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Heroes of the Nations

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FACTA DUCIS VIVENT, OPEROSAQUE
GLORIA RERUM.—OVID, IN LIVIAM, 265.

THE HERO'S DEEDS AND HARD-WON
FAME SHALL LIVE.

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS





GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS II.

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS

AND

THE STRUGGLE OF PROTESTANTISM FOR EXISTENCE

BY

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PREFACE



THE following account of the life of King Gustavus Adolphus, the national hero of Sweden, demands little preface. It makes no pretensions to be based upon original research, and I cannot claim to have read even all the modern authorities on the subject. My knowledge of the Swedish language is by no means independent of the assistance of a dictionary, nor can I hope to have escaped that tendency to partiality for which the natural fascination of such a subject is the only excuse. The work was undertaken, and the material partly gathered, before I was aware that it was to have the honour of forming one of a series of biographies. The difficulty of accommodating its proportions to that object has not been inconsiderable. I am on the one hand debarred from giving the references which in many places I should have desired to give, and on the other hand obliged to include accounts of many things of which I had made no special study. The military history of the Thirty Years' War is in itself a case in point. No satisfactory monograph on the subject exists, and I have often been obliged

to confess myself at fault in grasping the exact meaning of military terms, and the exact effect of manœuvres, in an art of which even in its modern shape I know nothing. Every one in the seventeenth century was a bit of a soldier, and the books which were written at the time presuppose in their readers a considerable knowledge of the practice of arms. In the library of the immortal Captain Miles Standish, the *Swedish Intelligencer* stood side by side with the Bible. But the times have so far changed, that I am able to plead that I am probably not much more ignorant of the art of war than the majority of my readers are likely to be.

The contemporary literature of the Thirty Years' War was very voluminous and is still very undigested. Every variety of dates, figures, and numbers, every variety of judgment upon the principal characters engaged, makes a little task like mine extremely bewildering. No great history of the period as a whole has as yet been written. Professor Anton Gindely's larger work treats, so far as it has at present gone, only of the very early years of the struggle. He has indeed published a smaller school-book on the whole subject, which has been translated into English, but this is avowedly only tentative, and he confesses that he has not explored the archives of Stockholm. But in those archives, if anywhere, it is probable that the true Gustavus Adolphus is to be found.

On the other hand, almost every separate character and every separate incident in the war has had one, if not many historians. For instance, I

have come across, in one place and another, seventeen different accounts of the Battle of Lützen. The subject of the present biography has been particularly fortunate, or unfortunate, in this respect. Gustavus Adolphus has been attacked and defended any time these two hundred and fifty-eight years. His character has undergone, in the so-called impartial verdict of history, even more transformation than that of Oliver Cromwell: he has been deified as a hero; with no less warmth he has been denounced as a hypocrite. To the school of Gfrörer, to Förster and the biographers of Wallenstein, he came into Germany as a robber. What claim have I to say that the later German historians, such as Droysen, are justified in their vindication of his character, even though Ranke has lent his great name to the view that the life-work of the King was essentially the defence of the German Protestants and the restraint of the ambition of the House of Hapsburg, as the only real safeguard for the national independence of Sweden? The only answer I can make to this question is that, in the present state of historical knowledge, a man who has no pretensions to be a student of archives can but study the result of the researches made by others and form his conclusions accordingly. I am quite aware that this is not a perfectly safe guide, for I believe that one can prove almost anything from a judicious use of original documents, and that in a subject which possesses such a completely European interest as the Thirty Years' War, documents may at any moment turn up

which may falsify all the conclusions of previous writers. Every Court in Europe probably possesses some archives which have reference to it, and the field of research has been by no means exploited.

I must therefore at once avow that my main guides have been G. Droysen's "Gustav Adolf" (Leipzig, 1869), and Geijer's "Sveriges Historia," the classic work upon the subject, which has been translated into German. Geijer is especially valuable, because so large a portion of his history of the German campaigns is made up of letters from Gustavus himself, taken from the Swedish archives, which, in many places, he quotes *in extenso*. He, as it were, lets the King tell his own tale. A large proportion of these letters were written to John Casimir, the Regent of Sweden, who had married the King's sister Catherine, and who became the father of King Charles X., and ancestor of the later Vasa Kings. Next in importance comes a volume of letters of the King to his Marshal, General Kniphausen, written during the campaign of 1630-1-2, and published at Gröningen, in Holland, by H. O. Feith, in 1860. Of this same description is a little volume of the King's miscellaneous letters and writings (including the correspondence of Gustavus with his first sweetheart, Ebba Brahe), published at Stockholm, in 1861, under the title of "Konung Gustav Adolfs Skrifter."

I have found little difficulty in the use of the above-mentioned books, but it is quite another matter with the mass of contemporary pamphlets, broadsheets, pictures, caricatures, and letters, to

which the King's extraordinary success in Germany gave rise. Some part of the ground is cleared by the fact that Professor Droysen has proved conclusively that the three most important contemporary accounts, the "Arma Suecica" of Arlanibæus (Frankfort, 1631), the "Inventarium Sueciæ" of Godofredus (Frankfort, 1632), and the "Theatrum Europæum" of Abelinus, which did not appear in its final shape until 1679, were substantially the work of the same hand, namely, of Abelinus himself. The latter was evidently intended to be the life-work of the author; it is a wonderful monument of research and industry, and is enriched with numerous plates, two of which adorn the present volume. Next in order, of the same class, comes the "Swedish Intelligencer," printed for a London bookseller in successive instalments from the year 1632 to 1637. It professes to be, and one sees no reason to doubt the fact, compiled from a series of letters written by several persons from the actual theatre of the conflict—that is to say, it may be called entirely first-hand evidence, although probably not derived from any persons who would be likely to be in the interior secrets of the diplomatic and military movements. It is enriched with numerous plates. Of the value of the work of Colonel Robert Monro, an officer who served in the Scotch Brigade of Gustavus's army, I have spoken in the text. In England also was brought out "Swedish Discipline, Religious, Civil, and Military," a very interesting tract (1632), of ninety pages, which includes the famous articles of war and a pay-list of the Swedish army.

As first-hand evidence, too, may be reckoned the work of Gualdo Priorato, a Venetian gentleman who had served under Maurice of Nassau, then under Gustavus, Wallenstein, Horn, and Bernard, respectively. He may at least be considered as having seen both sides of the struggle, but with the accuracy for which his nation was famous, he gives no account of anything which he did not actually see, and the disappointing thing about his book is that he seems to have seen very little. As a foreigner and a soldier of fortune, he was not perhaps admitted to much of the secrets of either side. This is the book, however, in which Frederick the Great probably read up his Thirty Years' War campaigns, for it was translated into French by one Francheville, and published at Berlin in 1772, the new edition being enriched with movable plans of the principal battles, "compiled on the spot by an engineer officer in the Prussian service."

Every campaign, however, and every event in each campaign, has, as I have said, a special literature of its own. Much of this is known to me only by name, though the names of many of the tracts are extremely expressive, as, for instance, the "Hansische Wecker," "Nun geht's mit Gott ins Bayern," etc. I have, however, endeavoured to read all of those, on which I could lay hands either in the British Museum or the Bodleian Library, which have reference to the two great battle-fields of Breitenfeld and Lützen, although without arriving at any very clear notions of the disposition of this second battle.

Of modern works besides those already referred to, I have derived considerable help, with regard to the thorny subject of military history, from a little Belgian book edited by MM. Merzbach and Falk, and entitled "Campagnes de Gustave Adolphe" (Brussels, 1887), one of a series of sketches of European warfare now in progress. The old German General von Bülow's "Gustav Adolf's Feldzug in Deutschland," 1808, is written rather from the point of view of a military theorist than of an historian. For the negotiations between the King and Wallenstein, and those between the King and the Protestant princes in the winter of 1631-2, the thirty-fifth volume of the "Preussische Staatsarchiv," contributes valuable material which I have done my best to use carefully. Harte's "Life of Gustavus Adolphus" (London, 1759) is a ponderous and painstaking work of the Robertsonian school, and contains a valuable diary or diurnal of the King's campaigns. The works of the Rev. B. Chapman (London, 1856) and Consul Stevens (London, 1885) are spirited and picturesque biographies, especially the former, though it has the disadvantage of having appeared prior to Droysen's researches. I cannot, however, claim to have made much use of the three last-mentioned works. To the very voluminous modern Swedish life of Gustavus, by Abraham Cronholm, I have made frequent reference, but only upon doubtful points. I cannot claim to have read it through. Herr Weibull's, the latest Swedish life (Stockholm, 1884), I have studied carefully, and have derived much valuable

side information therefrom, as well as the right, by the extreme courtesy of its editor, Herr Bukowski, to make use of some of the illustrations to that work.

I have unfortunately not had the opportunity of travelling over all the ground, even of the German campaign, with this special object in view, and the Prussian and Polish "terrain" is completely unknown to me. I have, however, seen at one time or another most of the places described in the German and some of those in the Swedish part of the book; and about two years ago I was able to make some special study of the Pomeranian campaign on the spot.

With regard to the spelling of the proper names, I am aware that I shall be severely taken to task for "arbitrariness," but it is a choice between arbitrariness and pedantry, and I prefer to be found guilty on the former charge. There are historians who write Lorraine Lothringen, and who would shiver at the very name of Charlemagne; there is everything to be said for their view, but do they always write Roma and Firenze? There is another school, which professes to adopt universally the French spelling wherever there is no English equivalent, but which is in practice equally illogical. I am not likely to find favour with either of these, for the only rule, by which I have thought myself at liberty to be bound, is the rule of common practice among educated Englishmen. Thus I maintain that Alsace has become an English word to express the country lying between the Vosges and the Rhine; Cologne, to express the city of "four and

seventy stanches"; and that to use these terms does not in the least stamp a man as an upholder of any anti-nationalist theories with regard to the Rhine frontier. But I cannot give up Mainz and Trier for Mayence and Treves. While refusing to call my hero Gustav Adolf, Gothenburg Göteborg, Munich München, or Vienna Wien, I hold myself quite free to speak of Regensburg, Speyer, and Kalmar.

The dates of the days of the month in this book are given in the old style, but it has been thought convenient to give the years according to the new style. Ten days must, therefore, it is almost needless to say, be added to each date to bring it into accord with modern chronology.

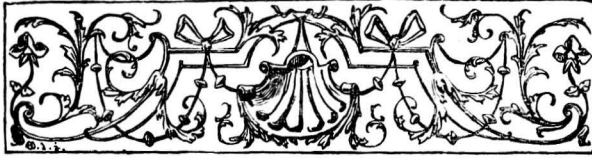
My thanks for assistance in my little work are due first to my father, who most carefully corrected the whole, and pointed out numerous faults of English; to Mr. Evelyn Abbott, of Balliol College, for many valuable hints; and to my most kind friend, Mr. Alexander Titz, of Stockholm, for his assistance with the illustrations, and for his unceasing attentions during my stay in Sweden. Lastly, to the Rev. Arthur Johnson, of All Souls, and Mr. Richard Lodge, of Brasenose College, to whose advice, though not directly in connection with this book, I owe whatever interest in History I may possess.

OXFORD, January, 1890.



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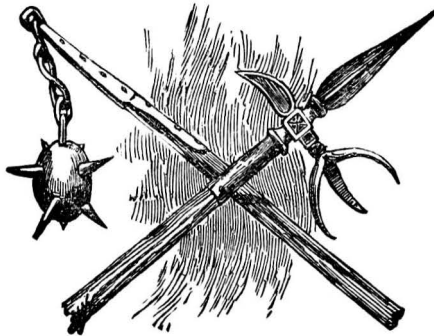
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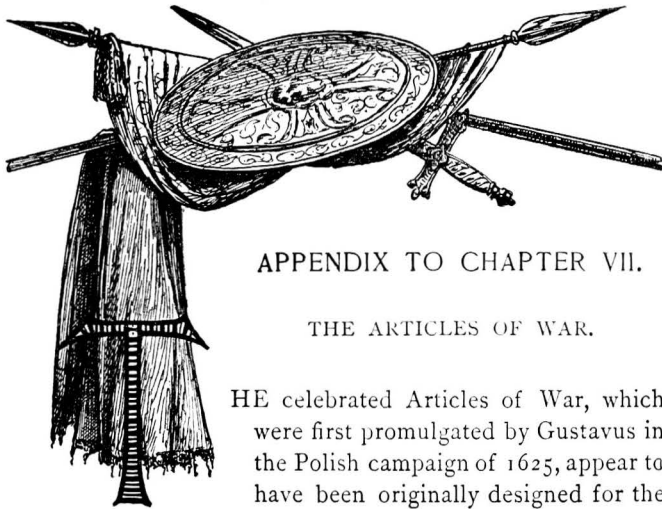


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APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VII.

THE ARTICLES OF WAR.

THE celebrated Articles of War, which were first promulgated by Gustavus in the Polish campaign of 1625, appear to have been originally designed for the foreign soldiers in Swedish pay, but they bound all the army alike, and were strictly enforced throughout the King's lifetime. They appear to have been largely drafted by his own hand. They may be thus condensed :

I. For an army on service there was a separate court-martial for each regiment, over which the colonel presided, assisted by assessors elected from the various grades by the whole regiment. There was also an upper court presided over by the Marshal of Sweden, or his deputy, with the leading officers as assessors. The King to be a supreme court of appeal in himself.

II. The provost-marshal had power to arrest and imprison, and bring before court-martial, any person whom he suspected of being an offender, but might not "justify" (*i.e.*, hang) him on his own responsibility, except in the case of resistance to his own actual orders.

III. To the regimental court-martial belonged all crimes such as larceny, cowardice, insubordination, etc.

to the upper court, cases of high treason and all civil disputes.

IV. The punishment of death (loss of head and hand, or hanging) is decreed to every tenth man by lot if a regiment runs away during a battle. The other nine are to serve without their banner, lie outside the quarters, and have to clean out the camp, until they have wiped out their disgrace by a bold deed. Death is the penalty for plundering or outrage.

V. Other punishments were "riding the wooden horse" (a sharp bar of wood on which the victim sat with a musket tied to each foot), imprisonment in irons, bread and water, fines, etc. Flogging was not allowed.

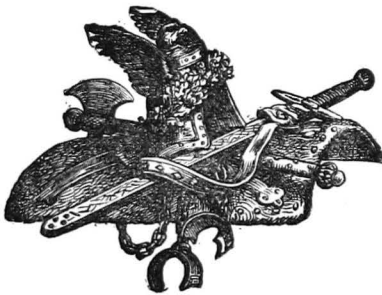
VI. A man might have his own wife with him, if he pleased, but no loose women were allowed in the camp. In the German armies so common had their presence become, that there was (we know from other sources besides Captain Dalgetty, who calls him "Captain of the Queens") an officer called Huren-Weibler, charged with the duty of keeping them in order.

VII. Morning and evening prayer in every regiment. Full service and a sermon on Sundays.

VIII. No duelling is allowed. Mr. Chapman quotes an excellent story of the King on this subject. Two officers obtained with difficulty his permission to fight a duel. He said he would come and see it. Arrived on the ground, he addressed the combatants as follows: "Now gentlemen, fight away—fight till one of you falls, and I have brought the provost-marshal with me to behead the survivor."

That these articles were rigorously observed on such a stage as that of the Thirty Years' War is perhaps too much to hope. But we shall find many instances in

which Monro's evidence, as well as that of other contemporaries, tends to prove the King's great zeal for their enforcement, and the punishments, which he meted out impartially for all violations of them which came under his knowledge.





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