history. The Hats carried everything before them; and the aged Horn was finally compelled to retire from a scene where, for three and thirty years, he had played a leading part.

The policy of the Hats was a return to the traditional alliance between France and Sweden. When Sweden descended to her natural position as a second-rate power the French alliance became too costly a luxury. Horn had clearly perceived this; and his cautious neutrality was therefore the soundest statesmanship. But thc politicians who had ousted Horn thought differently. To them prosperity without glory was a worthless possession. They aimed at restoring Sweden to her former position as a great power. France, naturally, hailed with satisfaction the rise of a faction which was content to be her armour- bearer in the north; and the golden streams which flowed from Versailles to Stockholm during the next two generations were the political life-blood of the Hat party.

The first blunder of the Hats was the hasty and ill-advised war with Russia. The European complications consequent upon the almost simultaneous deaths of the emperor Charles VI. and Anne, empress of Russia, seemed to favour their adventurous schemes; and, despite the frantic protests of the Caps, a project for the invasion of Russian Finland was rushed through the premature Riksdag of 1740. On the 20th of July 1741 war was formally declared against Russia; a month later the Diet was dissolved and the Hat *landtmarskalk* set off to Finland to take command of the army. The first blow was not struck till six months after the declaration of war; and it was struck by the enemy, who routed the Swedes at Villmanstrand and captured that frontier fortress. Nothing else was done on either side for six months more; and then the Swedish generals made a “ tacit truce ” with the Russians through the mediation of the French ambassador at St Petersburg. By the time that the “ tacit truce ” had come to an end the Swedish forces were so demoralized that the mere rumour of a hostile attack made them retire panic-stricken to Helsingfors; and before the end of the year all Finland was in the hands of the Russians. The fleet, disabled by an epidemic, was, throughout the war, little more than a floating hospital.

To face the Riksdag with such a war as this upon their consciences was a trial from which the Hats naturally shrank; but, to do them justice, they showed themselves better parlia­mentary than military strategists. A motion for an inquiry into the conduct of the war was skilfully evaded by obtaining precedence for the succession question (Queen Ulrica Leonora had lately died childless and King Frederick was old); and nego­tiations were thus opened with the new Russian empress, Elizabeth, who agreed to restore the greater part of Finland if her cousin, Adolphus Frederick of Holstein, were elected successor to the Swedish crown. The Hats eagerly caught at the opportunity of recovering the grand duchy and their own prestige along with it. By the peace of Åbo (May 7, 1743) the terms of the empress were accepted; and only that small part of Finland which lay beyond the Kymmene was retained by Russia.

In March 1751 old King Frederick died. His slender pre­rogatives had gradually dwindled down to vanishing point.

Adolphus Frederick (*q.v.*) would have given even less trouble than his predecessor but for the ambitious promptings of his masterful consort Louisa Ulrica, Frederick the Great’s sister, and the tyranny of the estates, who seemed bent upon driving the meekest of princes into rebellion. An attempted monarchical revolution, planned by the queen and a few devoted young nobles in 1756, was easily and remorselessly crushed; and, though the unhappy king did not, as he anticipated, share the fate of Charles Stuart, he was humiliated as never monarch was humiliated before.

The same years which beheld this great domestic triumph of the Hats saw also the utter collapse of their foreign “system.” At the instigation of France they plunged recklessly into the Seven Years’ War; and the result was ruinous. The French sub­sidies, which might have sufficed for a six weeks’ demonstration (it was generally assumed that the king of Prussia would give little trouble to a European coalition), proved quite in­adequate; and, after five unsuccessful campaigns, thc unhappy Hats were glad to make peace and ignomini­ously withdraw from a little war which had cost the country 40,000 men and (2,500,000. When the Riksdag met in 1760, the indignation against the Hat leaders was so violent that an impeachment seemed inevitable; but once more the superiority of their parliamentary tactics prevailed, and when, after a session of twenty months, the Riksdag was brought to a close by the mutual consent of both the exhausted factions, the Hat government was bolstered up for another four years. But the day of reckoning could not be postponed for ever; and when the estates met in 1765 it brought the Caps into power at last. Their leader, Ture Rudbeck, was elected marshal of the Diet over Frederick Axel von Fersen *(q.v.),* the Hat candi­date, by a large majority; and, out of the hundred seats in the secret committee, the Hats succeeded in getting only ten.

The Caps struck at once at the weak point of their opponents by ordering a budget report to be made; and it was speedily found that the whole financial system of the Hats had been based upon reckless improvidence and wilful misrepresentation, and that the only fruit of their long rule was an enormous addition to the national debt and a depreciation of the note circulation to one- third of its face value. This revelation led to an all-round retrenchment, carried into effect with a drastic thoroughness which has earned for this parliament the name of the “ Reduk­tion Riksdag.” The Caps succeeded in transferring £250,000 from the pockets of the rich to the empty exchequer, reducing the national debt by £575,179, and establishing some sort of equilibrium between revenue and expenditure. They also introduced a few useful reforms, the most remarkable of which was the liberty of the press. But their most important political act was to throw their lot definitely in with Russia, so as to counterpoise the influence of France. Sweden was not then as now quite outside the European Concert. Although no longer a great power, she still had many of the responsibilities of a great power; and if the Swedish alliance had considerably depreciated in value, it was still a marketable commodity. Sweden’s peculiar geographical position made her virtually invulnerable for six months out of the twelve, her Pomeranian possessions afforded her an easy ingress into the very heart of the moribund empire, while her Finnish frontier was not many leagues from the Russian capital.

A watchful neutrality, not venturing much beyond defensive alliances and commercial treaties with the maritime powers, was therefore Sweden’s safest policy, and this the older Caps had always followed out. But when the Hats became the armour- bearers of France in the north, a protector strong enough to counteract French influence became the cardinal exigency of their opponents, the younger Caps, who now flung themselves into the arms of Russia, overlooking the fact that even a pacific union with Russia was more to be feared than a martial alliance with France. For France was too distant to be dangerous. She sought an ally in Sweden and it was her endeavour to make that ally as strong as possible. But it was as a future prey, not as a possible ally, that Russia regarded her ancient rival in the north. In the treaty which partitioned Poland there was a secret clause which engaged the contracting powers to uphold the existing Swedish constitution as the swiftest means of sub­verting Swedish independence; and an alliance with the credu­lous Caps, “ the Patriots ” as they were called at St Petersburg, guaranteeing their constitution, was the corollary to this secret understanding. Thus, while the French alliance of the warlike Hats had destroyed the prestige of Sweden, the Russian alliance of the peaceful Caps threatened to destroy her very existence.

Fortunately, the domination of the Caps was not for long. The general distress occasioned by their drastic reforms had found expression in swarms of pamphlets which bit and stung the Cap government, under the protection of the new press laws. The senate retaliated by an order in council (which the