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Heroes of the Nations

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

CHARLES XII.



CHARLES XII.

FROM A PORTRAIT BY JULIUS KRONBERG.

Frontispiece.

CHARLES XII

AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE SWEDISH EMPIRE

1682-1719

BY

R. NISBET BAIN

AUTHOR OF "GUSTAVUS III OF SWEDEN"



G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

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PREFACE



T

HE present work has no pretension to be anything like an exhaustive biography of Charles XII.—a perfectly adequate treatment of so large and complex a subject would demand many volumes. But it does claim to at least suggest the lines on which such a biography should be written, it professes to present the leading facts of the heroic monarch's career in the light of the latest investigations and it endeavours to dissipate the many erroneous notions concerning "The Lion of the North" for which Voltaire's brilliant and attractive work, I had almost said romance, *Histoire de Charles XII.* is mainly responsible.

It is a question, I think, how far original documents should be consulted in the compilation of a short sketch of this kind, or even whether they should be consulted at all. For the use of original documents necessitates, generally speaking, the addition of notes, appendices and other literary *impedimenta* which are almost out of place in a popular book of so small a compass as the present one. Nevertheless, I have endeavoured, somewhat reluctantly, to steer a middle

course, by following the best available Swedish monographs in the purely historical and political portions of this book while going to original documents for the private conduct and personal character of my hero.—It now remains for me to set out my principal authorities.

I.

ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.

- 1.—*Konung Karl XII's. Egenhandiga Bref.* Ed. CARLSON.
- 2.—*Fragments tirés des chroniques moldaves . . . pour servir a l'histoire de Pierre le Grand et Charles XII.* Ed. KOGALNICEANŪ.
- 3.—*Des Printzens Max Emanuels Herzog in Wurtemberg Riesen und Campagnen.*
- 4.—*Karl XI's Dagbok.*
- 5.—*Kurze Nachricht von Sr Konigliche Majt's Studien* (by Count POLUS).
- 6.—*Negotiations de M. le Comte d'Avaux . . . a la cour de Suede* (No. 33 of the publications of the Historical Society at Utrecht, new series).
- 7.—*Letters and Despatches of John Duke of Marlborough.* Ed. MURRAY.
- 8.—*Correspondance diplomatique . . . du Duc de Marlborough.* Ed. VREEDE.
- 9.—*Historia Ablegationis Danielis Krmann . . . ad regem Sveciæ Carolum XII. 1708-9.* (Publication of the Hungarian Historical Society, 1894.)*

* Now used for the first time. So far as I am aware this document is quite unknown to Swedish historians.

II.

MONOGRAPHS, FOR THE MOST PART SWEDISH.

- 1.—CARLSON: *Sveriges Historia under Konungarne af Pfalziska Huset.*
- 2.—BESKOW: *Karl den Tofte.*
- 3.—FRYXELL: *Berättelser ur Svenska Historien.**
- 4.—CARLSON: *Carl den Tofstes tåg mot Ryssland.*
- 5.—HAMILTON: *Minne af Grefve C. G. Rehnskjöld.*
- 6.—SVEDELIUS: *Minne af Grefve Karl Piper.*
- 7.—CARLSON: *Om Fredsunderhandlingarne åren 1709-1718.*
- 8.—SVEDELIUS: *Minne af Grefve Arvid Horn.*
- 9.—LILLIESTRÅLE: *Magnus Stenbock och Slaget vid Helsingborg.*
- 10.—LAGERMARK: *Karl XII's Krig i Norge.*
- 11.—HOLM: *Studier til den store nordiske Krigs Historie.*
- 12.—BESKOW: *Friherre G. H. von Görztz, statsman och statsoffer.*
- 13.—AXELSON: *Bidrag till Kännedomen om Sveriges tillstånd på Karl XII's tid.*
- 14.—SARAUW: *Die Feldzüge Karls XII.*
- 15.—CARLEN: *Några blad om Carl XII.*
- 16.—BRÜCKNER: *Peter der Grosse.*

R. NISBET BAIN.

August, 1895.

* This entertaining but prejudiced and uncritical work should be used very cautiously.



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¹ From an engraving in Kronberg's Magazine.

² "Svenska Drottningar."

³ Viebull's "Sveriges Storhetstid." Hiertas. Stockholm.

⁴ Snoilsky, "Svenska Bilder."

⁵ Fryxell, "Berättelser ur Svenska Historien."

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¹ Fryxell, "Berättelser ur Svenska Historien."

² Viebull's "Sveriges Storhetstid." Hiertas. Stockholm.

³ "Svenska Landtmarskalkar."

⁴ Danmarks, Norges og Sverige Historien.

⁵ Cartensen's "Tordenskiold."

⁶ From a plate by Cederström.

⁷ "Svenska Drottningar."





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