of September the delegates came to an agreement, the principal points of which were: that such disputes between the two countries which could not be settled by direct diplomatic negotiations, and which did not affect the vital interests of either country, should be referred to the per­manent court of arbitration at the Hague, that on either side of the southern frontier a neutral zone of about fifteen kilometres width should be established, and that within eight months the fortifications within the Norwegian part of the zone should be destroyed. Other clauses dealt with the rights of the Laplanders to graze their reindeer alternatively in either country, and with the question of transport of goods across the frontier by rail or other means of communication, so that the traffic should not be hampered by any import or export prohibitions or otherwise.

From the 2nd to the 19th of October the extraordinary Riksdag was again assembled, and eventually approved of the arrangement come to by the delegates at Karlstad with regard to the dissolution of the union as well as the government proposal for the repeal of the Act of Union and the recognition of Norway as an independent state. An alteration in the Swedish flag was also decided upon, by which the mark of union was to be replaced by an azure-blue square. An offer from the Norwegian Storthing to elect a prince of the Swedish royal house as king in Norway was declined by King Oscar, who now on, behalf of himself and his successors renounced the right to the Norwegian crown. Mr Lundeberg, who had accepted office only to settle the question of the dissolution of the union, now resigned and was succeeded by a Liberal government with Mr Karl Staaff as prime minister.

The question of the extension of the franchise, which was a burning one, was to be the principal measure of the Staaff government. It brought in a bill for manhood suffrage at elections for the Second Chamber, together with single member constituencies and election on the absolute majority principle. The bill was passed by the Second Chamber on the 15th of May 1906, by 134 to 94 votes, but it was rejected by the First Chamber by 126 to 18. The latter chamber instead passed a bill for manhood suffrage at elections for the Second Chamber, on the condition that the elections for both chambers should take place on the basis of proportional representation. Both chambers thereupon decided to ask the opinion of the king with regard to the simultaneous extension of the franchise to women at elections for the Second Chamber. The government bill having, however, been passed by the Second Chamber, the prime minister proposed to the king that the Riksdag should be dissolved and new elections for the Second Chamber take place in order to hear the opinion of the country, but as the king did not approve of this Mr Staaff and his government resigned.

A Conservative government was then formed on the 29th of May by Mr Lindman, whose principal task was to find a solution of the suffrage question which both chambers could accept. A government bill was introduced, proposing the settlement of the question on the basis of the bill carried by the First Chamber in the Riksdag of the preceding year. A compromise, approved of by the government, was adopted by the First Chamber on the 14th of May 1907 by no votes against 29 and in the Second Chamber by 128 against 98. By this act proportional representa­tion was established for both chambers, together with universal manhood suffrage at elections for the Second Chamber, a reduc­tion of the qualifications for eligibility for the First Chamber and a reduction of the electoral term of this chamber from nine to six years, and finally payment of members of the First Chamber, who hitherto had not received any such emolument.

King Oscar II. died on the 9th of December 1907, sincerely regretted by his people, and was succeeded as king of Sweden by his eldest son, Prince Gustaf. During King Oscar’s reign many important social reforms were carried out by the legislature, and the country developed in all directions. In the Riksdag of 1884 a new patent law was adopted, the age at which women should be held to attain their majority was fixed at twenty-one years and the barbarous prison punishment of “ bread and water ” abolished. In order to meet the cost of the new army organiza­tion the Riksdag of 1902 increased the revenue by progressive taxation, but only for one year. Bills for the improvement of the social conditions of the people and in the interests of the working classes were also passed. During the five years 1884-1889 a committee was occupied with the question of workmen’s insur­ance, and thrice the government made proposals for its settle­ment, on the last occasion adopting the principle of invalidity as a common basis for insurance against accidents, illness or old age. The Riksdag, however, delayed coming to a decision, and contented itself by earmarking money for an insurance fund. At last the Riksdag of r901 accepted a Bill for insurance against accidents which also extended to agricultural labourers, in connexion with the establishment of a state institution for insurance. The bill for protection against Occidents, as well as for the limitation of working hours for women and children, was passed, together with one for the appointment of special factory inspectors. When in 1897 King Oscar celebrated his jubilee of twenty-five years as king, the exhibition which had been organized in Stockholm offered a convincing proof of the progress the country had made in every direction.

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Swedish Literature

Swedish literature, as distinguished from compositions in the common *norraena tunga* of old Scandinavia, cannot be said to exist earlier than the 13th century. Nor until the period of the Reformation was its development in any degree rapid or copious. The oldest form in which Swedish exists as a written language (see Scandinavian Language) is the series of manuscripts known as *Landskapslagarne,* or “ The Common Laws.” These are supposed to be the relics of a still earlier age, and it is hardly believed that we even possess the first that was put down in writing. The most important and the most ancient of these codes is the “ Elder West Göta Law,” reduced to its present form by the law-man Eskil about 1230. Another of great interest is Magnus Eriksson’s “ General Common Law,” which was written in 1347. These ancient codes have been collected and edited by the learned jurist, K. J. Schlyter (1795-1888) as *Corpus juris Sveo-Gotorum antiqui* (4 vols., 1827-1869). The chief ornament of medieval Swedish literature is *Um styrilse kununga ok höfdinga* (“ On the Conduct of Kings and Princes ”), first printed by command of Gustavus II. Adolphus, in 1634. The writer is not known; it has been conjecturally dated 1325. It is a hand­book of moral and political teaching, expressed in terse and vigor­ous language. St Bridget, or Birgitta (1303-1373), an historical figure of extraordinary interest, has left her name attached to several important religious works, in particular to a collection of *Uppenbarelser* (“ Revelations ”), in which her visions and ecstatic