

REINDER TO PROF BREDA'S ARTICLES

Minneapolis Man Takes Up the Cudgels in Behalf of the Liberals of Norway—He also Defends the "Landsmaal," the National Language of Norway, in Vigorous Fashion.

To the Editor of The Journal.

In the Journal appeared last summer two articles by Professor Breda, formerly of the University of Minnesota, in which he shamelessly slanders his own countrymen, the people of Norway. He re-hashed the most silly twaddle that has appeared in the fanciful reactionary papers in Norway.

According to the professor everything that is vile, foolish, extravagant, or factitious in Norway is gathered in the liberal party.

He sings the same refrain that has been sung by conservatives in Norway from the times of Wergeland and from the time when, about the year 1830 the farmers of the country first in a considerable body appeared in the storting (Norwegian parliament) and asserted the rights to which they were entitled according to the constitution of 1814.

The professor's statements about the history of Norway as an independent nation covers only a period of eighty-nine years, is misleading. Norway was independent from the first dawn of its history. In 1814 it was united with Denmark, at first nominally upon equal terms, but in 1858 it was made subject to Denmark and remained so till 1814.

In the professor's opinion everything was lovely under the rule of the conservatives, while now everything is going to perdition. This gives us the key to the standard by which he measures things.

List of Supposed Sins.

Of course, it is impossible to enter into all the details of the long articles. But to illustrate their one-sidedness and unreliability a few specimens are selected. The professor speaks about the increase of taxation and how unfavorably taxation in Norway compares with that of Sweden. According to good and correct statistics in Norway 22 1/2 crowns, and in Denmark 25 crowns. In 1899 the local taxes in Denmark were 33-1-3 crowns per capita. In Norway the average was 18-1-2. Taxation seems to be a disease that is prevalent throughout the whole world. We need only mention our own state and national taxes as an illustration to enlighten those who the professor says is caused by burdensome taxes, statistics show that it has been no larger under liberal administration than under that of the conservatives.

Among the supposed misdeeds of the liberal party the professor mentions the "national insurance" project. When this "project" was first introduced into the storting only twenty members voted against it. Of these eighteen were liberals and only two conservatives. In denouncing this measure the professor seems to forget that "national insurance" has existed in Norway at least as far back as the adoption of the crown law of 1814. All office holders on retiring receive a pension. The professor does not explain why one class in the commonwealth should be "insured" by the state. Under the head of "Spills for the Victors" he makes a number of assertions about which it is sufficient to say that they are untrue. He falls to produce the evidence. What his object is in throwing all this dirt, it is impossible to understand.

"Higher Classes Always Despised Labor, Manual Labor no Longer Respectable" is one of the headings in the professor's article. Among the so-called "higher classes" in Norway manual labor has never been respected. A person of the so-called "better class" cannot even carry a package on the street without being stared at. As the white people of Norway are not so-called "better class" cannot even carry a package on the street without being stared at. As the white people of Norway are not so-called "better class" cannot even carry a package on the street without being stared at.

What the professor says about the "shaking of the bloody shirt" is the veriest rot. It is a general idea among the common people of Sweden that Norway is subject to Sweden, and the ruling classes of the latter country have always tried to assert Swedish supremacy over Norway. But when the professor is an aristocratic clique that has largely succeeded such efforts. Since the time when the able and redoubtable chief, Erling the Wrynecker, or Crooked) in the twelfth century attempted to trade away a part of southern Norway to the Danish king in order to get the aid of the latter in getting his son acknowledged as king of Norway, contrary to Norwegian law, there have again and again appeared certain crooked classes who have been willing to trade away a part of the country or its rights in order to rule over the rest. The slogan of the modern crooked progeny of Erling the Crooked has been: "Swedish supremacy rather than peasant rule!" By the aid of this element the Swedish expansionists have hoped to get the Swedish claims of supremacy enacted into law. The danger of that supremacy is as real a danger as it ever was. Patriotic men in Norway do not desire a repetition or a parallel to the union under the Danish Oldenburg dynasty with nominal equality, but real and growing supremacy on the part of the allied nation.

"Fools" of Illustrious Rank. About the men in Sweden who have voiced the Swedish lust for supremacy, Professor Breda uses the expression, "men who retain a naive resistance to what the professor puts in when the talk is of the enemies of Norway's independence! Of course, the Swedes are sweet lambs who do not even bleed unless those "mad ideas," those wolves of Norway, pounce upon them with their unreasonable "chauvinism!" Among the "fools," as the professor calls them, who "retaliated in kind" was no less a person than Crown Prince Gustav. It is not very many years since he talked of a Swedish "promenade" into Norway, meaning a Swedish invasion of the country of which his father is king and whose successor he is expected to become.

The "Joint Commission" Succotash. As to the report of the "joint commission" the professor is also wrong. His object is to establish her own consular service, the relations of this consular service to the joint foreign office to be regulated by laws which cannot be changed without the assent to a possible future rearrangement of the foreign office. As to the "joint foreign office," there is, fortunately, as yet no such office. As a temporary arrangement the foreign affairs of Norway, much to the country's detriment, have been in the hands of the minister of foreign affairs of Sweden; perhaps it may be more correct to say that this has been so on account of the want of an arrangement. The words "without prejudice to a possible future rearrangement of the foreign office" must be the product of the fantasy of some one's fertile brain. According to the report given and signed by the Norwegian cabinet itself, the said laws cannot be changed without the consent of both law-making powers or authorities of both kingdoms. In other words, Norway was to give Sweden an absolute veto with regard to the foreign office. Of course, Norway ought to consent to no such abrogation of its independence. The ministers, Stang and Konow, would not do it, and so were forced out of the cabinet.

Professor Breda's Astonishing Gullibility. How a man of any pretension to respectability can be willing to peddle such idle gossip as that about Minister G. Stang is incomprehensible. It seems the professor is mad, or at least, anything, however absurd, about members of the liberal party. He tells us in good earnest that it was the intention of G. Stang, the secretary of war, to commence war against Sweden. This is a statement which he does not think of doing, because he did not have the authority to do it. If the king, the only authority in Norway that can lawfully declare war, were to commence war against his own subjects, the storting no doubt would take the necessary steps for the defense of the country.

Swedish Threats of War. The consular service, which is the present subject of contention between Norway and Sweden, is a consular service which Norway has a perfect right to take whatever steps it pleases. After the union between Norway and Sweden was established, the government of Sweden took the appointment of consuls for Norway, as well as Sweden, into its own hands, and for several reasons Norway has been obliged to accept this arrangement. The diplomatic and consular administration of the united kingdoms proceeds from a system of officers to which Norway pays a contribution, but over the organization of which it has no right to exercise any control. In 1836 the Norwegian storting resolved to establish a separate consular service for Norway, and Sweden, in accordance with a "military execution" in other words, to make war upon Norway. The latter country was not prepared for an attack, and the law about separate consuls did not go into operation.

Necessity of Defensive Measures. But the option became necessary not only among the liberals, but also among the conservatives, that everything possible should be done to hinder the recurrence of a situation in which the country in a state of defense. A plan was laid with this object in view, and both liberals and conservatives were united in voting money for the necessary expenses. When G. Stang was appointed secretary of war he went to work to build the general will of the nation in building the fortifications about which such a hubbub has been raised he simply executed a plan which dates ever so many years back. With remarkable energy and ability he succeeded in accomplishing a work which none before him had possessed the courage or the ability to do. In spite of all assertions to the contrary, he did the work comparatively cheaply. It is said that the erection of thirty-two fortresses cost no more than the cost of what an ironclad battleship costs.

Minister Stang's what an emphatic plan that he has had any intention of thus separating Norway and Sweden, and completing their purpose. Not a single word of national and growing supremacy of war, and it appears from the proceedings in the first chamber of the storting that the significance of these preparations is not fully understood.

These preparations then are not, as Professor Breda says, Russian oppression of Finland, are most probably what has of national and growing supremacy of part of Sweden. It can scarcely be supposed that Swedish statesmen have ever been blind to whatever danger there may be from Russia.

Professor Breda says: "Mr. Stang evidently never thought of the possibility of a war with Russia." Now, the fact is, that while Sweden has made threats of war against Norway, Russia has not. Besides, Russia is at present fully occupied in the east. There is no reason why Norway should be a challenge to Russia by building fortifications.

Unjust Accusation Against Providence. The professor winds up by a kick at the Norwegian language and with a hymn of devotion to B. Bjornson.

It is unjust if the professor does, to accuse providence of having cursed Norway with a language, "which in its written form is essentially identical with that of Denmark." That Norway is cursed with such a language is a "disproportion," not of providence, but of the want of national and public spirit, which prevailed in Norway at the time of the reformation.

As far back as history reaches, each of the countries, Sweden, Norway and Denmark had its own separate language. Each language, then as now, had a large number of dialects. Some time after the introduction of Christianity the language of Norway began to be written in writing. The old Swedish and Danish never came into use as written languages, but in the first part of the fourteenth century, literary activity in Norway ceased. From this time forward the language of the three countries underwent great changes until the time of the reformation, when the three languages had acquired pretty much the same form, as they have at present.

As above stated, Norway was made subject to Denmark in 1814. At the same time the Lutheran faith, which had become widespread in Denmark and Sweden, was introduced into Norway, and made the official religion in Norway. Denmark and Sweden were indifferent. To the change in religion a naive resistance was made. In Sweden and Denmark, which were independent, the people began to write their own language, but the Norwegians suf-

fered the Danish language to be forced upon them. The people had at this time sunk to the lowest depth of political indifference and want of national spirit. In 1450, Norway abdicated politically, when Norwegian and Danish magnates agreed that the two neighboring countries were to be forever united under one king, nominally upon equal terms, but really with Danish supremacy. In 1453 there was an abdication with regard to nationality. In that year members of the council of the kingdom of Norway agreed, together with Danish and Swedish magnates, that the union was an excellent thing for each of the two countries, Sweden and Denmark, but it did not seem to occur to them that a union would have been a good thing for Norway also.

When the Lutheran reformation was introduced into Norway there was an abdication in language. It is true that there is a greater difference between Norwegian and Danish than between Swedish and Danish. It did not occur to anyone at that time that the Norwegians, like the Danes and Swedes, ought to write their own language.

A Slumbering Nation. To sum it all up in one sentence: The underlying cause of the political, national and linguistic abdication of the Norwegians, was that they had no national and public spirit at the time. The people of Norway, among whom for centuries the greatest political, religious, and literary activity has prevailed, abdicating with regard to nationality. They were wide awake only in one particular, and that with regard to their private, personal rights.

Gradually, as a result of Swedish invasions and wars with Sweden, the national spirit was again aroused, but after centuries of slow growth and nearly a century of a national language, there are still people in Norway, who are willing to trade away a part of their country's rights, and a still greater number, who think that the Danish language, intermixed with a few Norwegian words, is the proper thing for Norway, and that the real Norwegian language has no right to recognition.

Ridiculous Ideas Among the People. The common people, and many others, are prone to think that their dialects were corrupted of the written language, and the idea has prevailed among them that their spoken language is inferior to the written language, which has been forced upon them. As a woman in a festive circumstance used to tell her ragged children to run and hide under the bed when neighbors or strangers called at the house, so the common people of Norway have been taught to hide their supposed linguistic rags in the presence of persons speaking the only orthodox, semi-German Danish language. In this way a certain amount of independence and want of self-respect has been instilled into the common people, and this is probably the reason why so many Norwegians think that the Danish language is to get rid of their own language as soon as possible, and they must needs "spilke Ingils" even to their own countrymen, although they would not do so if they were not so afraid that it reminds one of a hen trying to play the part of a crowing rooster. Can you guess, gentle reader, what expression the Norwegians use when they speak of acquiring the English language? They do not say that they are going to learn English, but that they are going to learn to talk.

Professor Breda's Ignorance of the Facts. From the facts stated above, the reader will be able to judge how much sense there is in the professor's statements. Breda, that the "Landsmaal," is a "dead" or "artificial" language. Why the Norwegian language should be a "constructed" or "artificial" language, is not the Danish, Swedish or any other language when first taken into use as a written language, many a mystery. The professor states the matter from an impartial standpoint. Professor Breda seems to think that the dialects of Norway are dialects of the written (Danish) language. At any rate, the English colonists' facts will get that impression from his article. It is not the case that the Norwegians have a language which is written in a form that is identical with that of Denmark, just as in America you have the same language as they have in England. Such a comparison cannot properly be made. The English colonists brought their language with them from England. But Norway is not a Danish colony; its people are a separate nation as old as the Danish, with their own language.

People in Norway are now doing what ought to have been done 300 years ago: writing the common language in a form that is identical with that of Denmark, just as in America you have the same language as they have in England. Such a comparison cannot properly be made. The English colonists brought their language with them from England. But Norway is not a Danish colony; its people are a separate nation as old as the Danish, with their own language.

The arguments against the "Landsmaal" are of the most conflicting sort. On the one hand it is alleged that it is a "constructed" or "artificial" language, and on the other, that it is one-sided, because only a part of the country is said to be represented by the language. It is a "constructed" or "artificial" language, and on the other, that it is one-sided, because only a part of the country is said to be represented by the language. It is a "constructed" or "artificial" language, and on the other, that it is one-sided, because only a part of the country is said to be represented by the language.

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Terre Haute, Ind. I am a prominent lawyer, named A. J. Kelley. Everyone in the city knows him, and also knows what a sufferer he was with rheumatism. Mr. Kelley is now well, and this is what he says: "I have taken about three bottles of 'Blood Wine' and must say in my case its action has been marvelous, simply magical. My old trouble of rheumatism which has bothered me almost constantly in different degrees of severity has entirely left me. I feel free of it, the first time in years and can truthfully say that 'Blood Wine' is the best thing I ever used."

Circleville, O. Gentlemen—"My wife and I have taken three bottles of your 'Blood Wine' with good results. I recommended it to a neighbor, who says it is improving her health; I find that it is all that it is represented to be and cheerfully recommend it to others." —W. H. Thomas, Pastor M. E. Church.

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