

he surrenders the kingdom unto the States again. The land, thus brought into a strait, humbly beseeches Gustavus once again to accept the kingdom. Thus he was crowned, anno 1527, becoming the first Protestant king that ever was in the world." Charles, the father of Gustavus Adolphus, abolished the rites of the Roman Catholic religion in his kingdom, and shut up the last monastery which yet remained in it.

Gustavus Adolphus was born Dec. 9, 1594, and early in life gave promise of his future greatness. Strong in body, quick and vigorous in mind, and courageous in disposition, the child was father of the man. Gustavus was kept, as a boy, under strict discipline, and there was instilled into him an ardent love of the Reformation. He mastered languages with ease, and at twelve years of age he spoke Latin, German, Dutch, French, and Italian fluently; understood English and Spanish, and knew something of Russian and Polish. His father soon came to regard him as the destined heir to his most cherished projects; and often, referring to some favorite scheme still unaccomplished, and looking to him for its fulfilment, he would pat the boy's head, and say to the bystanders, "*He will do it.*"

Gustavus was but seventeen years old when his father died. The laws of Sweden required that the prince should have attained his eighteenth year before he was of age, yet his great qualities were so strikingly apparent that he was allowed by the States to assume the administration nearly twelve months earlier. It was a mark of wisdom that he knew how to select wise counsellors, and his choice of the profoundly sagacious and patriotic Oxenstiern as his chancellor is said to have impressed all Europe with the highest opinion of the young monarch's penetration.

But Sweden had unfriendly neighbors; and this, with other causes, had reduced the kingdom to a perilous condition. Her finances were entirely drained by a series of wars and revolutions; she was in actual conflict with Denmark, which had taken possession of many of her strongholds; and Poland and Russia were preparing against her powerful armies. Gustavus took the field against each of these powers in succession; and for the most part with advantageous results. Thus, at the close of the last of these campaigns, a part of Livonia, with the important town of Riga, was added to his dominions. Some fifteen years were thus occupied; and at their close Gustavus Adolphus was a master in the art of war.

The enfeebled condition of the Protestant cause in Germany now awakened his profoundest sympathies. The long and bitter conflict