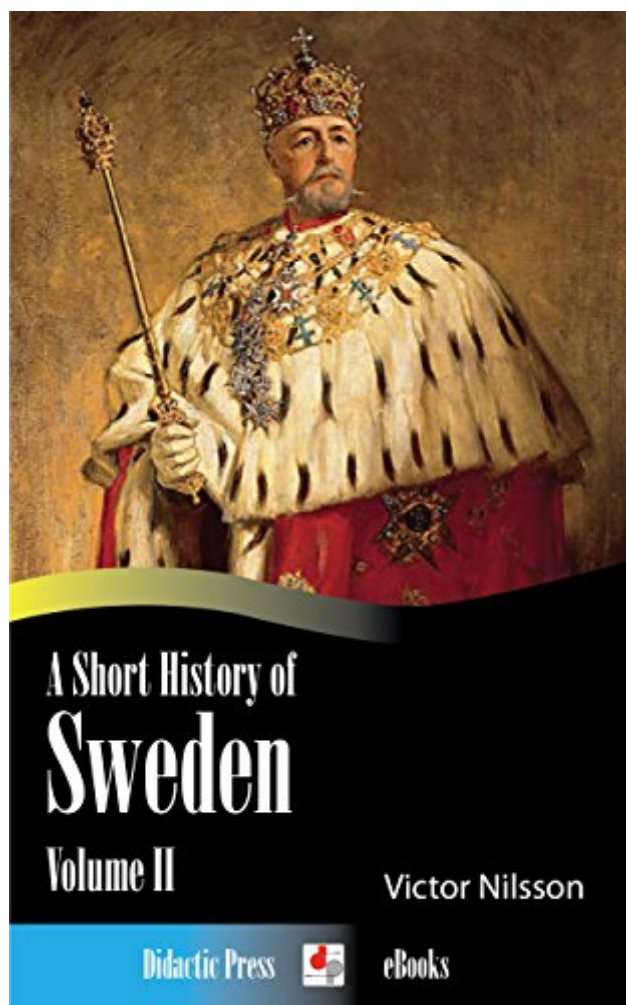


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Synopsis

Charles XII., the most famous of Swedish kings, was a boy of fifteen at the death of his father. He was born June 17, 1682, at the castle of Stockholm. The astrologers declared that Sweden was to receive a new war-lord, and that time they were not mistaken. Charles XII. was born in the same year as the absolute monarchy of Sweden, which power he was to abuse in such a great measure. Shortly after his birth, one of the speakers of the knightly chapter house, Justice Gyllencreutz, said while warning against the consequences of an absolute power: "A king may come who follows his own will, being more fond of war than peace, or utterly extravagant. History proves that changes of the constitution generally are beset by dangerous consequences; yea, that they often have brought destruction to the country and its people." These words were prophetic...

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