

SCANDINAVIA AND THE WAR

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FIRST of all, I must point out that, literally speaking, there is no Scandinavia as yet. There is a Scandinavian peninsula and a Scandinavian group of nations, but nothing that may be regarded as a political, economical, or even geographical entity. It is convenient, of course, to have a term that can be applied collectively to the three northern kingdoms; and to the world at large such a term has more validity than the nations comprised within it seem willing to admit. At home, in the United States, I find it next to impossible to make my closest and most intelligent friends remember whether, by birth, I am a Swede, a Norwegian, or a Dane. When I set them right, they answer commonly: 'Well, what is the difference anyhow?' Scandinavians are apt to take offence at an attitude which they regard as expressive of nothing but ignorance. To me that attitude is a most significant symptom, indicating that differences which seem very radical at close quarters may seem quite negligible at a distance. And no matter how much importance the Scandinavians themselves attach to the divergence of their respective natures and interests, an impartial outside observer can only conclude that all divergences are outweighed by their community of race and culture, their practical community of language, their extensive, although far from total, community of political position, and their steadily increasing community of economic interests. In any crisis they find themselves in a position almost