

A decorative border surrounds the central text, featuring a repeating pattern of stylized leaves and berries, possibly holly or similar winter foliage, in a dark, textured style.

**THE
SCANDINAVIAN
QUESTION**

W. Barnes Steveni

THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

Large Crown 8vo. Cloth, 5s.

"The Story of the Nations" Series.

A History of Norway.

From the Earliest Times.

By Professor HJALMAR H. BOYESEN.

With a Chapter by C. F. KEARY.

With 77 Illustrations and Maps.

LONDON: T. FISHER UNWIN.

The
Scandinavian Question

By
WILLIAM BARNES STEVENI

AUTHOR OF "THROUGH FAMINE-STRICKEN RUSSIA"

With a Map.



LONDON
T. FISHER UNWIN
PATERNOSTER SQUARE

1905

[All rights reserved.]

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	I
I. HISTORICAL ORIGIN OF THE UNION—THE NOR- WEGIAN POINT OF VIEW	13
II. THE CONSULAR QUESTION	23
III. THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF NORWEGIAN HOSTILITY TO SWEDEN—WHY SWEDEN HAS VOTED £5,500,000 FOR MILITARY EXPENSES	32
IV. THE GREAT VALUE OF THE UNION	42
V. HOW SWEDEN AND ENGLAND COMPELLED NOR- WAY TO ENTER THE UNION	59
VI. NORWAY'S FUTURE KING	70
VII. POPULAR FEELING IN SWEDEN AGAINST NORWAY	78
VIII. FOREIGN OPINIONS ON THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION	87
IX. THE NORWEGIAN FRONTIER FORTRESSES	94
X. THE SCANDINAVIAN PERIL	108
XI. THE ICE-FREE HARBOURS OF NORTHERN SCANDI- NAVIA—RUSSIA'S ALLEGED DESIGNS	125
XII. EXTENSION OF RUSSIAN SEA-BOARD	135
CONCLUSION—BERNADOTTE'S WARNING TO THE PEOPLE OF NORWAY IN 1814	148

SWEDEN AND NORWAY WITH DENMARK

SHOWING

Annexations of Swedish Territory by Russia from
1689 to 1808

ALSO

Annexation of Danish Territory by
Germany in 1866

EXPLANATION

Russian Military Route runs from
Tornaa to Three Engins Point
(eighteen miles from Lyngen Fiord)
thus

Railways ———

Frontier Boundaries ----- Lofoden IS

Boden Fortress +



Annexations by Peter the Great, 1689-1725

Annexations by Elizabeth . . . 1741-1762

Finnmark probable next annexation by Russia; now that she has been driven from the Pacific

Annexations by Catherine II . . 1762-1795

Annexations by Alexander I . . 1808-

THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

INTRODUCTION

THE greater part of the following booklet on the Scandinavian Question has now been written some time—in fact, prior to my recent tour through Northern Scandinavia, Lapland, Finland, and Russia; but it was not published, as I thought that the recent Congress at Karlstad had settled the Scandinavian Question once and for all time.

But the more I read the Russian and Continental papers, and consider the political changes that are now taking place—not only in our own country, but abroad—the more I feel convinced that the recent Congress has only helped us to tide over a very serious crisis, but not to solve the Scandinavian Question, which is perhaps just as important

2 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

to us as the Eastern or Far Eastern Question.

Another reason which decided me to publish this work was not only to induce the Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian people to forget their differences in view of the grave dangers threatening them from their colossal neighbours, but also to correct some of the false and misleading statements that have appeared in our Press concerning Sweden and her dealings with Norway, since the latter ceased to be under the Danish yoke and became united, as a free and independent nation, with Sweden, *i.e.*, as free as two nations under a union with common representatives abroad and such unequal responsibilities could possibly be.

For those who may entertain doubts concerning any statements I have made in this booklet, I would advise them to study three serious works that have appeared this autumn on this much vexed question. They are "The Swedish - Norwegian Union Crisis," by K. Nordlund; "Sweden for Peace," by Nils Edin, Professor at the University of

Upsala; and "Fiction and Fact," by the President of the Press Club, Stockholm. All these works, which can be purchased at Mr David Nutt's, are founded on historical documents, treaties, parliamentary minutes and reports, the originals of which may be seen in Stockholm and Christiania. For those who wish to go still deeper into the subject, I would advise them to visit the British Museum, and there see for themselves what was the position of Norway before she was united to Sweden, and why the latter country was forced to compel Norway to enter the Union. In fact this compulsory Union, for which we are responsible, and which has been disguised by the smooth words of diplomatists, has been one of the main causes of the recent unhappy events in Scandinavia, which nearly resulted in one of the saddest wars in modern times.

In fact, only by studying the historical events that preceded the Union of 1814, and the part each of the Scandinavian powers played in the wars of Napoleon and the wars against Russia, can we understand the present

4 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

question, which, as I have previously stated, still awaits its solution.

When the whole truth—not half-truths and distorted facts—is known, I am certain that the British public will do justice to both sides, not only because the British people believe in justice and fair play, but because it is also to our interest to see a strong and united Scandinavia, and the Scandinavian races—from whom so many of us have our origin—if not living in union, then in unity, constituting a bulwark of freedom and liberty in the north of Europe, which has been for centuries, and I trust always will be, the home of freedom.

In fact it is partly this intense love of freedom and independence—not unmixed with a spirit of pagan patriotism—that is one of the causes of the present trouble. The other causes I will leave the public to find out; for, sooner or later, the truth will be known about this unhappy quarrel which may ultimately again plunge the whole of Northern Europe, ourselves included, into war. My earnest hope is that the whole

truth, of which this pamphlet contains but a part, will be made public before it is too late, *i.e.*, before the Press and the public men of Britain, France, and Germany, acting on insufficient and incorrect data, make some serious mistake for which all Europe will suffer.

Personally, I have always had at heart the union of the Scandinavian peoples, not only because I am of Scandinavian origin, but because I believe that a closer union of the three northern kingdoms is essential to the peace and progress of Northern Europe. This dream, if it can be so called, has been rudely dispelled by the action of the Norwegian Storting of the 7th June, which act, if good, will bear good fruit, but if evil, misfortune and misery for future generations—or, in the words of one of the Karlstad delegates to me, it will be a source of unrest in the North.

Much of what I have written here will doubtless cause anger and vexation in Norway; but this cannot be helped; for the truth, such as I have discovered it during

6 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

my long study of that question, and my travels in Scandinavia, ought to be known.

I have only been once in Norway, and that was this summer, a part of which I spent among the fiords of the coast and the beautiful Lofoden Isles. During the short time that I was in that delightful country I learnt to like the Norwegians; for they had so much in common with my own sympathies and tastes, and I found them simple and manly, inspired with the poetry and memories of past ages. In fact many of the Norwegians appeared to live more in the past than the present, and their dreams of past greatness seem to have had much to do with their recent acts.

But we, who live in the twentieth century, cannot act as our Viking forefathers did a thousand years ago. They were indeed grand times; but, nevertheless, cruel, dark, and grim. Surely we have got past that stage of our development. Why should we then perpetuate them by treating kindred races in the same spirit as the old Norsemen did, and teach our children to hate and revenge

themselves on, instead of loving, kindred and sister nations? In heathen times, to be a good hater and to revenge a wrong, when violence begot violence, was a duty; these Viking virtues, if we may so call them, were not out of place. But now, a thousand years after Christianity has been introduced into Norway, these old teachings, which do not belong to our times, must be eradicated. The Norwegian children, instead of being taught to hate the Swedes, who are universally regarded as one of the kindest, most cultured, and polite races in Europe, will, in future, if taught to love them, perhaps in time wish to be united to them in closer bonds.¹ Some day when the storm breaks on Norway's ship of State, now alone on the ocean of European politics, the Norwegian people will learn how blessed a thing is unity, and how cursed a thing is disunion and dissension. May these simple truths dawn on the Scandinavian races before it is

¹ This is in reference to the Norwegian school books, which deliberately inculcate hatred of Sweden and the Swedish people. On the other hand, Swedish children are taught to regard the Norwegians as brothers.

8 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

too late, *i.e.*, before they are swallowed up by their mighty neighbours. Patriotism is a good thing when it teaches us our duty to our country and rulers; but if it only teaches us to hate our neighbours, and prevents the future union of the States of Europe, it is truly an accursed thing.

I am grieved that I should have to write in such a strain; but after working for a united Scandinavia, the present sad spectacle the three ancient kingdoms of the North present is indeed one to make one despondent. Had they held together, instead of weakening one another by strife and discord, the three Scandinavian races would now have occupied the place of the Germans in the Councils of Europe.

What will be their future, with their past grand history, Providence alone knows; but let us hope, for the sake of peace, liberty, progress, and unity, that it will be as peaceful and bright as the old heathen times were miserable and full of discord.

Nothing in the following pages has been written with the intention of causing the

Norwegian people any kind of offence. My object in writing this pamphlet is the following, viz. :—(1) to make known the truth, as far as it is in my power to do so with the material at my disposal; (2) to prepare the way for a union of hearts between the three Scandinavian kingdoms; and (3) to express my gratitude to my friends in Sweden, and to do them justice who are now smarting under injustice and misconception.

During the short time I was in Norway I learned, as I have already said, to like the Norwegian people exceedingly. Even the Swedes tell me that they like the Norwegians, and that “they are not a bad people, but misled by their leaders”; and I believe with those who have studied the underlying causes of this tragic rupture of the Union, that the Norwegians have been systematically misled by those whose duty, as leaders and teachers, it was not to sow hatred and discord between kindred people, but love and concord. On their heads rest the responsibility and all the misery—and, perhaps, bloodshed and strife—that may follow from their narrow and

misguided patriotism, unless a new school of statesmen, with a broader and nobler spirit, arises in Norway.

If I have said aught unkind in these pages, I have done it, not out of malice, but from a sincere desire for the welfare of the Scandinavian peoples, with whom we in England and Scotland—especially in East Anglia and Eastern Scotland—are so closely related. How much so, it will surprise many Englishmen to learn, if they have not read the works of Du Chaillu and other writers on the origin of the English people. They will there find that the very name of our country—England—is Scandinavian, and that not only the Danes, the Norsemen, the Normans, and the Angles came from the countries colonised by the Scandinavian races, but many of the so-called "Saxons" also did not come from Germany, but from Scandinavia.

But there are other and more telling reasons why we should interest ourselves in our Norse kindred. They are not only of the same Gothic origin as ourselves, but they are practically the only free nations remaining in

the north of Europe; for one can hardly apply the term free to the Germans or the Russians, who, in their worship of autocratic methods, have much in common.

For the peace of Northern Europe it were best that both nations should speedily compose this unhappy quarrel, which is more the result of misunderstanding, agitation, and intrigue, than of any deep-seated hatred of each other.

It is evident that the only chance of their maintaining their liberties and independence lies *in federation*, if not in complete amalgamation, or, in the words of a great English organ, which writes on this question as follows:—

“Divided, the presence of two great militarist Empires on their frontiers must be a constant source of disturbance. There can be no doubt that such a federation would make for the interests of Europe as a whole. It would diminish, in some degree, the number of possible changes to European peace, and serve as a barrier against any policy of adventure in the Baltic on the part of Germany, or any expansion towards the North Sea on the Russian side. At the same time it would give to the Scandinavian

12 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

peoples more weight in the councils of Europe, and win for them the position to which their intelligence and education entitle them in the making of international opinion."

Such is the fair prospect opened out to these kindred nations, if they will but act in the spirit of the religion they all three profess. But should they again turn back to their old pagan traditions of hatred, revenge for past injuries in the spirit of narrow-minded, un-Christian patriotism, love of bloodshed and strife, then their fate is sealed; for now, as ever, it is true that "a house divided against itself shall fall"—and the people of the North will fall from that high position they have held as free-born men for nearly two thousand years. They will not only fall, but the Scandinavian kingdoms will be divided between their two mighty neighbours, and their place in history will be known no more; for, through their want of unity and their love of strife, they will have struck themselves off the roll of the free nations of the world.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL ORIGIN OF THE UNION—THE NORWEGIAN POINT OF VIEW

IN a series of articles published in various English papers, I have endeavoured to give the historical origin of the events that led to the recent strained relations between Sweden and Norway, which have resulted in the Norwegians breaking adrift completely from the Union, under which the two countries had lived in peace and prosperity for nearly a hundred years.

In a work¹ published by Mr David Nutt, of 57 Long Acre, London, the historical origin of the present crisis is put forward by a Norwegian writer, H. L. Brækstad. As this work is published in English I have used it

¹ "The Constitution of Norway."

in preference to any other for the purpose of showing the Norwegian contention. According to the above-mentioned authority, "The Norwegian Constitution has been pronounced by experts to be 'the most liberal of Constitutions,' and 'one of which any nation might boast.'" According to Mr Samuel Laing, the father of the late Member of Parliament for Orkney, "the Norwegian Storting (Parliament) is a working model of a constitutional government, and one which works so well as to highly deserve the consideration of the English people. Under this Constitution the Norwegian people enjoy a greater share of political liberty, and have the framing and administering of their own laws more entirely in their own hand than any other European nation." It is thus evident that, according to this English authority, the Norwegians are not tyrannised over or oppressed by the Swedish Government, as has been repeatedly asserted by the Norwegians in their Press.

Their grievances are evidently of another nature, as will be seen hereafter, and are such as we English, Scotch, and Irish, who

have not yet been granted the full democratic institutions the Norwegians enjoy, cannot completely understand.

Mr Brækstad then proceeds to state that Norway has existed as a kingdom for over a thousand years, and even in the remoter age of her history she possessed a standard of culture such as hardly any other nation could equal. During the Napoleonic Wars, Sweden joined Russia against Napoleon,¹ while Denmark allied herself with the Emperor and his fate. Sweden agreed to furnish an army to co-operate with the Russians against the French in North Germany, and in return Russia promised Sweden the enforced cession of Norway by Denmark at the end of the war. The terms of this treaty were communicated to the British Government, and ultimately England agreed not to oppose the conquest of Norway, and also promised the help of her fleet, if required; but she stipulated that the rights

¹ So did England, Germany, and Austria. The English fleet actively co-operated with Sweden in forcing Norway into the Union, which country had to pay the penalty for fighting Denmark's battles against Sweden.

and privileges of the Norwegians should be respected.

In the following chapters we see how England kept her promise and assisted Sweden with her fleet, and prevented a Russian, Danish, French, and Norwegian invasion of Sweden, *i.e.*, when Sweden decided to throw in her lot with England. The question now before us is this. Has Sweden, during the course of the present Union, kept the promise she made to England in 1812, *viz.*, "that the rights and privileges of the Norwegian people should be respected?"

The Norwegians on their part assert that these rights and privileges have been shamefully infringed, whilst the Swedes reply that, on the whole, not only have they been respected, but the Norwegians have wrung from them, through continual and incessant agitation, far more rights and privileges than they were entitled to, considering the vassal position Norway held under Denmark prior to the Union, and that Norway was practically forced to enter the Union after she had

made her last unsuccessful attack on Sweden's very existence in conjunction with Russia, France, and Denmark.¹ Whom are we to believe in the present crisis? Personally the writer is in favour of placing the most credence on impartial authorities—English, German, and French; for when two parties are engaged in a quarrel it is impossible for them to judge matters in an impartial and just spirit.

Mr Brækstad further writes that:—

“In the following year the Swedish army invaded Holstein, and the Danes, unable to resist the Swedes, and having no hope of assistance from Napoleon, were obliged to accede to the conditions which the Swedes dictated, and which were finally embodied in the Treaty of Kiel. According to this treaty, Norway was ceded to Sweden, and the King of Denmark, in a proclamation to his Norwegian subjects, released them from their allegiance, and advised them to accept the new order of things.

“The Norwegians, however, would not tamely submit to be handed over like mere chattels to the Swedes. They had not been

¹ See Odner's "History of Sweden," and Nisbet Bain's "Scandinavia."

consulted in the matter, and the consent of the nation had not been obtained to the Treaty of Kiel, which they simply ignored.

“The Treaty of Kiel has, in fact, never been recognised by the Norwegians. As soon as the Swedes heard that the Norwegians would not submit to their demands, they invaded the southern part of Norway, led by the Swedish Crown Prince Bernadotte, formerly one of Napoleon’s Generals, who had been adopted by the childless king, Charles XIII. of Sweden as his successor. The Swedes met with a gallant resistance, but Christian Frederick, the new Norwegian king, considered the struggle was hopeless.¹ A convention was then held at Moss, where the Norwegians finally accepted the Swedish king as their sovereign, but on condition that their Constitution of the 17th May should remain intact, *except in respect of such alteration as the Union with Sweden rendered necessary.* An extraordinary Storting was summoned at Christiania, and on the 4th November of the same year Norway was declared to be a free, independent, and in-

¹ Fridtjof Nansen in his work makes out that the struggle was hopeless for the Swedes; but this is not in accordance with the standard histories of the day, whether English, German, or French.

divisible¹ kingdom, united with Sweden under one king. The Constitution framed at Eidsvold was retained, forming the present Grundlov, or Fundamental Law of the country.

“The Constitution adopted by the representatives of the Norwegian people at Eidsvold on the 17th May 1814, was framed on those of America, France 1791, and Spain 1812. The legislative power is vested in the Storting, which literally means the Great Assembly. The Storting is a one-chamber institution, and, with the exception of the Greek Chamber, is the only one in Europe. As already mentioned, *the King can exercise his veto only twice. The Norwegian parliament thus possesses a right not known in any other monarchy in Europe. When the same Bill has been passed by three successive Storthings, it becomes the law of the land without the assent of the King.* Thus the King may delay a Bill from becoming law, say for seven or nine years. The present King has, on two occasions, refused his sanction to measures passed for the second time by the national assembly, viz., the Bill for the admittance of the members of the govern-

¹ In the Norwegian Grundlov—it says also inalienable; but this word has been omitted in Mr Brækstad's work. See p. xxii.

ment to the debates of the Storting, and the Bill for the National flag. Both these Bills on passing for the third time became law."

As is well known, King Oscar, for reasons we shall hereafter state, recently refused his sanction to the Bill granting Norway a separate Consular Service. For refusing his sanction, the Norwegian Storting, claiming to act on behalf of the entire Norwegian people, solemnly dethroned the popular and accomplished monarch, whose greatest fault, in the eyes of his Swedish subjects, is that he has continually sacrificed Sweden's honour and interests, in order to obtain the goodwill of the Norwegian people. Thanks to this failing, if it can be called one, King Oscar has lost much of his popularity in Sweden. But his illegal and unconstitutional deposition has helped to bring back many of his once dissatisfied subjects to his side, for his numerous virtues and talents are recognised throughout Europe. The *Daily Mail*, commenting on this tragic event, writes thus:—

"Universal sympathy will be felt with

King Oscar, who has to choose between surrendering his legitimate position and involving his subjects in deadly conflict. No monarch in Europe has striven more conscientiously to play the part of a strictly Constitutional Ruler ; has insisted less strictly on his Prerogative ; or worked more zealously for the welfare of his people. It is only because he is convinced that the common safety of the two kingdoms depends upon the maintenance of the Union established in 1814, that he has steadily resisted the demands of the Norwegian Separatists. Had he cared simply for his own peace of mind, or the interests of his Dynasty, he would have given his assent to the Consular Law, and thus confirmed his popularity in Norway, without jeopardising his authority in Sweden."

"Because he has been unselfish and conscientious, he has now been brought to this cruel dilemma. He is well aware that the future of the Scandinavian peninsula is by no means unclouded, and that its prospects of continued independence are not improved by the course of events in the Far East. Driven back from its attempt to reach the sea in Asia, Russia may renew its secular struggle on the North-West. What sort of obstacle could be

22 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

opposed to its enormous and valiant hosts by a couple of disunited and mutually jealous peoples? There is not one of the Great Powers that would be sufficiently interested to offer more than a moral protest."

Had not the Norwegian grievances already been made known to the public in the Russian, German, English, French and Dutch and American Press, months before the Swedes ever thought of replying, I should have also stated the Norwegian case in this book. But that is now unnecessary. For those, however, who have not read the Norwegian case, I would advise them to read the works of Nansen,¹ Brækstad, Brogge, and a small book published by the Norwegian National Council of Women.

¹ Published by David Nutt, London.

CHAPTER II

THE CONSULAR QUESTION

THERE is not the least doubt that the Norwegian Separatists, under the pretext of having their own Consular Service apart from Sweden, have been endeavouring for a long time to break down the Union, and that the organisation of a separate Norwegian Consular Service was the first step prior to having separate diplomatic representatives who would enable the Norwegians to carry on a separate foreign policy.

Professor Sass, the Norwegian historian and politician, has openly and without contradiction stated in the Review, *Samtiden* that already, in March of the present year, this was Norway's real intention.

That the Norwegians have had this intention is clearly seen from a letter received from

Berlin on the 15th April and published in the *Aftonbladet* of Stockholm. The writer of this letter states that :

“Already, in the beginning of this year, before the negotiations regarding a separate Norwegian Consular Service had been broken off and the Union crisis had become acute, a programme for the establishment of a separate Norwegian Consular Service was drawn up by the departmental Consular Committee in Christiania, and announced to the public.

“Among the remarkable details contained in this programme, was a proposal that paid general consuls should be sent to Berlin, Antwerp, Barcelona, Genoa, London, Paris, St. Petersburg, New York, and other places. This simply means that Norwegian Consuls-General should be established in certain centres, important politically, but of minor importance as regards their trade in Scandinavian products.

“In St. Petersburg, Berlin, and Paris, unpaid Swedish and Norwegian Consuls-General are now in office. Sweden and Norway have hitherto followed the same principles as other maritime countries, and have established their most important consulships in the principal

ports. This being the case, it is quite natural that the present united kingdoms should have their principal German representatives in Hamburg, and the principal French ones in Havre."

The Norwegian Separatists, in proposing to appoint their consuls to the principal capitals, have undoubtedly the intention of making them temporarily do the work of diplomatic representatives, so that, when the time comes, they can be changed into Ambassadors or Plenipotentiary Ministers, if need be.

Since the Consular question interests England and the other Powers of Northern Europe mostly from an international point of view, it would be as well to quote the opinions of some of the leading Russian, German, and Danish papers on this subject.

The *Post*, which is supposed to be inspired by the German Government, states :

"That the Norwegians have for fifteen years intentionally worked with the object of destroying the Union, and that the Consular question has neither constitutional nor political importance, and that the Norwegians are now

taking advantage of Russia's weakness to terminate the Union. Moreover, the Norwegian agitation depended on an artificial excitement of popular opinion in Norway, and was wanting in any genuine grounds among the people. History has shown how ruinous it has always been for opinion to be led by passionate, irresponsible agitation. The Norwegians have never been oppressed by Sweden."

During the debate on the Consular question in the Norwegian Storting, Commander Frisak declared that, "as regards having separate Norwegian consuls, it was no great improvement in an economical sense; for his experience proved that if any difference existed between the Norwegian and the Swedish consuls, it was that the Swedish consuls were more willing and better than the Norwegian."

Mr Walter E. Kidd, an English gentleman resident in Stockholm, in a letter to the *Daily News*, states that the English Press has been much misled by the Norwegians regarding the Consular question.

"It is without doubt true," Mr Kidd writes,

“that the Consular Service is in need of reforms; but considering the circumstances obtaining at the present moment, viz., that the Swedish Government employs as consuls more Norwegians than Swedes, it is difficult to understand why English papers should come forward with such assertions as the above-named, *i.e.*, that Swedish trade is being favoured at the expense of Norwegian commerce. The reason for this assertion must be that they have been misled.”

Björnsterne Björnson, who, with all his faults, is an honest man, protested against making this a political question, as in fact it was only a pretext.

The Swedes also state that the pamphlets published by the Norwegians in England and Germany are exceedingly one-sided and misleading, for they are absolutely silent on many important facts. “For instance, the Swedish proposals of 1885, 1886, and 1891 concerning increased influence for Norway in the Ministerial Council are spoken of in these *brochures* in such a manner that it is impossible to get a correct impression of the subject. It must be remembered that it was

a Norwegian Government, and not Sweden, that rejected the generous proposal of the Crown Prince and broke off negotiations."

The writer, during his recent sojourn in Norway, interviewed several Norwegian captains and asked them whether they wished to have separate Consuls. These men, who appeared afraid to speak out openly, stated that they were satisfied with the joint Swedish and Norwegian Consuls, and, what is still more strange, did not wish the Union to be dissolved, for they received more help when they sailed under the flag of the Union than they would do under the so-called "clean flag," *i.e.*, the flag without the Union mark. The English Consul in Stockholm also informed me that the maritime population, in whose favour the cry for separate consuls was supposed to have been raised, did not want to have separate consuls. It is thus evident that the Consular question was simply a pretext for dissolving the Union, and that the real reasons have still to be made public.

The King of Sweden, in an interview

granted to the correspondent of the *Temps*, pointed out that Sweden had offered Norway her own separate consuls on condition that they were responsible to the joint Swedish-Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, but the Norwegians, whose real object was the dissolution of the Union, had refused that offer. The King of Sweden has, during a long reign, obtained the reputation of being an honourable gentleman. I therefore believe his words, and disbelieve all other assertions not in harmony with his public statement.

Speaking in French, with an occasional note of sadness in his voice, King Oscar said :

“The Norwegians have acted badly, all the more badly because they seek to throw upon me responsibilities which rest upon them entirely, and because they endeavour to make foreign nations believe that I rendered the rupture inevitable by declaring that it was impossible for me to form a new Norwegian Ministry when Herr Hagerup and his colleagues resigned on 27th May last.

“This is wilful and disloyal misrepresentation of the facts.

“I may say that I have always done good

to the Norwegians. Since my accession I have done for them everything which the Constitution allowed me to do. But I am King of Sweden as well as of Norway, and in that capacity I could not sign Acts contrary to the interest of my Swedish subjects. The Norwegians reproach me with what has been strict impartiality, and my conscience tells me that I have always acted for the best towards my two peoples.

“The Norwegians dethroned me, giving for this action the false pretext of the consulate question. I was ready to go as far as wisdom would allow, but I could not entertain the idea of two distinct Ministries of Foreign Affairs. This would have been the very negation of all foreign policy. I proposed one common Minister of Foreign Affairs, responsible to both the Norwegian Storting and the Swedish Riksdag, which would have given a maximum of guarantees. As for the consuls themselves, reform was easy if necessary, seeing that before the rupture the majority of the consuls of Sweden and Norway were of Norwegian origin.

“The Norwegians would not even listen to these propositions, which were absolutely in accordance with the desires they had long

expressed. The demand for a separate Ministry of Foreign Affairs is posterior to the others and was formulated only to extend the conflict."

In conclusion, King Oscar said:

"No, there will not be another Union. Those who have sown injustice will gather the fruits thereof. Personally, I am persuaded that none of my sons or grandsons will be King of Norway. Neither the Queen nor myself desires to be separated from any of our children. If one of my family occupied the throne of Norway he would be reproached with acting not as the King of that country, but as my son. It would be all one to me."

CHAPTER III

THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF NORWEGIAN HOSTILITY TO SWEDEN—WHY SWEDEN HAS VOTED £5,500,000 FOR MILITARY EXPENSES

DURING my sojourn at Stockholm I interviewed several leading editors and politicians concerning the Scandinavian crisis. On enquiring the reasons why the Swedish Riksdag had voted £5,500,000 towards putting the army and navy in order, several well-known Swedish politicians furnished me with copies of the motions made in the Riksdag and explained Sweden's attitude as follows:—

“ Since the Norwegian Government of the 7th June has made a revolution (supported by the Norwegian Storting) against the King of Norway, in opposition to the Norwegian Constitutional Law, the Act of Union and Sweden's extraordinary Parliament, it is

essential that not only the reasons, but also the consequences, of this act should be thoroughly investigated and made known."

"If we desire to discover the cause of the recent situation, we shall find it is the result of a prolonged agitation in Norway, carried on by editors and professional politicians, that is to say, by men who simply live by political agitation; and who have, with this object, fed the national vanity to such an extent that the Norwegians imagine that they are the Japanese of the West, and have, therefore, systematically awakened hostility to Sweden and the Swedes in order to attain their ends."

With this object in view, the Norwegian "Left," or extreme party, first took up the question of the "clean" flag for their electioneering cry, and notwithstanding the fact that the "Right" (*i.e.*, the Conservatives), as well as the seafaring population and shipowners, were against any change, these opinions gradually altered, owing to the above-mentioned agitation, and at last the Conservative party obtained a majority at the elections by being forced to take up this catchword of "Separate

34 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

Consuls for Norway" in their electoral programme.

"It must be explained," said a well-known politician to me, "that in many countries, where it is too expensive to employ an ambassador, the consuls are often entrusted with political missions. In fact, it is extremely difficult for a State to separate the political from the commercial activity of some consuls. But this was not the real question for the whole of this agitation; this secret arming and military preparations, which has been going on for the last ten years, was simply a means to dissolve the Union, under which the two countries have prospered for ninety years."

The final result of this agitation of the leading politicians in Norway is that the revolution has now become an accomplished fact, and it is only now that the Swedish people have found out that, during many years, this has been the real aim of the agitators, and that they have worked in this direction, so that they could even attain their aim by the employment of force. To this end, they have strengthened and developed their defences,

NORWAY'S HOSTILITY TO SWEDEN 35

built fortresses, and increased their fleet, whilst Sweden has been directing all her attention and surplus resources to the general defence of both countries. It was suspected by some that this arming was against Sweden, but many more imagined that this development of the defences was in order that Norway might contribute to the common defence. Now it is quite clear that all these warlike preparations were directed against Sweden.

Whilst Sweden is spending 23,000,000 crowns in defending the North against a possible attack by Russia, Norway has spent all her surplus, and a large portion of the money which she ostensibly borrowed for the construction of railways, in erecting a series of powerful forts on the Swedish frontier, which, now that the Union between the two countries has been broken, is a serious menace to Sweden's safety, especially as, after the shameful Revolution of the 7th June, she cannot trust the Norwegians.

It would be extremely unwise to do this, as it has been a part of the system of Norwegian education to feed the national vanity whilst

implanting a bitter hatred of the Swedish people, even in the very children.

As hatred of the Swedes has been systematically implanted in the hearts of the Norwegians, we must really take this factor into consideration when we think over the present situation and its future consequences, especially if Sweden should again be so unfortunate as to come into conflict with Russia, who is believed to have designs on Finmark, and, perhaps, the North of Scandinavia.

The Norwegian politicians have already developed a strong party discipline, which has even spread among the people at large. Notwithstanding that they have now managed to secure unity in the Storting, either by means of party pressure, conviction, or intimidation in one form or another, it is presumable that if Norway now becomes an independent Republic, the various parties in a not far distant future will be just as bitter against one another as before. Under such conditions it is impossible for a self-respecting king to rule in Norway; because the Norwegians will not allow him a shadow of any real power,

and he will simply be obliged to sign the decrees of Messrs Michelsen & Co., or of the actual rulers for the time being. The present system of government in Norway is, in reality, a reign of terror, as may be seen from anonymous letters that are being sent to the Swedish Press by loyal Norwegians who still believe in the Union. Any one who will not go with the stream in Norway is singled out for persecution and publicly branded as a traitor to his country. The Storting controls the Government and the Press, which sets the tune all over the country, rules both the Government and the Storting, whilst the Norwegian people, terrorised and hypnotised, are obliged to remain silent. These facts seem incredible, but coming events will prove their truth.

In Norway, where so many of the leading public men have been petty schoolmasters, it is a very profitable profession to be a public man; for the Government posts are well paid — especially those of politicians who become members of the Government, as they afterwards obtain a pension. Whilst in the

Storthing they are paid twelve crowns a day—a considerable sum in Norway. In the future, as of late, some electioneering cry must be raised, and, if possible, one that will appeal to the national vanity. This being the case, what is more natural than that they, who through their very education have been systematically taught to hate Sweden, will seek to obtain the majority of the votes by advocating some policy directed against Sweden.

For these reasons Sweden cannot have any confidence in the Norwegian nation, which has shown itself capable of breaking thus, not only the established law of its own constitution, but also the Act of Union, whilst placing the blame on its King. Sweden must, therefore, have some real guarantee in order to protect herself for the future.

It is unfortunately impossible to come to any definite arrangement with the present Storthing for two reasons: in the first place, because we can never be sure that the agreement which is made to-day will not at any moment be suddenly set aside; and, secondly, because the

present Norwegian Storting has not had any mandate from its electors to make this revolution against the King and the Union. For this is a revolution not only against the Norwegian Constitutional Law, but even against the Norwegian people, who are being shamefully misled and deceived by those they have placed in power, viz., the professional politicians (*yrkes politiker*) and agitators whom Björnstjerne Björnson has so well depicted in his writings.

Since the present revolution in Norway has, to a great extent, originated and been accomplished because the Norwegian politicians have trusted in all that has been written and spoken in Sweden, viz., that war with Norway is impossible, it is time to put an end to this nonsense. Though no one in Sweden wishes for war with Norway, it may happen that the rights and honour of that country will have to be vindicated in order that her people may leave her to their successors as respected a State as they themselves inherited.

In conclusion, leading Swedish statesmen inform me that the finances of Sweden are in

a very sound condition, and that all the money that has been borrowed abroad is invested in State railways, which are paying a good interest to the country.

As to the reports that have been circulated in the English Press about Sweden wishing to make Norway a vassal State, I learn on the same high authority that these assertions are deliberate falsehoods, the result of a pre-arranged agitation in England, Germany, France, and other countries to prepare outside opinion for the long contemplated conspiracy of the 7th June against Sweden, her king, and the people of Norway. These last are really to be pitied, not only because they are being misled by ambitious and unscrupulous men, but also are being taxed to such an extent that, in many cases, one-third of their earnings goes to the State and the Commune. As regards Sweden endeavouring to deprive Norway of her present liberties, freedom, and privileges—of which she had not a tithe under Denmark, which ruled her autocratically from Copenhagen—this is another falsehood; for, barring Switzerland, there is probably not such another free

NORWAY'S HOSTILITY TO SWEDEN 41

State in Europe as Norway, for Sweden never has interfered in her home affairs. All Sweden wished was that the two countries should stand as one State as regards their relations with the rest of the Continent. But no! the Norwegians wish to cut themselves entirely adrift from Sweden, and to have a foreign policy of their own with all its attendant dangers to both States.

CHAPTER IV

THE GREAT VALUE OF THE UNION

THE question of maintaining the Union with Sweden and preventing Norway from cutting herself adrift and carrying on a separate, and perhaps, hostile foreign policy against the sister kingdom, was one of life and death for Sweden. Ever since the Union of 1814, *i.e.*, since the two kingdoms were united under one crown, there has been continual peace between them; but, prior to that event, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark were the arena of perpetual wars (see any trustworthy "History of Scandinavia"), and of intrigues carried on by Prussia and Russia, with the object of weakening Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, and gradually annexing the territories of the combatants. It was in this manner that Sweden and Denmark lost their

extensive territories on both sides of the Baltic, which now belong to Russia and Germany.¹ And what happened before the Union would undoubtedly occur again if these three kingdoms were again split up and weakened by divisions and rival policies. Swedish statesmen and historians declare that they were obliged to annex Norway, in order to secure themselves from attack on their western frontier, as the Norwegians invariably attacked them in the rear when they were at war with Russia or Denmark. This occurred in the days of Charles XII., and, later on, during the reign of Gustavus IV., when a united Russian, French, Danish, and Norwegian army attacked Sweden on all sides simultaneously. Finland was overrun and conquered by Russian troops, and, had it not been for the appearance of an English fleet in the Sound, and English troops under General Moore in the south of Sweden, that ancient kingdom would, in all probability, have been divided between Russia and Denmark-Norway, as had been mutually arranged

¹ See map of Scandinavia with Russia's annexations.

44 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

between the Emperor Napoleon and the Tsar Alexander I. Although Napoleon is no more, there are several minor Napoleons who might be tempted to follow in the footsteps of the two above-mentioned rulers, if Scandinavia again, as in the past, became the arena of intrigue, rival policies, alliances, jealousies, and those fratricidal wars which have been the bane of the Scandinavian nations in times gone by, as they will again be in the future, unless they can be led by common-sense and good statesmanship.

In order to secure his rear whilst repelling the attacks of the Russians, the Danes and his other foes, Charles XII., as I have before stated, spent his last resources in trying to conquer Norway, and perished in the attempt. His namesake, Charles XIV. Bernadotte, followed out this same policy, and after contributing to the defeat of Napoleon and some of his principal generals, marched with an army of veterans into Norway and forced the Norwegians into the present Union, which, on this account, has never been popular. When you tell the Swedes that they had no right

to do this, they reply that, after the numerous attacks that had been made on Sweden by Norway, which was then a vassal State allied with Denmark, Sweden had no other choice.

It will thus be seen that Sweden's union with Norway was really dictated by necessity, and was the result of the bitter experiences she had had before the two countries were united.

Bernadotte, with the foresight of a true statesman, seemed to foresee that the Norwegians would resist being united with their kindred, and in a remarkable manifesto, written from the camp at Venersborg, warned the Norwegians what misfortunes would befall them as a result of disunion and discussion. This document is so remarkable that I have ventured to give it at length (pp. 148-152).

According to Professor Winroth, "the great value of the late Union to Sweden was that it gave her not only the opportunity to direct all her defensive forces against an attack from Russia, but that Norway, in the event of her defeat, could have been converted into a fortress of the finest possible kind. The

46 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

difficulty for a enemy to bring forward large masses of troops and provisions would be almost insurmountable on account of the geographical nature of Norway and Western Sweden, but now everything is altered ; for Sweden's back is again bared to attack as it was before the Union, and she must think of defending this also. In the case of defeat her army must now be forced up against a neutral territory, and there be compelled to disarm." This is the reason why Sweden regarded the maintenance of the Union as a question of life and death, and any one who will take the trouble to study the history of the two countries prior to the Union must confess that her fears for the future are only too well grounded.

Whilst Sweden has been spending her money and resources in building the fortress of Boden in the North, and making other preparations for a possible Russian invasion, Norway, the sister kingdom, has raised war-loans and squandered her resources in the construction of fortresses along the Swedish frontier, and making other military prepara-

tions for war against Sweden, in case the latter country should refuse to grant the Norwegian demands when the psychological moment arrived. It thus happens, that whilst Sweden's Russian frontier is fortified against Russian invasion, the Swedish Western frontier is practically undefended. In short, Sweden has not spent her superior resources as regards men and money, in preparing to crush Norway, for she always hoped that the Union question would be settled by amicable and constitutional methods. The Norwegian Separatists, however, judging from their military and naval preparations, seemed to have had other views on the subject, and were armed from head to foot, not to defend Scandinavia against the common enemy, Russia, but, if need be, to attack the sister kingdom as before the Union.

Count Hugo Hamilton, a descendant of the old Scotch nobles who fought under Gustavus Adolphus, voices Swedish feeling in this matter in the following characteristic speech made at Gefle on the 19th June 1905:

“Since the 7th of June, when Norway broke

her oath of fealty to her king, the ill-will in Sweden has grown. From the day that Norway despised the Union, thanks to which she has had freedom and protection, and whose protection she has enjoyed for ninety years, we have learnt only too well that the Norwegians had resolved to break up the Union. In reality, this is the reason why all negotiations were impossible for the furtherance of the safety of the Union; but, if we should part, why should it take place in this manner? Sweden and Norway are irrevocably united by nature, and, if they cannot wander along hand in hand, it should be equally imperative for both nations to arrange matters, that we could stand side by side with mutual respect and confidence. But the foundations of respect and confidence have been destroyed at least here in Sweden, by the breaking of oaths and promises.

“For us in Sweden a blow with the fist remains a blow, even when the hand that deals it hastens to caress.

“We cannot pretend a friendship which we do not feel any more. We are full of wrath and must give it vent openly and without any stint; for it is a healthy wrath.”

All that the Swedish people desired was

that Norway should have recourse to those legal means provided by the Norwegian Constitution to obtain her rights within the Union. By resorting to legal measures Norway would ultimately have obtained her aims, for the recent Union was rather a source of weakness than of strength. The separation of the two countries was more or less expected, and it is not so much this as the manner in which it was brought about, which has created such bad blood in Sweden. The Swedes state that their aged and noble monarch, as well as their country, were cruelly insulted, and that, had the Norwegian Storting continued to treat the Swedish nation in this manner, not even the most pacific Government could have restrained the people from paying back the Norwegians in their own coin. The whole people felt that their honour was at stake if they had acknowledged the recent *status quo* without a protest. They thereupon demanded that the Union should be dissolved in a legal manner.

Personally, the writer is more inclined to believe the statement made by Björnson

than that of the Norwegian statesmen or Nansen.

Björnson may make mistakes; but I believe he is at heart an honest man.

The German Socialistic daily, *Vorwärts*, publishes an interesting interview with Björnstjerne Björnson on the future of Norway, which will interest English readers.

“In reply to the question as to what he thought of the present political situation Björnson answered: ‘The party now in power are friends of mine, but I am not at one with them concerning their tactics.’”

“The aged poet grew quite excited, and said moreover: ‘The Government have begun with what they ought to have ended. We should, first of all, have had a referendum.’”

“‘You are, then, for a Republic?’ I remarked.”

“‘That I am, I am a Republican, and I know my countrymen. The great majority want a Republic, and if we introduced that form of Government, there would be a popular demonstration of joy that would wake the world. It appears that Nansen has spoken otherwise of the Republican sentiments of the

Norwegians, but in that case he doesn't know his countrymen.'"

"The Social Democrats urge, do they not, that a new referendum ought to be made to decide on the future form of Government?'"

"Yes, that is quite true. I see that Swedish papers have been saying that the referendum does not express the will of the people, and that the result of it is due to a sort of hypnotism. That is false. As I said before, I know my countrymen, and they know what they want.'"

"Much of the honour for what has happened is due to you. You have fought for the independence of Norway for the last half century, and you are still strong enough to support the agitation for a Republic?'"

"Yes; such has always been my object. For the rest, I have worked for a United North.'"

Björnstjerne Björnson's great virtue is that, whilst striving for a dissolution of the Union, he worked, as he expresses it, for a "United North," the only natural and rational policy in Scandinavia.

He also had the courage to condemn not

only the methods of the Storting, but the national hot-headedness. "I see more on a large scale," he said, "and have therefore more patience. If people will go in for experiments with the Constitution, which can lead to everything that is possible, one makes oneself responsible for that kind of stupidity which I have always opposed in Norwegian policy (I could reckon up a whole series), viz., that kind of feeling, that when the Swedes have caused bad blood, we should afterwards cause more!"

"We do not wish and we should not tempt the Swedes to more evil, so that we come further from the way, which shall unite the North."

The unbroken peace of over ninety years is the best evidence—better than talk and empty phrases—of the extreme value of the Union to the political security of the Scandinavian Peninsula.

"It is difficult to imagine," writes a Swedish military expert, "an attack against Swedish territory without its affecting Norway; and we could hardly imagine an attack against

Norway without its affecting Sweden in the greatest degree.

“The Kölen¹ is no impassable frontier wall, when once a footing is secured in either of the two countries; for an invader would strive to seize both Norwegian and Swedish territory.”

The same writer remarks that, “unless the two countries are united, they have no chance whatever of resisting a Russian attack in the North, as may be seen by a glance at the map of Northern Scandinavia.”²

Any one can see from this map, that if the Russians push their army twenty miles westwards, they will be able to cut off the whole North of Norway at a single blow, before England or any other country could hasten to its defence.

It must not be forgotten that since the destruction of the whole of the Baltic Fleet, Germany is practically Lord of the Baltic, *i.e.*, whenever the British Fleet is in home waters.

“Germany is in a position completely to

¹ The mountain chain between Norway and Sweden.

² See annexed map.

paralyse Russian naval power as long as the Black Sea fleet remains cooped up. It requires little divination to prognosticate that it must early become one of the most immediate objects of Russian aim to remove this state of dependence on Germany. She can never do this with much hope of success until the principal source of her naval power is outside the Baltic. With a Norwegian fjord in her possession, and with the raw materials for the creation and maintenance of a large fleet in the neighbourhood, the question would be half solved. Germany has her price, and it might not be worth the expense of a costly war for Great Britain to hinder this acquisition. A small power like Norway could not hinder Russia, if for nothing else than financial reasons."

"Many of the leaders of the Norwegian opinion affect to believe that it will be feasible to substitute a defensive alliance between Sweden and Norway for the present Union. This reasoning, however, would probably turn out erroneous, as far as such an alliance is understood to be permanently applicable to all political questions that may arise. Sweden will decidedly be very chary of entering into such a league, as she is not only stronger,

but also much less exposed, than Norway. The danger threatening her is no doubt from the same quarter as that menacing Norway; but it is evident that Russia would scarcely be likely to risk a war for the purpose of occupying the mineral fields of Norrbotten, if the ore was available for her on a commercial basis; and, in any event, not before matters had been settled with Norway. Even if the Union is dissolved peaceably, the risk to Norway will be great, and Norwegian statesmen, therefore, have every incentive to pause before insisting on their own Foreign Minister; a demand that must inevitably burst the bonds uniting the two sister nations, and which may ultimately lead to wrenching Finmark and part of Tromsö from Norway."

The above article, written by a correspondent to the *Timber Trades Journal*, shows considerable grasp of the situation. It is very improbable that Russia will risk a war with Sweden for the Norrbotten mineral fields, which I have just visited, as her own mineral resources are practically inexhaustible.

I will, however, conclude this chapter by quoting the following excellent advice given

in the *Times* and written in praise of the Swedish Crown Prince's attempt to bring about an amicable arrangement between the two countries, which proposal Norway unfortunately rejected. The great organ writes as follows:

“The negotiators on both sides must remember that a peninsula is not an island, and that if Russia cannot wage war at the end of a railway 4,000 miles long, it does not follow that this empire cannot do this at its very gates.”

The German Press has already pointed out that if Russia makes any conquests in Scandinavia, then Germany can compensate herself by annexing Holland, with its splendid colonial possessions.

The Danes have also reason to be disturbed over the unstable state of Norway and Sweden's foreign relations. According to some of the leading Danish politicians, “an economical and political union between the three Northern States would secure their future for a long time ahead. All other

arrangements would mean danger for the future."

The writer is also of this opinion, and after studying the question on the spot, both in Sweden and Norway, has come to the conclusion that the only safe and true policy of the three Scandinavian nations, is to do their utmost to pull together; for all other policies are unnatural and doomed to failure. This opinion was expressed in a letter written to Mr E. Björnson, of Christiania, the son of the celebrated Norwegian writer, on the 15th August, from Stockholm. On this occasion I wrote:

"The only true policy of the Scandinavian nations is unity, if not union. If they work together in this direction, they will soon find out their real enemies. All other policies are false and are bound to end in war, destruction, and partition. Norwegians tell me that England will help them. I know what England can do better than they, and I tell them that unless Sweden and Norway hold together, England can do nothing against Russia's millions, or Germany's either."

58 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

After visiting the North of Norway and Finland last month, I have come to the conclusion that England alone could not keep Russia out of Finmark; but that, if France gave her assistance, Russia could be kept from the sea, for a time, in this direction. But I doubt whether it would be for long, as Finmark is, geographically speaking, already as good as Russian territory.

CHAPTER V

HOW SWEDEN AND ENGLAND COMPELLED NORWAY TO ENTER THE UNION

As before stated, Fridtjof Nansen in his work "Norway and the Union with Sweden" makes out that the struggle with Norway was hopeless for the Swedes; but this is not in accordance with the standard histories of the day¹—English, German, or French. Neither are Nansen's statements in accordance with a Danish history of Norway, written only four years after the incorporation of Norway with Sweden, and not expressly for present requirements, and by the Norwegians. In this work ("The History of Norway from the Earliest Times," by G. L. Baden, and from the "Union of Kalmar," by Baron Holbey,

¹ Nansen's other "inaccuracies" have been answered by Mr E. Rinman, the President of the Press Club, Stockholm, in his work "Fiction and Fact" about the Scandinavian Question.

60 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

translated from the Danish and continued to the present time by A. Anderson Foldborg, published by Hamblin & Leyfang, Thames Street, London, in 1817), I find the following Danish account of the events that led to the session of Norway by Denmark to Sweden on page 321 of the "History of Norway":

"In the meantime, the Crown Prince of Sweden (Bernadotte) was extremely active in his preparations, and, by the middle of July, he had assembled a formidable army on the frontiers of Norway, consisting of 40,000 men, *most of whom had served in Germany*. Before commencing hostilities, the Crown Prince and the King of Sweden tried negotiating, and proclamations were addressed to the people of Norway, dated 13th July 1814, and replied to immediately. No good effect being produced hostilities commenced with a naval action near the Hvalöen Islands, which the Norwegian Commander evacuated with precipitation."

"On the 27th the Crown Prince marched with his whole army for Norway, and on the 2nd August he removed his headquarters from Strömstad to Swinemünde. On the same day a Swedish Division, under the command of

General Gahn, made an attempt to force a strong position, but was driven back with great loss; and on the following days the Swedes found the Norwegians in the seas with a superior force. A very severe and sanguinary action followed, in which the Swedes effected their retreat with the loss of one gun, twenty baggage waggons, and a considerable number lost in killed, wounded, and prisoners."

"On the 2nd of August, Admiral Pike attacked Kragerö; and on the retreat of the Norwegians the fortress of Frederickstad was summoned to capitulate; on the 4th it surrendered, and the Swedish troops entered it and Kongsten in the evening; the garrison was permitted to return home. Frederickstad commands the passage of the river Glommen, and may be considered the key of Christiana. On the 6th, General Vegesack forced a strong position taken by the Norwegians at Rackestad, who, with 3,000 men and four pieces of cannon, defended the great bridge. The Swedes having contrived to throw a bridge over the stream, on which two detachments crossed, these were immediately attacked by the Norwegians, who were in turn, after a sharp contest, forced to abandon all their

positions; on the 7th, the Crown Prince moved his headquarters to Frederickstad—the inhabitants of which took the oath of allegiance. Tune next fell, and during the night the Norwegians quitted the *tête-de-pont* at Langenæs.”

“On the 11th of August General Vegesack attacked 2,000 Norwegians at Trögstad, and took 200 prisoners. Colonel Aldercreutz forced them to abandon the Island of Roten, and Admiral Wirsén took the fortress of Sleswig, which advantage laid open the road to Moss. The Norwegians were now everywhere obliged to retreat. On the 12th August, the bombardment of Fredericksten commenced, the passage of Kolberg was forced, and the Crown Prince made preparations with a *very superior* force to surround the army of Prince Christian, posted near Moss. *All further resistance being unavailing*, Prince Christian resigned the Government, and surrendered Fredericksten, and a convention, extremely favourable to the Norwegians, was entered into on the 14th. On the 16th, Prince Christian issued a proclamation to the people of Norway explaining the inefficacy of his means to resist the united force of the Swedes and the English.”

Another Danish or Norwegian writer, Professor Paul Sinding, in his work, "The Scandinavian Races," says on page 423:

"The Swedish Crown Prince Charles John (Bernadotte) now marched his victorious army into Norway, and the Swedish fleet conquered Fredrickstad. The fortress of Fredrickstad was besieged, and the Swedish army marched upon Christiania, the capital of Norway. *The superiority being too large, the Norwegians hastened to secure their persons and property by a capitulation at Moss, upon condition that Norway should belong to Sweden, and Christian Frederick immediately leave Norway, the Swedish King, however, confirming that free constitution which Christian Frederick had given to Norway.*"

The accounts of these two Danish and Norwegian historians coincide with Nisbet Bain's statements in his work "Scandinavia," published this year. They also coincide with Swedish historians, whom I have not quoted, as they would be immediately contradicted by the Norwegians. Nansen's contention that Sweden was forced to give Norway all she granted her, because she could not conquer

the Norwegians, does not hold water, even on the evidence of Danish and Norwegian¹ authorities. Considering that the Norwegian regular army only amounted to 30,000 men, and these were mostly raw troops² in want of provision and military material, they certainly covered themselves with honour in *making* such an excellent resistance against the veteran troops of Bernadotte, who had just conquered the Danes, and helped to turn the tide at the battle of Leipzig, and in other encounters against the best troops of Bonaparte. Why cannot those Norwegians who have taken on themselves to justify Norway's conduct give these facts, instead of treating us to history, which is not in accordance even with the statements of their own historians. (*Vide* "Histories" in the British Museum.)

On p. 328 of this same work, the Danish historian writes :

"Thus, after a period of a hundred and eighty-four years, the compacted Union of

¹ See p. 18.

² "The History of Norway," translated from the Danish, p. 318.

Denmark and Norway was dissolved, and it will remain for those future involutions, which result from the political changes ever taking place, *to snatch the new acquisition from Sweden, and restore it to its former connection.*"

Norway was not happy under Denmark, according to the work of the Norwegian National Council of Women, and longed for greater freedom. Now, after being granted a democratic constitution and political freedom hardly to be found elsewhere in Europe, Norway is still not happy, and wishes to be *entirely free*. Taking advantage of Sweden's precarious position between Russia, Denmark, and Norway, her politicians have cut themselves adrift from the brother kingdom; and now both Norway and Denmark are again free to co-operate with Russia, as before, in destroying that little kingdom which for centuries stood up against Russian aggression, and fought for the political and religious liberties, not only of her own people, but of those of Europe also. Now again, as before, the three northern kingdoms, separated and mutually jealous of one another, will probably

fall victims to the designs of their more powerful neighbours.

The enmity shown towards Sweden in the Danish and Norwegian press during the late crisis bodes no good to Sweden's future.

Left alone, she must either rely on Germany or else on Britain and France, for the Swedes unfortunately no longer trust the statesmen of Norway.

The Swedes have distinctly shown by their past history that they have no great liking for the Germans, but entertain a distinct liking for England and France. The Norwegians are also great Anglophiles, whilst the party there that is in favour of Russia cannot be very large.

Such being the case, the best thing that could happen is for England and France to renew the Treaty of Stockholm, and guarantee not only Sweden and Norway, but also Denmark from aggression.

I am indeed glad that I am not alone in this opinion, for *The Speaker*, of the 16th September, treating the subject of England and Scandinavia, says:

“All Europe is watching, not without jealousy and alarm, the development of the negotiations, and it is therefore unfortunate that the *Standard* should have given great prominence to an article that had appeared in a Danish paper, recommending Denmark to become a British colony. It is no doubt flattering to our pride to know that we are the objects of a relative enthusiasm in Denmark, and that the Danes, or some party among them, would prefer our rule to that of any other people. We can well believe that this is the case. But nobody with a sense for history could see without regret the disappearance, from among the free and sovereign states of Europe, of a nation with the vigorous and interesting past that belongs to Denmark. A man is no worse an Englishman for preferring to see Denmark a sovereign state than a colony even of his own country. But the idea of the renunciation of her place in the separate states of the world by Denmark is fantastic, and it is idle to dwell on it. Nothing could be less desirable than the growth of a German and an English party in Denmark, for what is chiefly to be wished is that Denmark should look neither to England nor Germany, but that she should

give her mind to the *development of a Scandinavian alliance*. . . . The Scandinavian peoples have made their neighbours formidable by their own feuds. In the campaign in which Russia took Finland from Sweden, at the beginning of the last century, Sweden was fighting Norway in Denmark. It was when Norway *was a dependency of Denmark* that she lost the Orkneys and Shetlands. The best hope of a genuine union, not a union for making any one of the three states subject to any other, or for filching the rights of the weaker, but a union of defence, lies in the peaceful creation of three states with sovereign and unchallenged rights. Such a union a correspondent whose letter we print this week, hopes for, as the ultimate result of the negotiations now in progress. We have said that no Englishman wants to see Denmark or any other European state abjure its independence. We do not mean that England should necessarily play a passive part in the fortunes of a united Scandinavia. The independence of Scandinavia is one of those European interests to which England cannot be indifferent. Twice within the last two centuries England has taken action to defend Sweden. In the eighteenth century

she intervened with Prussia and Holland to save Sweden from the consequences of Gustavus's rashness, and in 1855 she organised a league for the defence of Sweden. *We think that our friendship with France might be employed in order to give the three countries a guaranteed protection against aggression.* Mr Gladstone was able to do this for Belgium, and it ought not to be impossible to make arrangements with France which would put the safety of Scandinavia outside the disputes of Europe or the dreams of the most ambitious governments."

I fully agree with these views, but am also of the opinion that before England and France make such a treaty, the three states should co-operate by making a Treaty of Alliance. Then, and only then, will it be possible for England and France to protect them from aggression, either from Russia or Germany.

But if the three latter kingdoms will not draw together, then the process of devouring them piecemeal must continue until they are completely absorbed by Russia and Germany.

CHAPTER VI

NORWAY'S FUTURE KING

WE have all heard that the Norwegians, on dethroning their king, proposed that he should name his own successor; but King Oscar refused this seemingly magnanimous request.

Bishop Billing, a well-known Swedish ecclesiastic, characterises this offer as "a Judas kiss, given with two aims in view; firstly, to gain the good opinion of the foreign powers; and secondly, to soften the brutality of the resolution, and to pacify the loyal portion of the inhabitants of Norway, enraged on account of what has taken place."

Had the Swedes any confidence in the Norwegian Separatists, or believed that they would not treat their new ruler as they had done their old king, this would be an excellent solution of the present difficulty. But un-

fortunately the Swedes have no faith in the monarchical sentiments of the Norwegians, for many of them are Republicans to the core, and state that, when they offered the Crown to a prince of the House of Bernadotte, they did this because they were convinced that a monarchical Norway would sooner receive the acknowledgment of the Powers than a Republic. This assertion has been borne out by the statement made by the late Swedish and Norwegian Minister at Madrid, Baron Wedel Jarlsberg, who, in an interview published in the *Heraldo*, states that :

“Norway could not be a Republic, although it is inclined in that direction, notwithstanding the Norwegians are one of the most advanced people as regards freedom and democracy; because Norway would more likely be acknowledged as a monarchy than as a Republic, and also would meet with greater sympathy at the European Courts.”

The Ambassador also said :—

“In the not far distant future, Sweden, Norway and Denmark, with their respective rulers, would unite into a confederation like

Northern Germany. But such a union was impossible between a kingdom and a republic, and for this reason Norway must be a monarchy."

It thus appears that the future King of Norway will be what the Germans call *ein Schatten König* ("a Shadow King"), and being a king over a republican people (who will give him but a tithe of power), will not have a very enviable time of it. . . . Judging from the *Social Democrat*, many of the Norwegians are dissatisfied with the Storting for offering the Crown to a prince of the Bernadotte line, as "that step has placed a stone in the way of Norway's goal," which is, in reality, a republic.

It appears from an interview which the writer recently had with an editor in Christiania, that part of the Norwegian people are Monarchists and the remainder Republicans. This editor, who appeared to be a very fair and impartial man, said that "in Norway the people are very unanimous, and do not hinder the Government in carrying

out its policy regarding the Union; but in Sweden, on the contrary, a great part of the people are doing their best to hamper their own Government. Moreover, in Norway the peasantry, as in most other countries, are Conservative, whilst the working classes are absolutely Republican, and more especially those who have been in America." . . . This being the case, we may await, without doubt, a bitter struggle between the Monarchists and Republicans in Norway, should a king be eventually elected. Under these conditions it is hardly to be expected that the throne of Norway will be a very stable one; for the Norwegian idea of kingship is apparently quite different from that obtaining in the generality of European countries.

Björnstjerne Björnson, the most gifted man in Norway and the most popular before he objected to the methods of the Storting, has declared for a Republic, and this will probably be the eventual form of government, as it most suits the character of the people.

Björnstjerne Björnson, in an interview

granted to the special correspondent of the *Social Democrat*, stated that he, like the majority of the Norwegian people, is a Republican. "I am not in accord with the Government," he added, "as regards the manner in which they have hitherto conducted themselves. I consider that we should have commenced with a popular election. When the time comes, I am ready to commence an agitation for a republic." Björnson contradicted in the strongest degree Nansen's assertion that the people were in favour of a monarchy, and declared that, as a natural consequence, the form of the future government of Norway should be decided by a new election on the part of the people. He desired a republic, "as it would please the democracy of the whole world."

The knowledge that probably the greater part of the Norwegian people are in favour of a republic, and that a king's tenure of office would only be temporary, is probably one of the reasons why King Oscar declared that no member of the House of Bernadotte should

ascend the Norwegian Throne; for even if their new King should not subsequently be dethroned by the democratic Norwegians, he would be, at the best, what the Germans call *ein Schatten König*. As Björnson is generally regarded as an honest man, even in Sweden, where he formerly had many enemies, I for one would certainly believe him when he says, "I am a Republican, like the majority of the Norwegian people." With Björnstjerne Björnson there is no ambiguity, and you cannot help respecting him, even if you do not hold his views.

In discussing this question with some of the Norwegian people, they said they would have a king, "as it would be cheaper than a Republic." This looks as if the former King of Norway would not enjoy a very generous Civil List.

‡ As the King of Sweden has refused this honour for any member of the House of Bernadotte, the throne of Norway is now practically going a-begging, and no wonder, considering the unceremonious way in which

76 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

King Oscar was deposed. The Emperor William, who was approached by the Norwegians, has refused to let a German Prince ascend the vacant Throne, fearing not only to offend King Oscar, but England also. There has been some talk in Norway of offering the Throne to an English Prince, but then this would give offence to Kaiser Wilhelm. It looks as if ultimately Norway will become a republic, for, when all said and done, the Norwegians are republicans, and, being such, cannot brook the least control of any monarch, no matter how constitutionally he may attempt to rule. Who shall be Norway's future King is a question full of interest! It may not be finally answered in this generation; but we must not forget that the Tsar of Russia, amongst his many titles, has always stuck to one which to us seems without any foundation whatever. For some reason unknown to the uninitiated, he and his predecessors have styled themselves for years "Heir to Norway," alleging that the Tsars are descended from the old Kings of that

NORWAY'S FUTURE KING 77

ancient kingdom. That this title has never been abandoned and that Russia has caused so much trouble in the north of Norway, are significant facts which must not be lost sight of.

CHAPTER VII

POPULAR FEELING IN SWEDEN AGAINST NORWAY

As the following interview, published in the *Westminster Gazette* of the 9th September, represents popular feeling in Sweden as regards Norway better than anything else I have found in the English Press, I trust I shall be pardoned for giving it at considerable length, especially as I find the statements in accordance, with the facts mentioned in Professor Edin's, Nordlund's, and other authoritative works on this question. The correspondent of the above-mentioned paper thus describes his interview with an eminent Swede :

“‘On the contrary,’ he declared, ‘we wish Norway nothing but good, and we deplore her determination to break with Sweden quite as much for her own sake as for any considerations of injured prestige on our own part.

PUBLIC FEELING AGAINST NORWAY 79

Under the alliance, Norway was part of a strong and united Scandinavia. Severed from her more powerful partner, Norway will present a tempting prey to foreign Powers. The *raison d'être* of the alliance between the two countries was the common defence of the Scandinavian Peninsula. We sought for no territorial aggrandisement when the Union was made which has worked so well for ninety years. Norway has her own Parliament, her own Customs, her own laws, her own flag. She enjoys Home Rule in the fullest sense; she has her own army and navy, and in recent years has built a chain of forts on the Swedish frontier, with what purpose we now understand. To acknowledge one throne for the two countries, was this a mark of bondage for Norway? Again, if Sweden does not object to being represented by Norwegian consuls, why, I ask you, should Norway refuse to be represented by Swedish consuls? Norwegian and Swede are of the same blood, and so far have we yielded to Norway's demand for a separate system of consuls that we have given her a representation of more than one-half in the common consular posts, although she only pays a third of the expense. She has a representation

of more than one-third in the Diplomatic Service—more than she is entitled to if the relative population and wealth of the two countries be taken into account. What more could we do?

“‘I can tell you,’ continued my Swedish friend, ‘that to the mind of many Swedes our King has been too kind and generous in the repeated concessions which he has made to Norway. The more we have yielded the more have they asked for, until we see that their demands were but a pretext for a rupture of the Union. And yet this Union is all to their advantage. In case of war we were obliged to defend Norway, but Norway was not obliged to defend Sweden. Indeed, so many concessions had we made that Norway had everything to lose by breaking her contract with Sweden—nothing to gain.’”

“‘Then you believe that Sweden should have adopted a more masterful tone?’ I asked.”

“‘No; I don’t say that,’ was the reply. ‘We always imagined that Norway was in good faith, and that having entered into a contract for the common defence of the peninsula, from which she derived the main advantage, she would keep it, or at least not

break it without asking our consent. It is on this point that we have been deceived, and we see in consequence that we were unwise to grant every concession, even to the separate flag, which Norway asked for, while we, as if to emphasise our willingness to bear the common burden, still keep the Norwegian quarterings on our flag. These concessions loosened the links in the Union, and rendered the final break possible. We now see that they were demanded for that purpose, and that Norway has been preparing for the break for the last ten years by strengthening her army and navy.'"

"'But if Norway asks for a king from the Swedish Royal Family, is not this a guarantee of good faith?' I asked."

"'We do not think so,' was the reply. 'Is it not in itself insulting to dismiss the father and to ask for the son as king? How could our prince accept the throne from which his father had been driven? I believe that in a few years' time he, too, would be driven forth.'"

"What we cannot understand in Sweden is that the English people should sympathise with the Norwegians in their demand for separation."

The following extracts from the Swedish

Press further shows what people feel and believe in Sweden :

“Too long have we tamely permitted the Norwegians to heap insult on insult upon us. Our weak policy of making continual concessions has had the result that the Norwegians now imagine that they can tear asunder the Treaty of Union without any after-reckoning.”

The *Smålands Post* writes as follows :

“We have heard of many revolutions in the world, but have never heard of a nation bound by such light ties as those that bind Norway and Sweden, which could thus tear asunder the bonds that united them and then call it ‘a struggle for freedom.’ Norway evidently does not know what she is losing through breaking this Union. She has forgotten the ninety years of uninterrupted peace, during which her former master, Denmark, was involved—viz., in 1848 and 1866—in two exhausting wars. But ninety years of defiance, self-worship, ingratitude, and madness culminated in that moment when they dissolved the Union because they were not permitted to endanger the same.”

Another paper writes :

“Since Norway so wishes it let all be ended between us, the dynasty *and mutual defence*

also. A fierce incendiary agitation, carried on by the members of the present Storting and the Press, has brought Norway to the position it now occupies. The more thoughtful part of the population has been frightened into silence by threats.

“The elevation of Norway from a Danish province took place with the guarantee that we should be protected from attack on our western frontier. This condition, together with others, we trust will be the Alpha and the Omega without which Sweden must never permit the Union to be dissolved.

“With pain and indignation we hear of this reckless and criminal act. What did the Norwegians do on the 7th June? They broke their faith and promises; they have been false to their oath to the Union and the Swedish people, which were given under the most binding pledges in 1814. (*Jämtlands Tidning.*)

“The breaking of the Union and the dethronement of the King has not been caused by Swedish despotism. On the contrary, during the short period of the Union with Sweden, Norway has attained a democratic development, the like of which we in vain seek elsewhere in any other State, and it has also considerably left our country behind. The talk

about the slighting of Norway's sovereignty rights is incomprehensible."

I will conclude these brief extracts from the Swedish Press with the following opinion taken from the *Helsingborg's Press*, which gives one an idea of how the Swedes now regard the Norwegians. This paper writes that "Sweden does not want war, but must be ready for all eventualities. The Norwegian policy is a policy of adventure, and the Norwegians have shown by their deeds that they are not to be depended on." In conclusion, we must admit that when two nations have ceased to trust one another, and when one of them thinks it has been shamefully deceived and insulted, the danger of a rupture is very great.

Sven Hedin, writing on this subject, says :

"The Swedes have taken the revolution quietly. Why? Because we have no further desire to live united to a people who trample sworn laws and mutual agreements under foot; and because we are cold-blooded and wise enough not to weaken the Scandinavian peninsula by a war within its frontiers."

Sven Hedin, notwithstanding his fondness for the Russians, like a true patriot, has continually pointed out to his countrymen and the Norwegians the danger that threatens them both from Russia.

One would think that this common danger would unite the two races; but the Swedes, after all they have endured, prefer to risk the danger of invasion from Russia, than to unite themselves with the Norwegians. "Not till the present generation has passed away," they say, will they think of an alliance with Norway. Those who have studied this quarrel for the last nine years, as the writer has done in the Russian and Scandinavian Press, can understand this feeling of bitterness; but the question is—is it wise?

There is not the least doubt that the agitation carried on against Sweden in Russia, Germany, Holland, England, and America has done far more harm than good, and indirectly nearly caused a war between the two countries.

The Swedes also state that the *brochures* published by the Norwegians in England

86 THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

and Germany are exceedingly one-sided and misleading, for they are absolutely silent on many important facts. For instance, the Swedish proposals of 1885, 1886, and 1891 concerning increased influence for Norway in the Municipal Council are spoken of in these *brochures* in such a manner that it is impossible to get a correct impression of the subject. It was a Norwegian Government, and not Sweden, that rejected the generous proposal of the Crown Prince, and broke off negotiations.

CHAPTER VIII

FOREIGN OPINIONS ON THE SCANDINAVIAN QUESTION

As the Scandinavian Question is not only of importance to us, but also to Germany, Russia, Denmark, and France, it will perhaps interest the reader to know how the Press of the above-mentioned Powers regards the recent important change in the balance of power in Northern Europe.

It would indeed matter little were this only a question between the Norwegians and their rulers, or even between Sweden and Norway. But, unfortunately, the geographical position of Norway is such that this cutting adrift from Sweden, and forming a separate Foreign Office, does not only affect the interests of the sister kingdom, but those of all the States

of Northern Europe, but most of all those of Great Britain.

The *Vossische Zeitung*, in describing this aspect of the situation, writes that :

“Under all circumstances the events in Norway are of importance beyond the frontiers of Scandinavia. Their importance does not consist in the Storting’s victory over the King. Norway is a country on which—even within a man’s lifetime—many great powers have cast longing glances.”

“We must, therefore, wait and see how circumstances develop between Norway and Sweden, and subsequently between the other Scandinavian kingdoms.”

The Russian paper *Slovo* in reference to the present crisis states that :

“The Vienna Congress of 1815 gave the powers then represented (Russia, Germany, Sweden, and England) an actual right to look well after the decisions of the Congress. Sweden then received full power to place Norway before a European Areopagus, the character of which will be still more serious than that of the international tribunal of the

Hague, since a change would also seriously affect the interests of Russia, not only because she was a signatory at the Congress of Vienna, but because she is the nearest neighbour of Sweden and Norway."

Russia, Germany, and England are directly interested in the position of Scandinavia, and for each of these States it is of great importance under whose particular influence Norway will come after her separation from Sweden. Russia is also further affected by the question to what extent will the dissolution of the Union affect the relations between Russia and Sweden with regard to the Finnish Question. The *Novaya Vremya*, the organ of the Russian war office, expresses the following opinion on this new political problem, viz. :

"The differences between Sweden and Norway are of old standing, and are intensified by the difference of the fundamental character of the two nations. Eight years ago the relations between Sweden and Norway were so acute that there was a talk of complete severance, and that Norway was seeking a personal union with other States. There was

one party in favour of a union with Russia and another with England. *Our Diplomatsists have made a note of this and it is to be hoped that they understand how to take care of Russia's interests.*"

Since Russia has failed to obtain an outlet on the Pacific, the Atlantic sea-board has naturally gained more importance in the eyes of her statesmen.

Hence it is evident what a perilous position the Norwegian Separatists, in their desire to make their country wholly independent of Sweden, have placed Norway in. Let us hope that the common-sense of the people will gain the upper hand, and that the people of Scandinavia will be able to settle their own differences without outside interference, so that there will be no need for Russia *to take care of her interests.*

The *General Anzeiger*, a well-known German paper of high standing, writes as follows on this subject :

"We look upon the Baltic as a German sea, and we have a right to do so, as our sea-power on the Baltic is the greatest. Other Powers,

however, have not the same opinion—neither Russia, Sweden, Denmark, nor England.”

The *Dresdener Anzeiger* also writes :

“*If both countries go separate ways, trouble will arise.* With what two Powers should the two States unite? Norway is not in a position to oppose Russia alone, which country, after her defeat in the Far East, will commence with renewed energy to find an access to the ice-free sea.

“In this manner the seemingly unimportant quarrels between the hostile brothers in Scandinavia go hand in hand with the great international questions of world-power and sea-power so important in our generation.”

The great Danish paper, the *Berlingske Tidende*, writes :

“The construction of the railway from the Gulf of Bothnia to the ice-free harbour of the Lofoden Fiord has increased the value of Northern Sweden and Norway for Russia. Such a harbour should be of untold strategic value for the last-mentioned country, and there is no doubt that the fear of a Russian attack always troubles the Norwegians; for they have Finland’s fate constantly before their eyes.

“It is curious how the Czar can blind free people, but no one can be blind to the advantage Russia would have from the dissolution of the Union, and without doubt it is that country which has caused the agitation for the dissolution.

“The time is past when the small States can live their lives for themselves. Strong as modern Norway is, its population is less than 3,000,000 and it has an army of only 30,000 men.¹ Such a land cannot stand alone. The ideal Union, which should be welcomed in England as a protection against Russia and Germany, is the formation of a Scandinavian kingdom embracing Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, each State constituting a separate kingdom and united for common defence.”

This is identically the same opinion held by that great English statesman, Sir Charles Dilke, who, in a letter to the Berlin correspondent of the *Aftonbladet*, written about seven years ago, expressed the following view concerning the Scandinavian Question :

“My opinion is simply this, that the small states (*i.e.*, Sweden, Norway, Denmark,

¹ *I.e.*, the number Norway set aside for the defence of Scandinavia, whilst Sweden placed 350,000.

Holland, etc.) must hold together and be good friends. They must also be armed if they wish to have any prospects in these evil days—yes, if they even wish to exist.”

In a remarkable interview with the above-mentioned correspondent, Sir Charles also said :

“I am a Radical in politics, a thorough democrat, but, if I were a Norwegian, I should be the most zealous friend of the Union.”

It appears that this remark created great resentment in Norway, which Björnson expressed in an open letter to Sir Charles, but this did not cause him to alter his opinion, which may be seen from another letter written to the same correspondent on the 6th September 1898.

CHAPTER IX

THE NORWEGIAN FRONTIER FORTRESSES ¹

WHILST Sweden is spending 23,000,000 crowns in defending the North against a possible attack by Russia, Norway has spent all her surplus and a large portion of the money which she ostensibly borrowed for the construction of railways, in erecting a series of powerful forts on the Swedish frontier, which, now that the Union between the two countries has been broken, is a serious menace to Sweden's safety, especially as after the shameful Revolution of 7th June, she cannot trust the Norwegians.

As before mentioned, the erection of Norwegian fortresses along the Swedish frontier caused a very bitter feeling in Sweden, which will take many years to eradicate. Professor Harald Hjerne, who is considered in

¹ Since this chapter was written this question has been temporarily settled by the Congress at Karlstad.—W. B. S.

Sweden to be one of the greatest authorities on Scandinavian history and politics, is of the opinion that Norway must furnish Sweden with guarantees to ensure the safety of her western frontier, should she be again attacked by Russia. Sweden, supporting herself on the *Riksakt*, has not built any fortresses along the Norwegian frontier, and has spent her revenue in defending not only herself, but the whole of Scandinavia. With this object she has borne the cost of keeping up an army of 350,000 men, whilst Norway only placed at her disposal 35,000 men. Although the population of Sweden is double that of Norway, this disproportion in the number of soldiers who were liable to protect their State from ultimate aggression has been felt very keenly in Sweden, and was one of the causes of the bitterness between the two nations. Professor Hjerne also states that "the erection of the above-mentioned fortresses has endangered more than anything else all confidence that the Swedes felt in the Norwegian people." According to the latter, "a separate kingdom that can erect such fortresses

against Sweden is an open danger to her safety and prosperity. No one knows under what foreign influence Norway may ultimately fall, and then these fortresses will be used for splitting up and weakening Sweden's means of defence."

All that is now desired in Sweden is to secure peace and quiet in the future Union, so that all possible cause of friction between the two States should be removed.

It is no use telling the Swedes that the Norwegians will never attack them, should they again become involved in war with Russia, or with any other power, for after the events of the 7th June, all confidence in the Norwegian people or Government has been destroyed in Sweden for at least this generation. This destruction of all confidence between two kindred nations, is perhaps the most serious aspect of the present situation. We must, therefore, take facts as they are, and not regard them as we would like them to be.

During the past summer, the writer has travelled several thousand miles through

Sweden and Norway, and has come to the conclusion that the fortress question is really the only one of importance on which all hopes of peace will come to grief, unless the great Powers, who are also indirectly responsible for the present trouble in Scandinavia, will do their utmost, by persuasion and tact, to bring the two northern kingdoms to terms. The Swedish newspapers, which have published plans and a detailed account of these fortresses, state that they date from 1899 when "they were erected secretly and with no good intentions" along the line of the Glommen, at Sarpsborg, Spydesberg, Jetsund, etc. These works even then awakened in Sweden much wonder and indignation. And it was then the so-called "frontier fortresses" had their origin. "They constituted only one line of works, and were like the old earth works, Blaker and Langenæs, as well as the fortifications of Kongsvinger and Frederickstad, directed against Sweden." "And if they have subsequently added to them another line of forts still nearer our frontier, they, in conjunction with this, constitute a system of

fortifications against our country." One of the fortresses is erected so near the Swedish frontier States that it can fire into Swedish territory.

The project of making the territory embracing these fortifications a neutral zone between the two, is not a new one; for, in 1814, when the Great Powers—England, Russia, Austria, and Germany—compelled Denmark to cede Norway to Sweden, these fortresses were considered a serious menace to the latter country, for when the envoys of the four above-mentioned powers arrived in Christiania on the 30th June, they came according to their instructions, "not as envoys to negotiate between Sweden and Norway, but as heralds of war empowered to see that the decisions of their sovereigns were carried out, and consequently demanded that the Treaty of Kiel should enter into force within fourteen days." Prince Charles of Augustenberg, who had been chosen by the Norwegians as their leader, demanded three months in order to ask the advice of the Storting. The Commissioners replied that

they did not believe they could obtain the permission of the Swedish Government "unless Prince Christian surrendered Fredericksten, Frederickstad, and Kongsvinger, and that these places should be occupied by Swedish troops, and moreover consented that the land between the frontiers and the Glommen (in Norway) should be declared neutral territory." As the Norwegian Council of State on the 6th July declared that these conditions were unacceptable, the Commissioners of the Powers, on the following days, delivered an ultimatum in which they declared "Norway's cession to Sweden was guaranteed by the four allied Powers, and was irrevocable, since the Union was regarded by them as one of the main pillars constituting the balance of power in Europe, and as compensation to Sweden, which could not be exchanged for any other." They again repeated their demands "that the frontier fortresses should be delivered over to Swedish troops, and that the whole country up to the Glommen must be evacuated by the Norwegian troops and declared neutral."

For those who are not conversant with the events that led to this action of the Powers and the cession of Norway to Sweden by the Treaty of Kiel, it would be as well to state that Sweden lost Finland, because she refused to give up her alliance with England in 1808, and also Swedish Pomerania, which was ceded to Denmark on condition that that country should cede Norway to Sweden. Sweden was compensated with this Union with Norway, not only for the loss of Finland and Pomerania, but for helping the Allies against Napoleon, and in order to restore the balance of power in the north of Europe.

Norway, on the other hand (which was little better than a vassal of Denmark;¹ for she had to fight that country's battles) not only took the side of Napoleon with Denmark against England and the Allies, but well-nigh brought about the destruction of Sweden in 1808 by invading her western frontier, whilst Denmark attacked her in the South, and Russia in the North and North-east.

¹ Norway was, in fact, almost a province and was governed from Denmark without having any representative rights such as Ireland and Scotland have, Denmark being, till 1849, an absolute Monarchy.

NORWAY'S FRONTIER FORTRESSES 101

If people will only take the trouble to turn to the history of this period instead of reading that which is being fabricated for the present occasion, they will see that it was England and the Allies that brought about the present Union between Sweden and Norway in 1814, after England had by means of her navy saved Sweden from invasion and from being partitioned between Norway, Denmark, and Russia, as had been arranged by Alexander I. and Napoleon.

Sweden, as before stated, for taking our part in 1808, not only imperilled her existence, but lost at least one-third of her territories. That she is receiving so little help or sympathy from England now, is a cause of bitterness and surprise. The Great Powers, however, thankful for the services rendered by Sweden in Germany (especially at the battle of Leipzig when the Swedish artillery decided the day against Napoleon) were anxious to reward her—not only for what she had lost in their quarrels—but also to see that she should not again be threatened by a combined Danish, Norwegian, and

Russian attack. For this reason they insisted that the above-mentioned fortresses should be handed over to the Swedish troops, and the territory right up to the Glommen made neutral.

Sweden, who has lost through the recent action of the Storthing all that she fought for in 1808, 1813, and 1814, does not now demand that their fortresses should be handed over to her, but simply rendered harmless, and that the territory, on which they are constituted, should be made a neutral zone. If this is not granted, all that she fought for and all that was given to her by the Great Powers for her services to the Allies or she had gained by her own exertions, is lost.

That Sweden lost Finland, Pomerania, and other possessions through helping the Allies against Napoleon and Norway—Denmark may be a matter of past history or indifference to many people; but that her frontiers are again open to her old enemy is regarded with serious misgivings in Sweden.

Swedish military authorities, with whom I have recently spoken on this subject, state

that these forts, though nominally erected for defensive purposes, can be again used as the base of another attack against Sweden, especially should she again come into collision with Russia, which is not impossible, especially as the casements and entrenchments of the Norwegian frontier fortresses can be used for massing troops and storing cannon and munitions of war. When you tell the Swedes that the Norwegians will never attack them, they do not believe you, and point to past history and the last ninety years of incessant ill-will and friction. They also point out the long and dangerous agitation of the Norwegians in the Russian Press against Sweden, the secret war preparations, the borrowing of money, nominally for railways, but actually for the construction of fortresses instead, the Russian agitation in the north of Norway, the open agitation of Finmark fishermen to become Russian subjects, and many other facts. They, moreover, state that, whilst Sweden has been spending millions of money in fortifying the northern frontiers against Russia,¹ the common

¹ The fortress of Boden alone in the North, near the Russian frontier, will cost 23,000,000 crowns (£1,300,000).

enemy, Norway has done nothing in that direction but has been building fortresses, raising war-loans, purchasing cannon and arms, in order to attack Sweden, whilst the latter country, believing that the Union question would be settled amicably, has built no fortresses against Norway.

It appears that the Swedish military authorities were aware that these fortresses were being built, but thought that since the two countries were united under one King, and had a common Swedish or Norwegian Ministry and a common Foreign Policy, there was no danger. But now Norway is a separate kingdom, and free to carry on a separate Foreign Policy, Sweden must take every guarantee to protect itself against again being placed between two fires—Russia and Norway.

Any one who has read Scandinavian history will see that the existence of these fortresses is a question of life and death for Sweden, as long as she cannot rely on the friendship of the Norwegians. As Sweden's main object

in entering the Union with Norway, which has now been unceremoniously torn to pieces, was to ensure security on her western frontier, it is quite natural that she should insist that the fortresses, which have caused so much mischief in the past, should be demolished, or rendered harmless, by being included in a neutral zone of territory.

Björnstjerne Björnson, the great Norwegian patriot and writer, has taken up this serious question with his usual zeal. In a letter to the well-known Danish paper, *Politiken*, he says :

“I think the conditions that have been insisted on by the Swedish Riksdag, before acknowledging the dissolution of the Union, are hard, viz., that the Norwegians should dismantle their new fortresses opposite the Swedish frontier. The demand is a violent one. A people must break down that defence which they have, to protect their capital, because it is near the frontier of another country! No wise policy had ever dictated this demand. In a plan for the defence of the Scandinavian Peninsula, which is several

generations old, there was a whole row of fortresses almost like those now in existence. And what does it mean, but that fear of Sweden really caused the Norwegians to build them? Against Sweden they could not possibly be used, for with the Union every reason for quarrelling with Sweden has vanished."

The *Verdens Gang*, one of the most influential papers in Norway, is of the opinion that all ideas of creating a neutral zone should be abandoned, and that Sweden's demands must be considered as a hard slap in the face for us.

The Swedes, on the other hand, think that the very existence of these fortresses is a hard slap in the face of Sweden. And worse still—neither nation has any confidence in the other.

Long before the Karlstad Conference I foresaw that this question would lead to war unless our King could be induced to act as mediator between the two brothers. I, therefore, advised some of the leading men in Stockholm to approach the King, and at the

NORWAY'S FRONTIER FORTRESSES 107

same time also wrote to one of our leading editors to use his influence in this direction, for he was the only monarch whom both nations would seriously pay any attention to.

CHAPTER X

THE SCANDINAVIAN PERIL

THAT Russia has, for a long time, had an eye on Finmark, with its ice-free harbours and fisheries, there can be no question, notwithstanding there are Norwegians who deny this palpable fact. During my stay in Stockholm a Swedish editor was so kind as to furnish me with a copy of the *Aftonbladet* of the 22nd July 1903, which removed all my doubts on this subject.

Without repeating all that the Swedish papers have written with regard to Russian intrigue spies, and Russian agents, which would immediately be contradicted by misguided Norwegian "patriots," it is sufficient to recall only the Medhaven incident, when over a thousand fishermen at Medhaven, in Finmark, openly declared that they would become Russian subjects, simply because the

Norwegian Government wished to prevent the wholesale extermination of the whale off the coast of Finmark.

With reference to this incident the Norwegian paper, *Intelligensedlarnee*, wrote as follows, directly after the incident occurred :

“ It is no use arresting eight fishermen, when *a thousand* are guilty of the grave crime of sending a telegram to the Russian Government for help—incited to this act by their own fanaticism, *and by the conduct of the Russians*, who were in evidence during the sad days when the Medhaven incident occurred, who, moreover, arm themselves to the teeth, and are almost resolved to declare war against their own fatherland.”

Another correspondent telegraphed on this occasion to the *Verdens Gang*, one of the first papers in Norway :

“ That no telegram was sent to Russia by the fishermen, but, at a large meeting held at the fishing-place (Garvik), during the Medhaven disturbances, where nearly a thousand fishermen were present, the proposal was made to telegraph to the Russian Government for help. Two Russian captains were much in evidence on this occasion, and the following conversation

took place : ' How many of you can we reckon on ? ' enquired the two captains. ' Many thousands, ' was the reply. ' Then we can get *help from Russia in three days.*' "

" Luckily, " adds this correspondent, " this proposal was out-voted, and the fishermen did not send for help from Russia, " which, as we knew, is always ready to help oppressed nationalities, but the price for their assistance is, in the end, dear indeed.

The above statements were, to a great extent, confirmed by the " Amtman, " a high official in Finmark, who telegraphed to the *Verdens Gang* that he had heard that the fishermen thought of appealing to Russia.

I have intentionally quoted the two above-mentioned Norwegian papers, as an attempt was afterwards made in the Norwegian Press to minimise the importance of this incident, which clearly shows what a hold Russia has obtained over the sympathies of the fishing population of Finmark. While staying in the extreme north of Norway this summer, I was told that one could frequently see the portrait of the Tsar Nicholas in the cottage of the fishermen of Finmark ; but seldom that of

the peaceful, cultured, and magnanimous ruler who has recently been unceremoniously dethroned by his Norwegian subjects, many of whom openly declare that if they are to be a "*Lydrike*" *i.e.*, a vassal State, they will be so under a Power that can protect them, *i.e.*, Russia, and not under Sweden.

Under Denmark, which ruled them from Copenhagen with autocratic power, they were to all extent and purposes vassals; but since 1814, when they have enjoyed one of the most democratic forms of Government in Europe, this talk about being a "*Lydrike*" is neither just nor truthful. But one cannot argue with the Norwegian people on that subject—they wish to be entirely independent, with their own separate Foreign Office and Consuls, forgetting that no State, united with another, can have everything entirely its own way in this world. "When a whole nation has decided to commit political suicide," as a Swedish gentleman recently remarked to me, "what can we do? We have," continued my informant, "endeavoured to protect the peninsula to the best of our

ability, whilst the Norwegians, instead of preparing to help us, have been spending their money and their energies during the last ten years, not in trying to defend themselves against Russia, but to fight Sweden."

As the result of this policy the whole north of Norway is practically undefended, whilst the south, especially on the south-eastern frontier opposite Sweden, the whole country is bristling with fortresses and cannon.

Whilst staying at Narvik a Norwegian engineer told me that the Swedes could easily take the north of Norway, and, as regards Finmark, the Russians could take that valuable stretch of territory with 20,000 men, if they wished to; for the distance between the Russian frontier and the Atlantic (Lyngen Fiord), as I have previously shown, is only twenty English miles.

Swedish military authorities have long since declared that Finmark is practically indefensible against Russia, and that is why the Swedish Government was spending—prior to the dissolution of the Union—millions of crowns in preparing to defend the country

lying between the strong fortress of Boden in Lapland and Narvik, opposite to the Lofoden Islands. A glance at any map will show how impossible it is for either the Swedes or the Norwegians combined, without very generous assistance from some great Power, to prevent Russia occupying Finmark, especially now she has built a military road right up to the Norwegian frontier from Uleåborg, the terminus her railway in Northern Finland. A Swedish officer of rank and title recently informed me "that Sweden, after all the insults and indignities that have been put upon her by the Norwegian people and Government, would never engage in a war with Russia to protect Norway from invasion."

"But should the Russian attack against Norway proceed through Swedish territory, then the Swedes would feel bound to make common cause with the Norwegians against their ancient enemy." Any one who takes the trouble to read the *whole* history of this unfortunate conflict between the two kingdoms cannot be surprised at Sweden's decision.

It appears that the portion that is most

threatened is the above-mentioned stretch of territory between the Russian frontier and Tromsö. Should the Russians hereafter decide to push forward to the Lyngen Fiord from Lake Kilpis Jarvi (see map), even with a small force, they would be able in a very short time to cut off 600 kilometres, or about 500 miles of coast. If one, however, reckons the whole coast-line, with all its bays and indentations, Russia will have about two or three times that extent of open water at her disposal. On studying the accompanying map one discovers that the Russian frontier, in the neighbourhood of Tromsö, practically cuts the north of Norway into two parts. The south portion of these two parts constitutes half of the province of Tromsö, whilst the northern portion is called Finmark. This province is so situated that it is impossible to reach it from the most northern part of Sweden without passing through Russian Lappmark. It thus transpires that in this wild and almost completely uninhabited territory, about 200 miles north of the Polar Circle, there are no roads from the interior of the country to the

coast. The only way to assist Norway in this part of the peninsula would be to send troops by the Lofoden Railway to Narvik in Norway, and, by using that important place as a base, aid the Norwegians to defend Tromsö, and thus prevent the Russians advancing further south.

As there are no roads along the coast, the territory between the Russian frontier, Pasvig Elf, and Tromsö, cannot be defended except by a Power that is master of the sea. That Russia, in the course of a few years, will have reconstructed her fleet, there is no doubt; and that in the event of a war between her and Norway, she will be sufficiently strong to hinder the transport of Norwegian troops to the north of Norway. Of course, this is supposing that England, or some other naval power, did not come to the rescue of the Norwegians.

As regards Sweden's assistance, the Swedish people are now so exasperated by the events of the 7th June and the incitement or agitation against her in the Russian, German, Norwegian, and English Press, on the part

of the Norwegians, that they would not now go to the assistance of the Norwegians, so long as the Russians leave them in peace. This was not the case in 1856, when France and England made a treaty with Sweden to defend the northern part of the peninsula against Russian aggression.

From the above it is evident that it is practically impossible for Sweden to support Norway in defending the northernmost part of her territory between Narvik and Pasvig's Elf, *i.e.*, if the attack is made from the sea. Russia, however, moving from Archangel and the coasts of the White Sea, can always make herself master of the northernmost part of Norway, if a strong sea-power like England or France does not prevent this."

"Looking at this question from another point of view," continued my correspondent, "it is now a pure advantage for Sweden to be free of the responsibility of defending Norway; for Sweden would then have no cause of quarrel with her mighty neighbour, and lose still more territory.

"Should Russia, however, attack Norway

through Swedish territory, this attack will evidently be dictated with the idea of making herself master of a much larger stretch of the Norwegian territory, *i.e.*, probably the coast reaching right up to the Trondjem Fiord, a distance of about 800 kilometres south of Tromsø. In the event of the invasion taking place in that direction, the whole of Northern Sweden would follow the same fate as Finland, Livland, Courland, and the other territories Russia has taken from her once powerful neighbours. Sweden would, under these circumstances, be bound to defend both herself and Norway, even without the Union. Norway would also be obliged to help Sweden; for the Norwegians understand that if Russia takes the north of Sweden, the corresponding portion of the Norwegian coast will follow suite. From an economical point of view the loss of Finmark and the northern part of Norway would be a great loss which Norway would have great difficulty to bear, as Norway's best fishing grounds are along this coast, with their great yield of fish and other products amounting, in 1902, to about £1,000,000."

The writer of this hastily compiled pamphlet, who has recently been in Lofoden Isles and

the north of Norway, after studying this question on the spot, has come to the conclusion that neither Norway nor Sweden could defend Finmark when once the Russians have made up their minds to take it; for it is *geographically indefensible*. They could, however, with the assistance of England and France, defend the territory lying between the fortress of Boden and the Lyngen Fiord; for the forces of the three Powers could in this instance co-operate against a Russian advance without danger of being cut off from their base at Narvik. The reason I believe that Finmark could not be defended is, because the whole territory at the back of this province already practically belongs to Russia, who could, without encroaching on the territory of Sweden rapidly and easily cut off Finmark from the east of Norway. In fact, I have heard Norwegians affirm that 15,000 Russian troops could take Finmark, which the Russians claim to have formerly belonged to Russia. But why 15,000 when Russia could *easily* push forward 500,000 men from Uleåborg and Kajana if necessary? These claims have

recently been put forward at great length in the *Finlandsky Gazette*, a Russian official organ. In this paper the Russians endeavour to prove that a large portion of Finmark was filched¹ from them by the Norwegians when the frontier between Russia and Norway was demarcated. But Russia can always find an excuse whenever she wants to annex the territory of another power. The fact that a Russian official paper has commenced to write in this strain even before the Union was legally dissolved is exceedingly significant.

The breaking up of the Union, which has given both kingdoms nearly one hundred years of peace, has caused a feeling of apprehension in Sweden, and even among the more thoughtful part of the Norwegian people, who have time amongst the ceaseless agitation of party and bread-and-butter politics to think of the future. I found this especially the case in Northern Norway; but in the South (at Christiania) the politicians, engrossed in their struggle for honour, place,

¹ The Russians are at this very moment massing troops into Finland—not with the object of annexing Finmark, but of suppressing an expected revolt.

and power, did not seem to regard the situation at all seriously.

Before leaving Stockholm I interviewed one of the leading Swedish delegates, who told me frankly that the Norwegians, by cutting adrift from Sweden, had caused both countries a world of trouble and anxiety, and especially for themselves.

Sven Hedin, who formerly dreamt of a Scandinavian Union and of a real Scandinavian Power in the North, has now resigned himself to the inevitable, and is grateful that the present Union is at an end; for in its present form it has only been a continual source of anxiety, expense, and worry to Sweden.

The celebrated explorer called on the writer whilst at Stockholm, and in the course of a conversation we had in Russian on Scandinavian and Asiatic politics, expressed his opinion that Sweden should be congratulated on having got rid of Norway; for she could now devote all her resources towards the defence of her own territories instead of dissipating them in the defence of the entire

peninsula. When we remember that Sweden kept up an army of 350,000 men for this purpose, and a considerable naval force, whilst Norway only offered 35,000 men for the common defence of Scandinavia, it is not difficult to understand that the Swedes are not wholly dissatisfied with the dissolution of the great Union, especially in view of Russia's alleged designs on Northern Norway.

Sven Hedin expressed to me his opinion that Russia must find an outlet in this direction; for her energies were now so cramped that it is impossible for her to find an outlet to the ocean, either towards the Pacific, the Persian Gulf, or at the Dardanelles. When we remember that the population of Russia is now about 130,000,000, and that it doubles itself every fifty years, we can understand what importance this almost forgotten province in the extreme North of Europe now possesses in the eyes of her politicians. In fact, we may safely say that a new Eastern Question has been created, which will probably now be spoken of as the Near Eastern Question, in contradiction to the Far Eastern

one, which for the time being has been settled to the great dissatisfaction of Russia, which must, as a natural consequence, seek compensation here in Europe for what she has lost in Asia, *i.e.*, as soon as she has recovered from her late defeats.

I will conclude this chapter by quoting a few sentences from Sven Hedin's last book, "Sweden and the Great East." On page 87 of this work the celebrated explorer writes as follows :

"Let us not believe that the war and the revolution has crippled Russia; for, in one or two years, she will be ready for action again, and, without fail, in five or eight years, when she has managed to repair her losses. Norway's fleet is not strong enough to defend the long coast, and her army is not yet efficient to hinder an overpowering invasion. . . . Perhaps Norway imagines that she can spare the most northern part of her territory, and that separation from Sweden was worth such a sacrifice? But one should remember that if one gives the Evil One a finger, then he will take your entire hand. One should also remember the

existence of Catherine Harbour and the military roads in the extreme north of Finland, the disturbances among the whale-hunters, and the disputes about the reindeer pasturage. Here we have the first warnings; but more are to follow. The coast and territory is well marked out and defined by the above-mentioned incidents."

The Germans have a proverb which runs — "That if you keep painting the devil on the window, His Majesty will at last make his appearance." I do not wish, like a certain eminent statesman, to insinuate that Russia is the Evil One, or in any way to be an alarmist. But I want to point out that the balance of power in Northern Europe has been seriously unsettled by that Norwegian statesman, and that, since one of its main pillars has been cleft in twain by the dissolution of the Union, we may look for important changes in the north of Europe, — changes which will not only affect our interests, but which may seriously affect the fate of the three ancient kingdoms of the Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes. For, let

us remember that the main pillar of unity in the North is now shattered. Its basement (Denmark), is divided, whilst the cornice (Finmark), deprived of its support, will sooner or later follow the fate of the remaining portions of the once stately edifice. The house divided against itself is falling, and the materials of which it was composed are gradually being taken away for the construction of still greater edifices. Such are the fruits of discord. May the people of Scandinavia, who have played such a grand part in the world's history, unite before it is too late, and whilst the present short breathing-space is given them. They may then still live to be a bulwark of freedom, progress, culture in the north of Europe. When I wrote these lines the guns of Cronstadt were booming their notes of warning in the distance, over the Finnish Gulf, shaking the rocky shores of once free and happy Finland, then on the verge of revolt. All I can wish is that her fate will not be theirs.

CHAPTER XI

THE ICE-FREE HARBOURS OF NORTHERN SCANDINAVIA—RUSSIA'S ALLEGED DESIGNS

THERE is little doubt that the disasters of the Russian fleet at Port Arthur, and in the Pacific have taught that Empire, not only the advantage of having a strong navy, but the necessity of having open sea-ports, so that her ships may put out to sea whenever necessary.

It would, however, be far better for Russia, since she is pre-eminently a land Power, that she should confine her naval activity to the construction of just as many gun-boats and torpedo-boats as are required for coast defence, as was pointed out by the unfortunate Commander of *Alexander III.*, Captain Bashutoff, who, prior to sailing for the Far

East, publicly stated that "the Russians are not, and never will be sailors," in our sense of the term.

It cannot be denied that many of the reverses Russia has sustained in the Far East have arisen from the fact that her sailors cannot get out to sea for more than three or four months in the year; as during the winter, which lasts about seven months, their ships are either frozen in, or their time is taken up in repairs. Moreover, it cannot be denied that the *personnel* of the Russian fleet is excellent, especially when manned by Finns, Esthonians, Lithuanians, and other people of the Baltic provinces; but even these hardy men are practically little good as sailors, since they have not the opportunity of becoming proficient in their profession.

This being the case, is it not natural that Russia should aspire to have outlets to the warm-water ports in the German Ocean, the Black Sea, and the Persian Gulf? For, as long as her ships can be bottled up in the Sound, or in the Bosphorus, it is evident that she will do her utmost to secure open-water

ports, either on the Norwegian coast or at Constantinople.

The Norwegians, however, assert that the Russians have plenty of harbours in the North, on the Moorman coast, if she likes to use them. If this is the case, why has she spent so much time in endeavouring to win over to her side¹ the fishermen on the north of Norway, and why was the Treaty of Stockholm made, in 1855, between England and France and Sweden, if Russia did not really covet the north of Norway?

As pointed out by a leading English paper,² we are directly interested in this question, and cannot consent to the partitioning of the peninsula by Russia, and by the accession of Russia to the status of a North Sea Power. And not only should we be compelled to take steps in our own interests to resist this new Muscovite aggression, but the duty would be further incumbent upon us by solemn treaty.

¹ When in the north of Norway this summer in Finmark, I made enquiries concerning this assertion, and learnt that Russia had harbours enough for the present, but they were of little use as they are enveloped in winter darkness a great part of the year.

² *The Newcastle Chronicle.*

We have on more occasions than one made reference to the treaty between Great Britain, France and Sweden and Norway relating to this matter of Russian intrigue in Northern Norway; but it should not be untimely to quote the main article in this instrument—the Treaty of Stockholm, signed in 1855.

It reads:

“In case Russia should make to His Majesty the King of Sweden and Norway any proposal or demand having for its object to obtain either the cession or the exchange of any part whatsoever of the territories belonging to the Crowns of Sweden and Norway, or the power of occupying certain points of the said territories, or the cession of rights of fishery, or pasturage, or any other right upon the said territories and upon the coasts of Norway and Sweden, His Majesty the King of Sweden and Norway engages forthwith to communicate such proposal of demand to her Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the Emperor of the French; and their said Majesties, on their part, engage to furnish to His Majesty the King of Sweden and Norway sufficient naval and military forces to co-operate with the naval and military

forces of his said Majesty, for the purpose of resisting the pretensions or aggressions of Russia. The description, number, and destination of such forces shall, if occasion should arise, be determined by common agreement between the three Powers."

"A conflict of arms between Norway and Sweden would be a crime, and even the severance of the Union between them would be a calamity, and a calamity fraught with dire consequences. Both Swedes and Norwegians are held in the highest esteem in this country, while in the United States Scandinavian immigrants are, after English aliens, the most popular. We deplore, therefore, this fratricidal quarrel as it affects the two nations immediately concerned. But we cannot lose sight of the still wider issue which is almost certain to be raised. It promises to make more easy a new distribution of political power which Russia is seeking in Western Europe as the result of pressure applied in the Near and Far East. Russian obsession in the remote regions of Asia has given to her rivals nearer

at home an opportunity, of which they have in no small measure availed themselves.

“The Russian railways will soon be connected with the Russo-Finnish railway system, the extreme terminus of which is only forty-four miles from the Swedish frontier railway, which has been mainly built for military defensive purposes, and for the development of Northern Sweden. Another incentive for Russia to seize this territory is that, along the railway running between the Finnish frontier and Narvik, there are situated the Kirunavara and Gellivara mines, in the centre of the largest and richest iron beds in the world.”

With the object of preventing Russia from advancing in this direction to the Atlantic, the Swedish Government is now constructing the strong fortress of Boden. This fortress is expected to be ready in 1906, and will cost about £1,300,000.

“Taking it for granted that the Norwegian coasts are really Russia’s goal, Sweden in the event of war with her colossal neighbour, will, owing to her geographical position, be obliged

to protect essentially Norwegian interests, notwithstanding that there is a party among the Norwegian Radicals who are tacitly,¹ if not openly, in favour of Russia's designs (*Pall Mall Gazette*).

The writer, who has recently visited Boden, Finmark, and the Lofoden Isles, has come to the conclusion that it would be better for the peace of Northern Europe and of the world if Russia were allowed a commercial outlet at the Varanger Fiord, if she really desires one; for it is impossible and unsafe to bottle up a great nation of 130,000,000, which doubles itself every fifty years. Any further attempt to keep Russia from the ocean means another big war and the slaughter of tens of thousands of men.

The Russian Empire, which covers an area equal to one-sixth of the world, must have some open-water ports, but all the same the writer does not see the necessity of her becoming a naval power in the Atlantic, a menace to England and Norway, and, subsequently, to Sweden also.

¹ See Nisbet Bain's "Scandinavia," *last chapters*.

This quarrel between the two sister kingdoms is naturally felt with keen interest by the whole people of Finland, for, thanks to the dissolution of the Union, another bulwark of freedom, liberty, and culture, has been shattered, if not absolutely broken down.

The *Newcastle Chronicle*, writing on the fate of Finland, says :

“With Norway and Sweden involved in a crisis, of which it is impossible to prophesy the outcome, the future of Finland becomes a matter of international importance. The disasters encountered as the result of unscrupulous attempts at aggression in the East are not at all likely to deter Russia from making similar attempts in the West. And there could be no keener spur to her ambition than a divided Scandinavia. It is inevitable that a very short time will see the abandonment for some years to come, of all the Russian schemes which Japan has so decisively wrecked. Then the intrigues which have ended so unhappily in Manchuria and Korea will be transferred to the territories of Norway and Sweden. The first step is obviously to completely subjugate Finland which is in the main Swedish in sympathy, and the return

of the garrison at the end of the war to that unhappy country will place Russia and Sweden face to face with only a narrow span of sea dividing them. There is, as everybody knows, a not inconsiderable section of Norwegians who would see cause for congratulation in that state of affairs, but we venture to think that their rejoicing would be only short-lived. It is to Norway that Russia looks for the ultimate achievement of her great desire, and the supporters of disruption in both countries might very well take to heart the lesson which the Russian treatment of Finland teaches, and sinking minor differences, present a united front to the efforts which will undoubtedly be made against the inviolability of Scandinavia. The paltry concessions to Finland are only due to the fact that the bureaucrats at St Petersburg are too deeply engaged in combatting the revolutionary movement at home to pursue for the present the policy of oppression to a finish. But that is only a temporary phase, and with the end of the war, the close observer will see in the domination of the Grand Duchy the first overt steps towards the object which Russia has always had in view, and which she will now pursue with renewed vigour, as a

method of consolation for the present *débâcle* on land and sea."

Although this article was written several months ago, the events that are now happening in Finland are only too well bearing out the predictions of the above-mentioned paper. Russian troops are now being poured into the Grand Duchy night and day; for it is believed that the Finns intend rising against Russia's dominion. Only a few weeks have elapsed since the writer left Finland, which is now the scene of political murder, unrest, and sedition. With Finland's unhappy fate before their eyes, the late action of the Norwegian patriots is incomprehensible.

CHAPTER XII

EXTENSION OF RUSSIAN SEA-BOARD

IN a lecture, delivered by the writer before the Aldershot Military Society on 13th December 1904, he expressed the following opinion *re* Russia's attempts to get to the sea.

"The necessity of being prepared, not for offence but defence, is as urgent now as ever; for, until we have come to some arrangement with Russia, which will give that country more outlets to the sea, war with her is only a question of time. A great and growing nation of about 130,000,000 people cannot for ever be cooped up in the Baltic and Black Seas, or in the wilds of Central Asia and Siberia. But at the same time, the nations of Europe and Asia cannot consent to be plundered of some of their fairest possessions in the course of Russia's endeavours to gain the open sea. Because I want an outlet to the river near my house,

I have no right to "annex" my neighbour's garden, without even paying for it. But this has been Russia's policy ever since the days of Peter the Great, and, if continued, will lead to more bloody wars, costing Europe and Asia thousands of men and millions of money. I, moreover, do not believe that Russia really wants India, and that she will only invade our territory in case we make ourselves particularly disagreeable. Her true objective is the Persian Gulf. Seventy-five thousand British troops seem far too few to protect such a valuable possession as India, when we think that Russia could recently afford to lose about 75,000 men in two battles (Liaojan and Shaho)."

"It also seems unwise to trust so much to Asiatics, excellent soldiers though they undoubtedly are. We must rely more on ourselves, and not on others, all through."

"If we but study Russian history from the days of Peter the Great, we can see that most of the wars waged by Russia have arisen from her desire to get to the sea. The first State she encountered in this attempt was Sweden, which for several hundred years sought to keep Russia from the Baltic, and to preserve

her own possessions along its shores. Charles XII., after fighting Russia, Poland, Saxony, Norway, and Denmark for twenty years, had eventually to cede almost all his territories on the east and south of the Baltic, to Russia and Prussia. Sweden, who fought Russia and her Allies so gloriously, had then only about 3,500,000 to 4,000,000 subjects, and did not make peace until only old men, boys, and youths were left in the country. But the odds were too great, and in the end Russia won and established herself on the Baltic."

"Russia's next struggle was with the Crimean Tartars and Turks, in order to get to the Black Sea and control its outlet. Owing to the unfortunate campaign on the Pruth, where Peter barely escaped destruction, this plan of gaining the command of the Black Sea had to be abandoned for a time. But it was only temporarily postponed, and under Catherine II. and Nicholas I. the attempt was renewed with greater success. The Crimean war checked Russia's aspirations in this direction for at least twenty-five years; but there is no knowing that she will not make another attempt to capture Constantinople, or gain control over the Dardanelles,

when an opportunity presents itself. There is probably no empire in the world that works with such persistency to carry out a political programme, once resolved on, as Russia."

"It is now over a thousand years since Oleg the Varjag (Viking), Grand Duke of Kieff, invaded Constantinople and nailed his shield to the gates of that city. His successors, who also attempted to capture the city, were destroyed by Greek fire, or defeated; but no one who has read Russian history will say that she will ever rest until she has an outlet from the Black Sea for her fleet."

"The present war, broadly speaking, arises from Russia's unceremonious attempts to acquire open ports on the Pacific, and until some arrangement is made with Japan and the Powers, she will not give up the attempt to reach the sea, now that she has spent so many millions on the great Siberian Railway, which, undoubtedly, requires an outlet of some kind."

"It will thus be seen that Russia's attempts to get to the Baltic, the Black Sea, the Pacific, and the Mediterranean have led to a whole series of sanguinary and costly wars. It is equally evident that, if Russia persists

in her high-handed policy, three more wars are in view."

"(1). War with Sweden and Norway, to acquire ice-free ports on the Atlantic.

"(2). War with Great Britain, in order to get an outlet on the Persian Gulf.

"(3). War with Turkey or one of the great Powers, in order to obtain control of the Bosphorus.

The lecturer also pointed out how war might any day break out between England and Russia, owing to the bellicose attitude of a portion of the English and Russian Press, which increased the danger of an outbreak by exciting the passions and prejudices of the people. Bismarck's prediction was, in fact, coming true, viz., that future wars would be brought about, not so much by kings and their ministers as by the Press, or rather the worst section of the latter."

"This does not look like the Millennium, and as the chances of a future conflict with Russia are so very great, it is the duty of the British people to see that the army is made as efficient as possible, that is, if they wish to preserve the British Empire intact."

"I am not an advocate of a war with

Russia, and I think every attempt should be made to meet *Russia's reasonable and legitimate endeavours to get to the ocean, i.e., whenever they can be met without the loss of valuable territory and without detriment to any of her neighbours. I think this question is so very important that a Conference should be convened to see if it is not possible to solve this great problem peacefully.* If something is not done, we shall have to go through the same terrible experiences as the Japanese."

In a conversation the writer had recently with Dr Sven Hedin in Stockholm who has also spent a considerable portion of his life within the confines of the Russian Empire, the distinguished explorer expressed the opinion that Russia would soon recover from her recent reverses, and that she would, in all probability, endeavour to make her way out to the sea at the point of least resistance—viz., Finmark in the north of Norway.

Dr Sven Hedin, who is probably one of the greatest authorities on Russia, also recently informed the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* that,

"After what had occurred in Northern

Manchuria, Russian activity in the north of Europe is inevitable; moreover, that Norway is powerless to prevent Russia from absorbing Finmark at any time she pleases, Russia already has a military road from Torneå on the Baltic to Three Empire Point near Lake Kilmsjarvi, which is only eighteen miles from Males, on the Lyngen Fiord. In the event of Russia trying to secure a warm-water port in this district, Sweden, whose relations with Russia have always been of a friendly character, would not now come to the help of Norway in any form. In this matter, as, indeed, in all others, he considered that the disruption of the Union was a distinct advantage to Sweden. He pointed out that the respective military obligations of the two countries were unjust, as Norway was only compelled to send one-third of her force to the assistance of her sister kingdom, while Sweden's whole armament was at Norway's disposal.¹

Perhaps the most unfortunate upshot of

¹ The unwillingness of the Norwegians to contribute their fair quota towards the defence of the Peninsula was one of the main reasons why the Swedish Conservatives would not give Norway complete equality in the Union; for equal rights with equal responsibilities was their motto.

the rupture of the Union is that Sweden no more feels herself bound to spend her resources in protecting Norway from a Russian invasion. United, these two countries might have made a desperate, and perhaps successful, resistance; but divided they have no chance, should Russia, after the lapse of three or four years, decide to attack them. As I write these lines, I learn from the Russian Press that the Russian Government is sending troops to Uleåborg and Kemi, in order to prevent the Finns—who are dissatisfied with the loss of the liberties they inherited from Sweden—from rising in open revolt. Uleåborg is close to Torneå, on the Baltic, from which Russia has, as previously stated, a military road leading to the frontiers of Finmark. Let us bear in mind that the terminus of the Russo-Finnish railway system is only forty-four miles from the Swedish frontier railway, which has been mainly built for defensive purposes.

The writer, who has just returned from Sweden, Norway, Finland, Russia, Lapland, and Finmark, is of the opinion that neither

the fortress of Boden, nor Sweden and Norway combined, will be able to keep Russia out of Finmark and Lapland, if she seriously wishes to push a large army from Uleåborg and Torneå to the Atlantic, which she can accomplish without any serious difficulty.

As before stated, I am not an advocate of war with Russia, and do not see why England, Sweden, and Norway should throw away 300,000 men in preventing Russia getting to the Atlantic, if it is only for legitimate purposes, *i.e.*, for her commercial and economical development.

I say 300,000, for I estimate that it would cost us and the above-mentioned countries about this number of men if we should seriously attempt to bar her advance to the Atlantic, as the Japanese have done from the Pacific.

After living twenty-six years in Russia, and studying that country's resources and requirements, I have come to the conclusion that she must have more outlets to the open sea, and that if we intend to stop her, we must

prepare to fight her just as the Japanese have done.

With the Japanese, war was a vital necessity; but I believe this question of giving Russia a commercial outlet in the North, and another outlet for her fleet in the Black Sea, can be settled without war, and is not of vital importance to us. Russia, in fact, must be allowed to develop and expand towards the South, the land of the Black Soil, and to extend her influence among the Slavs she has freed. It is her true mission to free the Slavs and dispossess the Turk, who, with all his many good qualities, is entirely out of place in Europe.

In the writer's opinion, our policy in preventing Russia breaking up the Turkish Empire and liberating the Slavs from the Turkish yoke, has been a terrible mistake. Charles XII. committed the same blunder by aiding the Turks, and thus compelled the Russians to extend their empire northwards to the Baltic. Kaiser Wilhelm is following in the same false footsteps, and, like Disraeli

and Salisbury, is bolstering up the corrupt power of the Sultan, who has once more become a danger to the peace of Europe.

Let us not imitate Lord Salisbury, who, before he died, confessed that in supporting the Turk against Russia he had "*put money on the wrong horse.*" Let us not help the Turk or the Kaiser to resist Russia's legitimate and reasonable endeavours to obtain an outlet in Southern Europe, or to become the leader of the Slavonic race of the Balkans, now that Austria is no longer capable of that rôle.

If we do not continue this error of bottling up Russia's growing energies in all directions, we need not fear that she will break into the North, and become a peril to us and the Scandinavian kingdoms—Sweden and Norway. Should Russia, however, break through in that direction, it will be because we have forced her to do so; for I know that her serious statesmen do not wish to develop in this direction, or even to invade India, unless forced to by circumstances.

If Russia is allowed to have a commercial

outlet in the North, and a naval outlet into the Mediterranean, the danger of her invading India or Northern Scandinavia will be almost entirely removed, for she cannot then blame us for barring her way to the ocean, or hindering the development of her trade.

I believe that in politics, as in life, we must, as Lord Rosebery expressed it, "sometimes put ourselves in the other man's place," and that if we do so the words uttered by Count de Witte, the great Russian statesman, at Portsmouth, will come true, viz. : "That an arrangement with England is also possible, if *both* countries will endeavour to have consideration for each other's interests." And that not only applies to England, but to Sweden and Norway also, which countries may also come to an amicable arrangement with their mighty neighbour by providing her with a *commercial* outlet in the North—in short, a western terminus for the great Siberian Railway.

If we endeavour to meet Young Russia in this direction, the *past* will be forgotten, with all the errors on both sides ; but, should our statesmen decide to continue the old mistaken

EXTENSION OF RUSSIAN SEA-BOARD 147

policy of bottling up in *all* directions the energies of this young and growing nation of 130,000,000, the upshot means two other terrible wars—one with Sweden and Norway, or Norway alone, in probably less than five years from now, and another gigantic war with us on the expiration of the present treaty between England and Japan. Any one who has read the Russian Press during the last twenty years, as the writer has done, will know that I have good grounds for making these statements.

CONCLUSION

BERNADOTTE'S WARNING TO THE PEOPLE OF NORWAY IN 1814

I WILL conclude this little book with the words of that old lion, Carl Johann Bernadotte, who though dead yet speaketh. This great General, when staying at the camp of Venersborg in Sweden on the 17th July 1814, addressed the following *letter*, from which I have selected certain passages, to the Norwegians, who then thought of electing their own king and starting a kingdom on their own account.

“Norwegians, destined by nature to be united with the Swedish nation, your destiny was accomplished when the King of Denmark ceded to Sweden, by the peace of Kiel, his rights over Norway. He obtained immediately after his signing of the treaty, the evacuation of the Duchess of Schleswig and Holstein, the surrender of the fortress of Glückstadt, etc., the recognition of the Sound dues, the abandonment of more than 12,000,000 francs contributions imposed on the Duchies, the renunciation of a

like sum due to the Swedish Government for captures made by Danish vessels during the peace, a considerable sum in money, part of which has been paid; and lastly, the promise of Swedish Pomerania to be ceded immediately after the surrender and occupation by the Swedish troops of the fortress and of Kongsvinger, Frederickstad, and Akkerhus."

"These great sacrifices were only made to Denmark in consideration of a promise that you should peaceably and without opposition recognise the authority of the King of Sweden, and you will appreciate this when you read the treaty which has united Sweden, Russia, England, Prussia, and Austria, against the common enemy. If, in this age, these treaties could be eluded by civilised nations, good faith could no longer exist on earth."

"At the period when your Government furnished France with many thousands of sailors to equip her ships of war, Sweden acknowledged the indispensable necessity of rendering herself independent of the Continent. She refused to humble herself before the idol of the day, and relying with confidence on herself and her constitutional laws, she dared to invoke them in favour of her sons, and rejected the demand of a like number of sailors. She did more, she united herself at

the most critical moment which our annals record to a monarch¹ whose ruin Napoleon was resolved on. She is now proud of having preceded so many nations in this manifestation of her opinion."

"Norwegians, the smaller States are always the puppets of the more powerful ones. You cannot form an independent Government, and the idea of the man who misleads you is to reunite at some future day the Crowns of Norway and Denmark. But Nature, in accordance with sound policy, has determined that the Norwegians and Swedes should be friends and brothers. It is also as brothers the Swedes wish to live with you. United and affording one another mutual support, Sweden and Norway will present on every side an impregnable barrier. Isolated and separate, they will have everything to fear, both from themselves and from others.

"Look at England; that celebrated isle which founded her prosperity on a similar union. That of Norway and Sweden is greeted by the first-rate Powers of Europe. An experience of many centuries has proved that the divisions of the North have always entailed its ruin. The same idea struck the great Gustavus."

“After having previously arranged the peace of Europe and established freedom of religion, his plan was to unite you to Sweden. It was, however, frustrated, and the consequences for you have been fatal.”

“Norwegians, after the memorable battle of Leipzig, your interests should have told you that your union with Sweden could alone secure your happiness and establish your security.”

“The great Powers desire this union, and they agree that it is time to put an end to the differences which resulted from the separation of the two nations. Will you alone oppose yourself to the general wish? Will you fight single-handed against the Swedes, and the Sovereigns who have countenanced your union with us? Their glory, their interests, their sanctity, and their treaties demand that it should be carried into effect.”

“I arrive among you with the hope that you will treat as brothers this brave army of Swedes whom I bring back from a campaign as glorious as it has been astounding.”

“Neither this army nor that which was stationed a year ago on your frontier desire laurels which must be stained with your blood. The Swedes are, like ourselves, brothers of the Scandinavian family, and battles fought

between the two nations are equally repugnant to nature, to reason, and to sound policy."

"Norwegians, suffer not yourselves to be influenced by the instigation of individuals who have only in view their personal interests. Sacrifice not the welfare of your country to the deceitful illusions which they present to you. Open your eyes to the dangers into which a criminal ambition precipitates you. Sweden will not lay down her arms before she has accomplished a union necessary for her security and repose. You have it in your power to prevent the evils of war which can only be advantageous to your seducers. Direct your minds to the prosperity which awaits you, and to the glory and prosperity which must result from a unity of the two nations."

"Norwegians, reject therefore an influence and errors equally unworthy of you! Let the wish of the nation express itself! Let this wish fix its laws under the protection of an enlightened monarch. He offers you, with the entire removal of all war, independence, liberty, and the enjoyment of all your privileges."

"Your loyalty will be the pledge, while his virtues are the guarantees."