

his forces and in the Battle of Pultowa the Swedish army suffered their first great defeat. Charles himself escaped and reached Bender, where he was welcomed by the Sultan.

Charles remained for five years a guest of the Sultan. In 1710 he succeeded in getting the Turks to declare war against Russia. Peter allied himself with the governors of Moldavia and Wallachia, and marched south to the river Pruth. Here he was betrayed by the Wallachian governor and surrounded by a Turkish army. He was able, however, to buy a truce from the Grand Vizier, by which he surrendered Azow and his conquests on the Sea of Azow to Turkey.

During Charles' absence in Turkey the Swedish forces had been driven from Poland, and Augustus had re-entered as king. The alliance between Russia, Denmark and Poland had been renewed, and Peter had occupied Livonia, Esthonia and Curland.

In 1714 Charles was requested to leave Turkey as his presence was not in accordance with the Peace of Pruth. Travelling through Hungary and Germany in disguise, he reached Stralsund, which was being besieged by the allies. The city was forced to surrender in December, 1715, but Charles managed to escape.

Peter the Great, who was dissatisfied with the existing alliance, now entered into negotiations with Charles, and a truce was arranged. Charles now made extensive plans of conquest against Denmark and Prussia. His plans, however, were brought to an end in 1718 when he met his death at the siege of Fredrickshall in Norway. With Charles' death Sweden no longer figured as a great power. The Council of State which took over the government made peace with Prussia, Denmark and Poland, and in 1721 by the Peace of Nystadt came to an agreement with Russia. Prussia received Pomerania and a few islands, Denmark commercial advantages and an indemnity, Russia the provinces along the Baltic, while in Poland Augustus was recognized as king. Sweden in return had Finland restored and indemnities paid by the different countries. Thus Russia after twenty years of war became at Sweden's expense the leading power of the north.