losses by the progreſs of the Russian, the Daniſh, the Saxon, and other arms, made many great ſacrifices to obtain peace from thoſe powers. The French, however, about the year 1738, formed a dangerous party in the kingdom, under the name of the *Hats ;* which not only broke the internal quiet of the kingdom, but led it into a ruinous war with Ruſſia, by which the province of Finland was left. Their Swediſh majeſties having no children, it was necessary to settle the ſucceſſion ; eſpecially as the duke of Holſtein was deſcended from the queen’s eldeſt ſiſter, and was, at the ſame time, the preſumptive heir to the empire of Ruſſia. Four com­petitors appeared ; the duke of Holſtein Gottorp, prince Frederic of Heſſe-Caſſel nephew to the king, the prince of Denmark, and the duke of Deux Fonts. The duke of Holſtein would have carried the election, had he not em­braced the Greek religion, that he might mount the throne of Ruſſia. The czarina interpoſed, and offered to reſtore all the conqueſts ſhe had made from Sweden, excepting a ſmall diſtrict in Finland, if the Swedes would receive the duke of Holſtein’s uncle, Adolphus Frederic biſhop of Lu­bec, as their hereditary prince and ſucceſſor to their crown. This was agreed to ; and a peace was concluded at Abo, under the mediation of his Britannic majeſty. This peace was ſo firmly adhered to by the czarina, that his Daniſh majeſty thought proper to drop all reſentment for the in­dignity done his son. The prince-ſuccessor married the princeſs Ulrica, third ſiſter to the king of Pruſſia ; and in 1751 entered into the poſſeſſion of his new dignity, which proved to him a crown of thorns. Through a ſtrange med­ley of affairs and views of intereſt, the French had acquired vaſt influence in all the deliberations of the Swediſh ſenate, who of late have been little better than penſioners to that crown. The intrigues of the ſenators forced Adolphus to take part in the late war againſt Pruſſia : but as that war was diſagreeable not only to the people, but alſo to the king of Sweden, the nation never made ſo mean an appearance ; and upon Russia’s making peace with the king of Pruſſia, the Swedes likewiſe made their peace, upon the terms of leaving things as they stood at the beginning of the war, Adolphus died diſpirited in 1771, after a turbulent reign of twenty years ; and was ſucceeded by his son Guſtavus. The moſt remarkable tranſaction of this reign is the revo­lution which took place in the government in the year 1772, by which the king, from being the moſt limited be­came one of the moſt despotic monarchs in Europe. Ever ſince the death of Charles XII. the whole power of the kingdom had been lodged in the ſtates ; and this power they had on all occaſions moſt grievouſly abuſed. Gustavus therefore determined either to ſeize on that power of which they made ſuch a bad uſe, or periſh in the attempt. The revolution was effected in the following manner. On the morning of the 19th of Auguſt 1772, a considerablenumber of officers, as well as other perſons known to be attached to the royal cauſe, had been ſummoned to attend his majeſty. Before ten he was on horseback, and visited the regiment of artillery. As he paſſed through the ſtreets he was more than usually courteous to all he met, bowing familiarly to the loweſt of the people. On the king’s re­turn to his palace, the detachment which was to mount guard that day being drawn up together with that which was to be relieved, his majeſty retired with the officers into the guard-room. He then addreſſed them with all that eloquence of which he is ſaid to have been a perfect maſter ; and after inſinuating to them that his life was in danger, he expoſed to them in the ſtrongeſt colours the wretched ſtate of the kingdom, the shackles in which it was held by means of foreign gold, and the diſſenſions and troubles ariſing from the ſame cauſe which had distracted the diet during the courſe of fourteen months. He assured them that his only deſign was to put an end to theſe disorders ; to baniſh corruption, reſtore true liberty, and revive the ancient luſtre of the Swe­diſh name, which had been long tarnished by a venality as notorious as it was disgraceful. Then aſſuring them in the ſtrongeſt terms that he disclaimed for ever all abſolute power, or what the Swedes call *ſovereignty,* he concluded with theſe words : “ I am obliged to defend my own liberty and that of the kingdom, againſt the ariſtocracy which reigns. Will you be faithful to me, as your fore­fathers were to Guſtavus Vaſa and Guſtavus Adolphus ? I will then risk my life for your welfare and that of my country.”

The officers, moſt of them young men, of whoſe attach­ment the king had been long ſecure, who did not thorough­ly perhaps see into the nature of the requeſt his majeſty made them, and were allowed no time to reflect upon it, immediately conſented to every thing, and took an oath of fidelity to him.

Three only refuſed. One of theſe, Frederic Cederſtrom, captain of a company of the guards, alleged he had already and very lately taken an oath to be faithful to the ſtates, and conſequently could not take that which his majeſty then

@@@(c) Such is the account given by Voltaire of the untimely death of this northern hero. Many perſons, however, who had the beſt opportunities of procuring authentic information at the time, have declared that they believed he was aſſaſſinated by a Frenchman who was among his attendants. The famous earl of Peterborough, who, in his rapid marches and fearleſs intrepidity, bore no small reſemblance to Charles XII. aſſured Biſhop Berkeley, that he had no doubt of the Swediſh monarch’s having been aſſaſſinated ; and Mr Wraxall, in the account of his Travels through Sweden, gives ſuch arguments for the truth of that opinion as leave very little doubt in our minds. It muſt be confeſſed, however, that Mr Coxe reaſons plausibly in ſupport of the other opinion ; and perhaps at this diſtance of time nothing can be ſaid with certainty on this queſtion, but what has been ſaid by Johnſon :

His fall was deſtined to a barren ſtrand,

A petty fortreſs, and a *dubious hand.*

He left the name, at which the world grew pale,

To paint a moral, or adorn a tale.

*Vanity of Human Wishes.*