

# Saga-Book of the Viking Club.

VOL. I. PART III.

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## ADDITIONAL GIFTS TO LIBRARY & MUSEUM.

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IN addition to the gifts to the Library and the Museum given on pp. 2—4, and 115—117, the following have since been received:—

GIVEN BY

P. M. C. KERMODE, F.S.A.Scot.

“Catalogue of the Manks Crosses, with Runic Inscriptions and various Readings and Renderings compared.” Second Edition. By P. M. C. Kermode, F.S.A.Scot.

REV. J. SEPHTON, M.A.

“On Some Runic Romains.” By the Rev. J. Sephton, M.A., Reader in Icelandic at University College, Liverpool, etc.

ALEXANDER BUGGE.

“Handelen mellem England og Norge indtil Begyndelsen af det 15<sup>de</sup> Aarhundrede.” Af Alexander Bugge.

PROFESSEUR AD. DE CEULENEER.

“Type d’Indien du Nouveau Monde représenté sur un Bronze antique du Louvre. Nouvelle Contribution à l’Interprétation d’un Fragment de Cornelius Nepos.” Par Ad. de Ceuleneer, professeur à l’Université de Gand. 1890.

“Le Colorado. Conférence faite à la Société Royale de Géographie d’Anvers.” Par M. A. de Ceuleneer, professeur à l’Université de Gand, Membre de l’Académie archéologique de Belgique, etc. Vol. I. 1890.

A. W. JOHNSTON.

“The Dwarfie Stone of Hoy, Orkney.” Reprinted from *The Reliquary and Illustrated Archæologist* for April, 1896. By A. W. Johnston.

ALBANY F. MAJOR.

“Five Pieces of Runic Poetry.” Translated from the Icelandic Language. By Bishop Percy, but published anonymously. London. 1763.

ALEXANDER GARDNER.

“Scandinavian Folklore.” By W. A. Craigie, M.A., F.S.A.Scot.  
Presented by the Publisher.

A. W. JOHNSTON.

“Birds of Omen.” By Jessie M. E. Saxby. (30 copies.)

A. G. MOFFAT.

“Scandinavian Literature.” By Rev. J. Bosworth. 1839.

JOSEPH ANDERSON, LL.D.

“Notice of a Cave recently discovered at Oban, containing Human Remains and a Refuse Heap.” By Joseph Anderson, LL.D.

“Notes on the Contents of a Refuse Heap at the base of a fortified Rock, near Oban.” By Joseph Anderson, LL.D.

A. W. JOHNSTON.

A Pair of Rivlins, or Shoes made of undressed hide. Ancient type of shoe still worn in parts of Orkney and the Shetlands; made in Sanday, Orkney.

ACQUIRED BY EXCHANGE:

“Two Norse Lays.” I. The Home-bringing of the Hammer. Translated from the old Norse, with explanatory notes. II. The Awakening of the Gods. Kirkwall. 1873. (Three copies.)

“Sturlunga Saga: including the Islendinga Saga of Lawman Sturla Thordsson and other works.” Edited by Dr. Gudbrand Vigfusson. 2 vols. (Clarendon Press).

“Passio et Miracula Beati Olavi.” Edited from a 12th Century MS. By F. Metcalfe, M.A. (Clarendon Press).

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### SPECIAL DONATIONS TO FUNDS.

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John Walker, Esq.	...	...	...	...	1	11	0
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Abany F. Major, Umboths-man	...	...	...	...	3	0	0

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### PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS.

AMONG publications by members of the Club during the year are the following :—

“Queen of the Isles.” A Shetland Tale. By Mrs. Jessie M. E. Saxby.

- “The Bondwoman.” A Story of the Northmen in Lakeland. By W. G. Collingwood. (London: Edward Arnold).
- “In the Northman’s Land.” Travel, Sport, and Folklore in the Hardanger Fjord and Fjeld. By Major A. F. Mockler-Ferryman, F.R.G.S., F.R.S. (London: Sampson Low, Marsden & Co.).
- “Norse Tales and Sketches.” By Alexander L. Kielland. Translated by R. L. Cassie. (London: Elliot Stock).
- “Handelen mellem England og Norge indtil begyndelsen af det 15<sup>de</sup> Aarhundrede.” By Alexander Bugge (Christiania).
- “Wulfric the Weapon-Thane.” A Story of the Danish Invasion of East Anglia in the Days of Edmund the Martyr. By the Rev. Charles W. Whistler, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. (London: Blackie).
- “Some Ancient Stone Forts in Carnarvonshire.” By Lady Paget. (Privately printed).
- “The Northmen in Wales.” By Lady Paget. (Privately printed).
- “The Caves in Allt Gwyn, Dwygyfylchi, Carnarvonshire. By Lady Paget. (Privately printed).
- “On Some Runic Remains.” A Lecture. By the Rev. J. Sephton, M.A. (Privately printed).
- “The ‘Dwarfie Stone’ of Hoy, Orkney.” By A. W. Johnston, in *The Reliquary and Illustrated Archæologist* for April.

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*FORTHCOMING WORKS.*

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- “King Olaf’s Kinsman.” A Story of the Coming of King Cnut, and Olaf’s Deeds in England. By the Rev. C. W. Whistler, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. (Blackie).
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*\*\* The Editor will be glad if Members will bring to his notice any article or publication by them which might find a place under this or the foregoing headings.*

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*REPORTS OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE  
MEETINGS OF THE CLUB.*

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**FOURTH SESSION, 1896.**

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AL-THING, JANUARY 10TH, 1896.

The REV. A. SANDISON (Jarl) in the Chair.

Mr. Gilbert Goudie (Jarla-man), F.S.A.Scot., read a paper on "The Norsemen in Shetland," which is printed in full on another page.

In the course of the discussion which followed, the Lawman, Mr. A. W. Johnston, said that an interesting point with regard to the Norwegian government of the islands was that the Earl of Orkney had to undertake their defence at his own cost, on which account he did not have to contribute any tax to the King of Norway, his nominal sovereign, as had to be done by the Earls in Norway itself. With regard to the pledging of the sovereignty of the islands by Norway, Orkney was first pledged by special treaty, and, there not being sufficient money to pay the remainder of the Princess's dowry, Shetland was likewise pledged, but without any treaty being apparently drawn up. The old Schynd Court, which granted a Bill to each successor to an Udal holding, has ceased to exist, so that at present Udallers have no proper legal method of making up their title to their heritages, an anomaly which calls for rectification. The speaker called attention to Sir George Dasent's theory, that the islands were empty and desolate when the Norsemen first invaded them, and that it was not before their swords that the ancient inhabitants disappeared: a theory which he drew from the fact that the Sagas are silent on the subject of conflicts. Mr. Johnson also pointed out that the "collie" or old black lamp was still in use, and that he had recently acquired one



in Orkney, as well as an iron mould, in which one had been made last year.

The Rev. John Spence said that Shetland as a whole was very dear to him, and he was sorry that he had not come prepared to discuss the subject at length. He also regretted that Mr. Goudie had not entered into fuller detail: light upon the place-names especially would have been most valuable. He hoped, however, that Mr. Goudie would favour the club again on the subject. He himself, as a Shetlander, had navigated the islands in every part, and knew every rock and headland round the coasts, and the whole country inland as well. He had also travelled all the world over, and knew and loved people of all nations; but he was bound to say that his heart always retained a special love for "the old rock" and its inhabitants above all others, and therefore the chance of being present that night had been very welcome to him.

The Jarl said that if the audience had missed something of the detail they might have desired, it arose, he thought, from the fulness of the lecturer's knowledge of his subject and his fear to overload it with details. Shetlanders could probably fill in for themselves many of the gaps, but possibly others who were not connected with the islands would have appreciated the lecture better had fuller details been given. He felt much interest in the problem of the Pictish inhabitants: for though Mr. Goudie said they were probably absorbed, local tradition in North Shetland at any rate said very decidedly that they were exterminated after long and desperate fighting; and to this he inclined, in spite of the opinion of Sir G. W. Dasent, quoted by Mr. Johnston, that they had previously left the islands, as no warfare is recorded in the Sagas. In Unst there was a tradition that the warfare continued till the only surviving Picts were a priest and his son. Their one possession of value was a knowledge of the way to brew heather-beer. The Norse invaders, coveting this secret, offered their captives their lives in return for the knowledge of it. The priest consented to teach it them on condition that they first slew his son. When this deed was done he defied them, and carried the

secret with him to his grave. So, for good or ill, the art of brewing beer out of heather was lost to the world. It was a question whether there was any real survival of Celtic names in Shetland. If there were none, the fact supported the view that the Picts had been exterminated, not absorbed, assuming that they had not been destroyed by pestilence. If we may judge from many other instances, place-names have such wondrous vitality that many of them must have survived, had the earlier inhabitants been absorbed. This was especially the case in a country like Shetland, where every feature in the landscape, each stone along the shore, every rock and skerry, even to the reefs below the surface, every knoll and dell, even to a dimple on a hill side, had a local name describing it. These names, however, were fast dying out; and for this the curse of the lovers of the past will rest on the Scotch schoolmasters and the officers of the Ordnance Survey. The schoolmasters transformed and explained away the names they were too ignorant to understand; and the Survey officials took down the local nomenclature from the lips of the most talkative, and therefore generally of the most ignorant, people. He was afraid, too, that the ministers, or many of them, would have also to stand in the pillory for the destruction they had wrought in their crusade against superstition. However, he was glad to say that the researches of Mr. Jacob Jacobsen had aroused much interest, and there was some hope that the process of destruction would be arrested. He himself had heard in use almost all the personal names mentioned by Mr. Goudie, and he thought that the Norse forms still persisted, the forms given as corruptions being pet names or diminutives. It had been very interesting to him, when visiting Norway some years ago, to find that seafaring terms used by the fishermen and boatmen, and also the peasants' names for flowers and plants, were practically identical in Shetland and Norway. As regards the prospect of the Norse element in the islands continuing, it must be borne in mind that Shetlanders have a wonderful faculty of absorbing other races, and even Scotchmen and their descendants settled in the islands soon become Shetlanders in feeling, and develop

a true insular hatred of everything Scotch. This hatred of Scotchmen was doubtless partly due to the fact that the ministers, schoolmasters, and lairds, classes all likely at one time or another to arouse animosity, were Scotch. As regards the landholders being mainly of Scotch descent, the way in which the native Udallers were rooted out and their lands acquired by foreigners made a very shameful record. In his boyhood Prince Lucien Bonaparte had visited the islands on the same errand as Dr. Jacobsen, and stayed with his father. The Prince's opinion was that the language in Shetland had never been a pure Norse tongue. Ecclesiastical buildings abounded; and this was especially so in the case of small chapels dating from Roman Catholic times, which were so frequent along the coast, all now in ruins. The ancient dykes referred to by Mr. Goudie were a noticeable feature in the landscape, and were remarkable. They exist only in outline, and are broken by many gaps. When used for division walls, if they were ever so used, they must have been constructed for the most part of turf. Possibly they were never intended to do more than indicate the delimitations of different townships. In conclusion, he would only refer to one more legend, that of the so-called New Kirk in Unst, of which the story ran that it had never been finished, for whatever the builders built by day the Picts came and destroyed by night, till at last the task was given up in despair. From careful examination of it, and calculation as to the amount of material remaining in the walls and ruins (there being little reason to suppose that the stones had been removed for other purposes), he thought that the story of its never being finished was true, and even that there might be some truth in the legend told about it. Close to the ruin there were the remains of a stone circle, perfect on the far side, though on the near side the stones had evidently been removed. (Query, to build the church?) On the under side of the church was a green mound, into which he had dug, discovering many fragments of pottery, calcined bones, heather charcoal, and white, sea-worn pebbles, which (Mr. Anderson told him) were associated with interments where the dead had been burned. His conclusion was that the

building dated from early Christian times ; and that a burial-place and place of meeting held sacred in heathen days had been chosen as its site, possibly out of the spirit of monkish fanaticism that led to the desecration of heathen shrines in other parts also. But many of the people, though perhaps outwardly Christian, still cherished their old beliefs, and, angered by the sacrilege, came by night to undo the builders' work till their superstitious fears led them to abandon it.

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AL-THING, JANUARY 31ST, 1896.

Mr. W. F. KIRBY (Lawright-man) in the Chair.

Dr. Jon Stefansson (Lawright-man) read a paper on "The Saga." The lecturer said that when we speak of Sagas, we mean, *par excellence*, the Icelandic family Sagas. The fact that only Iceland, and not Norway, should have these, can only be explained on the supposition that the inhabitants of Iceland were differentiated from their kinsmen in Norway, not only by their new surroundings, but also by a strong infusion of the artistic spirit of the Celt. More than one-half of the settlers of Iceland were born and bred in the half-Norse and half-Celtic petty kingdoms in Ireland and the Western Isles. Story-telling had, after centuries, reached a high perfection in Ireland. The mode and manner of telling stories, the elaborate memorising of hundreds of them by heart, all agree with the Icelandic way. Yet the difference of the Irish and Icelandic Saga stands out in strong relief. In Iceland its power is concentrated on human emotion. In Ireland it deals more with the supernatural and gorgeous, though it has a feeling for nature, which the Icelandic Saga lacks. Fate does not work itself out more inexorably and artistically in tragedies of Sophocles than it does in some of the Sagas. Take, for example, the Laxdæla Saga. The final catastrophe is at first but faintly and vaguely indicated. Chapter by chapter, insensibly, it grows more clearly inevitable. The conflict is prepared with the most consummate art. No details, however small, are neglected that may contribute to bring about the end aimed at. The thread of fate, which

binds together all the moving incidents of the tale, is woven into it with a master hand. The elements themselves are leagued with fate. Geirmund does not get a fair wind on leaving Iceland until the sword, that was destined to give Kiartan his death-wound, had been taken from him. If character-drawing of men and women is the highest achievement in literature, the Icelandic Sagas rank with the highest literature of the world. Even their very excrescences are not so superfluous as is thought. Family registers are, in the light of heredity, useful helps to elucidate the characters of hero and heroine. The relation of the Sagas of Ireland and Iceland has not yet been studied by one who is equally equipped with knowledge of the vast body of Sagas existing in the two countries—in the case of Ireland mostly yet unpublished.

In the discussion which followed, Mr. R. Ford Smith said that he had been very much interested by Dr. Stefansson's paper, but there were one or two points he should like to comment on. With regard to the theory that the Sagas, or perhaps rather the power of composing Sagas, was principally derived from the intercourse of the Norsemen with Celtic races, it was surely the fact that the Sagas were written from Icelandic originals. Many Sagas—for instance, those contained in the *Heimskringla* and the historical Sagas generally—must probably have been brought from Norway by fugitives from Harald Haarfager, and Sagas so brought may surely be regarded as needing no alien inspiration. Their form was most likely derived from the shape given them by the actual tellers; for, as Dr. Stefansson had pointed out, the Sagas were handed down orally, and the fact of the whole people being more or less Saga-tellers is a strong argument for their preserving the actual truth of events, as everyone could check the teller if he erred. We were very fortunate in having them, as for this reason they had probably reached us in a very perfect state. He had always been under the impression that when the chief of a district rode down to the shore on the arrival of a ship, it was to fix the price of the goods in the cargo, rather than to learn the latest news. He would also like to protest against the description of *Njal*

as meekly giving in to his wife, and compounding for her quarrels. He had always looked on it as a very noble characteristic of Njal, that he declined to be dragged into a quarrel with his friend by female spite, counting his friendship worth the lives of many thralls.

The Umboths-man, Mr. A. F. Major, said he would endeavour to deal with some of the points raised by the last speaker, leaving it to the lecturer to correct him if he were wrong. It was, he thought, a fact that the chief of a district rode down when a ship reached the shores of Iceland, to fix the price of the goods, and to purchase what he himself required. Till he had done so no one might traffic with the merchantmen without incurring the risk of an onslaught from the chief's followers. He agreed also with the last speaker's remarks about Njal, and considered his refusal to be dragged into the quarrels of his wife a very fine trait. Njal valued his ancient friendship with Gunnar above the lives of many thralls, as Mr. Smith had said. With regard to the larger question of the origin of the Sagas, he thought northern scholars erred in insisting on the Icelandic literature as something quite unique in the North. The remarkable feature with regard to that literature was rather the fact that it had been recorded and handed down to us. But there was evidence that a considerable store of Sagas and songs very similar had also existed elsewhere in the North. In Denmark there were the Sagas on which Saxo Grammaticus founded his work; in Norway, the histories which the emigrants carried to Iceland to be handed down and committed to writing there; in England, the song of Beowulf, the lays of Caedmon and Cynewulf, the songs enshrined in the Chronicle, and the lays of the people of which King Alfred speaks. There had been found, too, in Denmark, a single leaf of a lost English poem, King Waldhere's lay. It evidently belonged to a work of great length, and it is probable that many other such poems had also perished, leaving no trace. He thought, too, that Dr. Karl Blind, had he been present, would have had something to say of traces of Sagas among the Germanic races, still preserved in the Nibelungen Lied, or in that later, though ancient, poem of

Gudrun, which must be founded on a lost Saga. It may be observed, too, that some of the Eddaic poems of the Nibelung cycle seem more akin to the German version than to the Icelandic one preserved in the Volsunga Saga, as Sigurd's death appears to take place in the free forest, as in Germany, and not as in Iceland by night in his hall. He knew but little of the Irish Sagas, but they seemed in spirit to differ widely from the Icelandic, though not perhaps more widely than the two lands; for the literature born among the loughs and wooded mountains, the green meadows, and broad streams of Ireland, would of necessity be far apart from that of the rugged rocks and gloomy valleys of Iceland, with its furious torrents brawling through vast lava wastes, and only a few scant acres here and there of fertile soil. Perhaps the most striking feature of the Icelandic Sagas, that they are practically the earliest prose writings of modern Europe, may be due to Irish influence, for most of the literature he had mentioned is in verse. But it could not be allowed that the kinsmen of those who sang the songs of Beowulf and Waldhere, or handed down the Sagas on which Saxo drew, needed a blend of Celtic blood to give them inspiration. They, too, had drunk of the mead that Odin stole from the giants: the mead that the goddess Saga poured out for the Skalds in Valhalla, and had listened to Bragi, the teller of the endless tale. Rightly considered, the marvel of Icelandic literature is that it has lived when so much has perished and left us scarce a vestige that it once was. All honour to the people whose sturdy love of freedom won them a home where they could keep the songs and records of their race alive, and the debt we owe them for what they have saved for us is very great. But other lands were less happy. When the Danes ravished England tirelessly for two hundred years or more, giving to the flames hall and garth and abbey with their stores of precious vellums, who knows what priceless treasures of song and story went flaring up to the blue list above. Surely the Eddas and Sagas were but the peaks of a vast continent that elsewhere the sea of constant strife had swept away.

Mrs. Clare Jerrold thought the views of the last speaker were rather wide of the mark, as it could not be said that

scholars were agreed in regarding Iceland as the only land where myth and mystery were preserved. The ancient history of England, and all the lands about, were full of myths and stories. Yet it was true that the Icelanders were the only people who made a real literature out of their ancient Sagas, and they have probably preserved for us almost all their store. Was it not likely that these stories had a common source? The English tale of Beowulf, the Danish Grendel story, even the Eddaic myth of the ironwood, and the wolves and witches that inhabited it, seemed to spring from one stock. Perhaps Norway, or rather Norway and Sweden, for in this connection they were indivisible, was the place of their birth, whence they spread to surrounding lands, though to the Icelanders belongs the chief credit for their preservation.

Dr. Stefansson replied, as to the Icelanders bringing all their Sagas from Norway, it must be remembered that the history of Norway itself was written in Iceland. When he spoke, too, of the temple-chief coming down to the shore for news, he, of course, did not mean that he came down for that alone, but for that among other things, and to invite the chief man to stay with him, when, doubtless, news would be interchanged. It is true that Saxo incorporated many stories in his work; but, as he had pointed out, Saxo himself says that it was from Icelanders he learned them, or most of them. So he, a Dane, goes to Icelanders, staying at the Court of Denmark, to get the materials for Danish history, showing that if other northern countries had their Sagas, Icelanders alone could record them or relate them artistically. Of course, there were Sagas in other countries; but they have not come down to us, and seem to have been principally in verse, to which he did not refer. It may, perhaps, be fair to infer from a scrap that has reached us the existence of a vast body of early English epics, or Sagas; still, it can only be an assumption. The old English literature that we have is very inferior to the Sagas. Mr. William Morris is right when he says that Iceland should be to the North of Europe what Greece is to the South.

The Chairman said that it seemed to him that the peculiar



merit of the Icelandic literature was that it was largely in prose, unlike most other old literature that we possess. Scandinavia likewise seems to have had a character of its own, which has largely impressed the older literature of other nations. The ballad literature of Finland and Esthonia contains large traces of Scandinavian influence, while the folk-tales were to a large extent of more modern origin, apparently derived in the former country from Russia, and in the latter from Germany. Scandinavia had likewise left a strong impress on Lappish popular literature. But in dealing with any popular literature we must allow for diffusion, both in ancient and modern times, to an extent which we can hardly realise. Popular story-tellers still exist in Ireland; but even those who cannot read or write often take their subjects from the Arabian Nights and other printed sources. The aphorisms in the Havamal are so remarkably like those in the Oriental story of the Wise Heycar, that it is difficult to imagine that the Vikings did not bring back Oriental matter from the East before the time of the Crusades, when it is generally supposed that the influence of Oriental on Western thought and literature really began.

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AL-THING, FEBRUARY 21ST, 1896.

The REV. A. SANDISON (Jarl) in the Chair.

Mr. Einar Benediktsson read a paper on "The Ancient Thule, or the Isle of Sun." The old Thule, said the lecturer, was known long before Pytheas made his travels in the north-west of Europe. Thus, both Ctesias of Cnidos and Diogenes Antonius wrote on Thule; and, from a work by the latter, it is certain that the name was applied to a country near the region of Iceland as early as the fifth century B.C., One of the strongest proofs that the original Thule was Iceland is that the name, correctly understood, means the Isle of Sun; for no other island, corresponding with the earliest descriptions, could have been known to the ancient Greek writers in which the sun for days never set. The main part of the name Thule corresponds remarkably with the

various forms of the Celtic *houl*, "sun." As we have Thule, Thyle, Thile, so we have *houl*, *heul*, *hiol*. The old writers differ as do old dialects. The original name of Iceland was Houl-i, or some other combination of the two words, meaning "sun" and "isle," according to the dialect of the discoverer, who is supposed to be a Celt from the British islands, the nearest inhabited land to Iceland at the time. The prefixed T may have arisen in various ways; *e.g.*, as a Gaelic euphonism before a masculine noun beginning with a vowel—and it may be remarked that Bede in one place uses the name Thyle as masculine, and that various forms of names for islands are masculine in old Gaelic dialects; or the prefixed T might be derived from the genitive sign *d'* changed into *t* before the aspirated vowel; or, again, it might have come from a wrong reading or pronunciation of the Greek equivalent of the name ἡ τοῦ ἡλιοῦ νήσος, a form in which the name probably passed into Greek, as such proper names as "a Land of Sun" are usually translated in foreign languages. Another possibility is that the Gaelic euphonic *it* was prefixed to the Norse name Sol-ey and changed to an aspirated *t*, or that the name Houli was adopted in Greek and not understood, the pronoun τό being prefixed, and later on passed in Θούλη. Isidore of Seville states, without giving any philological reason, that Thule is named after the sun, and he seems to have had some earlier authority for this. In fact, this explanation of the name turns out to be the most natural of the multitude of etymological definitions brought forward by writers on the mystic Thuleland. Whoever first set out to search for an island in the northern ocean must naturally have started in the season of the year when the days are long. Gradually he must have seen the day lengthen until he came to a large island where the sun never sets. Thus he got corroboration of the theories of old men of science about the length of the day in the north; and, struck by the glory of the midnight sun, which no one forgets who has once seen it, he gave the land a name harmonising with his strong impression of the wonderful sight. What was more natural than that he should call it the Isle of Sun? And what is more natural than it should be a Celtic name of that signification, which was given

to the land nearest to the British Islands, from which also the Phoenicians and Greeks must have got their earliest information about Ultima Thule. As Iceland was most likely first discovered and named by Celts, so one can see from a passage of Bede that the island was visited (probably from the British Isles) long before 795 A.D., when Dicuilus says that Irish monks went there. The usual interpretation of Landnåma and Islendingabok, that only a few monks were in Iceland when the Norwegians arrived, is unreliable. Many things point to the Irish colony being spread over a large part of Iceland. The Celtic settlement in Iceland partly took place independently of the Norwegian discovery; and it is worth mentioning that the first settler of Iceland in historical times is a Celt, who arrived in the north of Iceland about ten years before Ingolfr Arnarson, commonly called the first settler. As a great part of the population is undoubtedly of Celtic descent, and as the geographical position of Iceland places it in a close connection, commercial and political, with Great Britain, so the earliest traces of any knowledge of Houlee, the Isle of the Sun, have come down to us indirectly from the old Celtic inhabitants of the British Isles.

In the discussion which followed, Mr. J. M. Mitchell said that he had heard the lecture with very great interest, especially the latter part of it. He had always thought that too much stress was laid on the colonisation of Iceland from Denmark and Norway. From many indications he considered that for the origin of the Icelander we must look to the East, as we must in the case of the Celts also. It had long been recognised that in islands old forms of life and customs that had died out on the mainland survive, as is seen to be the case to-day in Orkney, Shetland, and Iceland. He had been struck in Shetland with the Spanish pattern of the wool-work, even before he learned that it could be traced to the time of the Armada. Now, among the Icelanders there were many facts in their customs, legends, and arts to show that the race came, in part at least, from the East. He had a very curious ring, which he bought in Iceland, not perhaps itself more than 400 years old, but of a pattern much more ancient. It was formed of a serpent, not the Midgard Worm,

of the Eddaic mythology, holding his tail in his mouth, but the Eastern serpent that figured as the emblem of the ancient sun worship. At its tail there was a very curious ornament; and he had been told by experts that both that and the serpent ring were almost identical with specimens found in the ruins of Persepolis. He also produced an Icelandic bed-quilt of modern make, but reproducing an antique pattern, which closely resembled patterns of Persian carpets. Again, old fairy tales and folk-lore akin to those of the Celts were also found in Iceland; and in many other points a resemblance to the East could be traced in the habits and customs of Iceland. In conclusion, he would like to ask whether any old serpent-mounds had been found in Iceland, such as those on the west coast of Scotland and in the Hebrides. They were heaped up in the form of a snake, with flat stones to represent the head, and were no doubt a relic of sun worship.

Mr. A. F. Major (the Umboths-man) said that he had been extremely interested by Mr. Benediktsson's suggestive lecture, and thought he had made out a strong case in support of his theory as to the origin of the name "Thule" and its poetical meaning. His argument in favour of a Celtic derivation was so strong that he seemed rather to have weakened than strengthened his case by suggesting a possible derivation from the Greek. But there were points in the latter part of the paper on which he did not quite hold with the lecturer, and he thought the Celtic origin of the Icelanders was by no means so pronounced as was suggested. In the first place there was no historical evidence in favour of the Celtic inhabitants of the British Isles being a seafaring people. The Romans appear to have met with no seafaring people on the northern shores of Europe, except the Veneti whom Caesar encountered in Brittany; and surely if the Britons had been seamen also they would have tried to repel Caesar's invasion by sea, or, at any rate, some naval attack on the Romans during the long time the conquest of Britain lasted would have been recorded. But though Greek and Phoenician sailors had been coasting round their shores for centuries, navigation in the North seems to have had no existence; and a hundred years or more after Caesar's time Tacitus says of

the Suiones, apparently a Scandinavian people inhabiting the south of Sweden, that their vessels had no sails but only oars. Of course some means of traversing the sea they must have had—dug-out canoes, perhaps, or skin-covered boats; and in these they may well have been driven by storms even as far as Iceland—but there was no evidence to show that they were a maritime people, as described by the lecturer. Again, he had found nothing in the facts brought forward by Mr. Benediktsson to shake the conclusions drawn from the statements in the early Icelandic records, that the Celtic settlements before their time consisted only of a few anchorites and recluses. There was no colonisation in the proper sense of the term. For one thing, these Irish monks generally chose the desolate places of the earth to dwell in; and the story told of an Irish bishop directing one of the later settlers where to go points only to a monkish knowledge of the island. Again, had there been an Irish colonisation, Celtic place-names would be found in Iceland; but he was under the impression that the names were almost entirely Scandinavian in their origin. Surely, too, the proportion of the Celtic stock among the settlers of Iceland was nothing like so great as the lecturer affirmed. An admixture there undoubtedly was, yet the language, laws, and customs of the Icelanders remained Norse, which pointed to the settlers, too, having been Norse in the main. Most of those who went thither from Great Britain were of Scandinavian stock, no less than direct immigrants from Norway, coming from England, Orkney, Shetland, and the Norse settlements in Scotland; while even in the case of Ireland the settlers came from the Norse kingdoms which fringed a great part of the coast, and, if of mixed race, the Scandinavian element seems to have been the preponderating one.

Dr. Jon Stefansson wished to thank the lecturer for his paper. He thought Mr. Benediktsson had brought forward good arguments to account for the name Thule, and that his explanation of the poetical name given to Iceland in ancient times—the Sun Isle—was the best yet offered. He was grateful to him for it. He did not think there were any serpent-mounds in Iceland, though he understood that Dr.

Phené, lecturing before the Club last year, believed he had discovered them there. He himself had unfortunately not been present at that lecture; but he could confidently affirm that he had never seen or heard of any such thing in Iceland, and never met anyone else who had done so. Although in the main he agreed with the lecturer, he could not assent to his opinion that more than half the population of Iceland were of Celtic stock. Take *Landnámabok*, which records the names of thousands of the original settlers. It is true that there are a great many Celtic names there, but the proportion is nothing like so great as Mr. Benediktsson asserted. As regards place-names, very few in Iceland are Celtic: he should doubt if a dozen could be found in the island. But it is quite true that a large proportion, at least two thirds of the original settlers, came from the British Isles. But many of these were Norwegians who touched there on the way, or came from the Orkneys, Shetlands, and other Norse regions.

Mr. Benediktsson, in reply, said that with regard to the early inhabitants of the British Isles not being a seafaring nation, he did not think the silence of Caesar proved this. We did not know where Caesar landed, but obviously he would do his best to evade any seafaring tribes, or would avoid the coast they inhabited. Besides, though they engaged in commerce and peaceful intercourse by sea, it did not follow that they would likewise take to the sea in warfare. Moreover, there might have been a population living in the British Isles at the time of the Roman invasion quite different from those inhabitants of the islands who are supposed to have discovered Iceland for the first time. With regard to the Celtic names, the chief's name was generally given in the records, and even though he were a Norseman, his followers might be largely of Celtic stock. There was no doubt that the governing race in Iceland was of Norse origin; but the Icelanders trace their descent back to the followers rather than to the chiefs, because the last-named were few, the first many. Even considering *Landnámabok*, his opinion was that the pure Celtic names of historical settlers indicated a Celtic origin of the greater part of the population. But this, after all, was a subsidiary point; and with regard to it he was here

content to rely on the opinion of Gudbrandr Vigfússon, as expressed in the article on "Iceland," in the "Encyclopaedia Britannica."

The Jarl said he wished to express his personal indebtedness to Mr. Benediktsson for his learned and luminous paper. His only regret had been that it did not last longer. He had come there, as a Shetlander, prepared to resent any attempt to locate "Thule" elsewhere than in Shetland, but he was bound to say the lecturer had converted him. With regard to the point raised as to the existence of seafaring in early Britain, he thought great weight ought to be attached to the absence of evidence on the point from Caesar, who was such a close and careful observer that, had the Britons come under his notice as a seagoing race, he would certainly have recorded it.

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AL-THING, FEBRUARY 28TH, 1896.

Mr. G. M. ATKINSON (Jarla-man) in the Chair.

The Umboths-man, Mr. Albany F. Major, read a paper on "Sea-faring in Saga-Time," which will be re-produced in full on a future occasion. It was followed by a discussion in which Messrs. W. F. Kirby, E. H. Baverstock, F. T. Norris, Dr. Jon Stefansson, and the Chairman took part.

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AL-THING, MARCH 20TH, 1896.

The REV. A. SANDISON (Jarl) in the Chair.

Mr. P. M. C. Kermode read a paper entitled "Illustrations of the Sagas from Early Monuments in the Island of Man," which is reproduced in full in another portion of the *Saga-Book*.

In the discussion which followed, Mr. J. Romilly Allen congratulated the society on its good fortune in having induced Mr. Kermode to travel from the Isle of Man to handle the subject of Manks crosses, of which he had such an intimate

knowledge, and to show the splendid drawings and photographs he had collected. Since Cumming issued his "Runic Remains," many additional stones had been discovered, and also the meaning of ancient symbolism and the origin of the decorative patterns were now much better understood than they were half a century ago. Among other points a new feature had come to light in what Dr. Colley March had styled "the Pagan-Christian overlap." He himself had originally studied ancient symbolism entirely from the Christian point of view, and had doubted if any pagan influence intruded itself; but owing to the study of the Manks crosses he had changed his views on that point. It was the fragment from Kirk Andreas that had first attracted his attention. He had been shown representations of the Sigurd story for the first time on carved wooden doorways of churches in Norway by the present Bishop of Stepney. Upon again studying the Kirk Andreas stone after seeing these a new light broke in upon him, and he recognised subjects from the Volsunga Saga which also appeared in the Norwegian carvings. The Isle of Man was a specially interesting field for study on account of the mixture of styles to be found there, the Celtic-Norse art of the island showing strong resemblances in some respects to that of Scotland, and in others to that of Wales. He hoped one result of this lecture would be to hasten the production of Mr. Kermodé's promised work on the Manks crosses.

Mr. A. F. Major (the Umboths-man) asked the lecturer whether it was not possible that some of the crosses in question might date from heathen times. The cross was not a purely Christian symbol, but was widely known in all Aryan lands, and the sign of Thor's hammer, a form of cross, was in use among the Norsemen. Finding the emblem used by the Celtic dwellers in Man as a memorial of the dead, might not the invaders have adopted it? With regard to the interpretation of the emblems, he thought that members present, who had only looked for a few moments at the drawings or lantern slides, could not give much assistance to Mr. Kermodé, who had given the designs hours of patient study. But with regard to the figure of a man attacked by an eagle, he would



remind him that there was a story in the Prose Edda, in which the giant Thiassi, in the form of an eagle, carries off Loki, which might possibly be here represented. Also the scene, which Mr. Kermode thought was merely a hunting scene, had struck him forcibly as representing possibly the incident in the last fight at Ragnarök, described in the Prose Edda, where Vidar rends in twain the wolf Fenrir. Certainly the so-called hunter seemed to have one leg in the beast's mouth, while he grasped his upper jaw in his hands. Vidar is described as setting one foot on Fenrir's lower jaw, while, grasping his other jaw, he tore and rent him till he died.

Mr. G. M. Atkinson wished to know whether all the crosses shown by Mr. Kermode were by Gaut. The interlacing or vertebral pattern, as the lecturer styled it, appeared also on the magnificent cross at Gosforth in Cumberland, and it had been suggested that it was derived from the interlocking rings of chain-mail.

The Saga-master (Mr. F. T. Norris) was inclined to dissent from the lecturer's view, that the crosses with purely heathen forms on them, derived from the old mythology, were the work of Christianised Norsemen. The use of such heathen forms appeared to him proof positive that those who had them carved were still believers in the old lore and uninfluenced by the new faith, whatever might be the particular means they might adopt to set forth their belief.

The Jarl agreed with the other speakers, that the cross was not exclusively a Christian symbol, for it was found in all parts of the world, and in pre-Christian times. It was therefore conceivable that pagans might have employed it. With regard to the lecturer's suggestion that the introduction on a monument of scenes from the Volsung legends indicated that the person to whom it was set up claimed to be a descendant of Sigurd, he doubted whether such a deduction could invariably be drawn. Might not a fashion have sprung up of carving such scenes on monuments to the dead in general, even if the descendants of Sigurd set the example? With regard to the introduction of scenes from the heathen mythology on Christian monuments, it must be remembered that the mythology in later times was run, so to speak, into

Christian moulds. The Norsemen, when they first met with Christianity, were quick to recognise its strength; and its influence leavened their beliefs in the form in which they have come down to us.

Dr. J. G. Garson thought there was little doubt that the monuments were not pagan only. The anthropological history of religion shows it to be an invariable rule that, when a new religious cult is adopted by a nation or people, it is grafted on to the older or pre-existing one, of which some portions are retained; and so it doubtless was in the Isle of Man also. Besides this, the crosses shown were all of the later and more complex forms which the symbol took, and on that ground alone they must be assigned to a date later than the re-introduction of Christianity into the island, in the ninth or tenth century. If the lecturer did not already know it, he should like to direct his attention to a monograph on crosses by General Pitt-Rivers, in which the various forms taken by the symbol are traced out.

The lecturer in reply thanked the members for their remarks and criticisms on his paper, but said that, nevertheless, as the result of his study, he was most strongly convinced that these monuments were Christian. The purely pagan monuments in the Scandinavian peninsula were of a very different character, and he did not think the heathen Norsemen would have adopted this form, the history and evolution of which were known. The probable date of the crosses was also against the pagan theory, as the Norsemen in general began to accept Christianity from the ninth century onwards, and in Man, surrounded by Christian lands, the conversion doubtless took place earlier than elsewhere. He did not imagine all the crosses, whose photographs he had shown, were by one hand; but in respect to many of them, and to those three especially which formed the main theme of his paper, and of which he had shown full-sized drawings, there were details in the treatment of the decoration which showed that they were by one artist, and he had little hesitation in saying that that artist was Gaut. As to the period, the Kirk Andreas cross, which showed peculiarly Scandinavian treatment, was, he thought, the earliest. Generally it might be

judged that a purely geometrical pattern was Celtic, a purely dragonesque treatment Scandinavian. The latter was met with on the two cruciform pieces at Braddan, probably the latest of the series; but in this case the limbs of the cross were occupied by a geometrical pattern, which, he thought, was due to the fact that the artist had followed in this portion of his work the Celtic model, confining his original work to the shaft. The date of the Andreas piece, he thought, was about 1080, and the date of all these crosses between that and 1150. He thought Mr. Major's suggestion for the identification of two of the scenes, which he had not traced, very probable; and, before he had done with the subject, he would again carefully consider all the sculptured figures, and might find yet more having reference to the old Norse legends and myths.

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GREAT AL-THING, APRIL 17TH, 1896.

The REV. A. SANDISON (Jarl) in the Chair.

The Great Al-thing was held at the King's Weigh House, on Friday, April 17th, 1896, at 8 p.m. The Law-Thing Saga, or Annual Report of the Council, and the Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year 1895, were laid before the meeting and unanimously adopted, and Umbothsvikings, or Officers of the Club, for the ensuing year were elected.

Mr. A. W. Johnston presented a pair of "rivlins," or shoes made of undressed hide, formerly in general use in Orkney and Shetland, and still manufactured in Sanday, Orkney, and read some notes on the derivation of the word *rivlin*.

The Jarl commented on differences between the "rivlins" under discussion and those which he remembered in use in Shetland in his youth.

The Saga-master (Mr. F. T. Norris) then read a paper on "The Worship of Freya and other Teutonic Goddesses and Gods in Roman Britain." The erroneous belief was current that the first connection of Teutonic peoples with

Britain took place at the period of the Saxon Conquest, for numerous *Coloniae* and *Municipia* were created by successive imperial rescripts, consisting largely of time-expired German soldiers. The *Notitia Imperii* of Theodosius, the six bronze rescripts discovered in England, and other records, prove that about two-thirds of the garrison, especially in the later years of the occupation, were of one or other of the Teutonic races, in which designation must be included the *Belgae*, whose former frontiers on the Continent extended to the Seine, the Rhine, and the Straits of Dover. Passing in review the various *Municipia*, *Coloniae*, and Stations colonised or occupied by German troops, allusion was made to the extent of the influence on the social and, in particular, on the religious life of the population of Britain, which so large a constituent of Teutonic people must exert. The *Deae Matres* and *Deae Matronae* were recognised by the Romans as distinctively German divinities, and inquiry would show they represented Freya and her maidens. The very numerous temples, altars, and other dedications to them found in Britain and on the Continent, showed the high favour in which they were held not only by civilians, but by soldiers, and the latter fact attested the essentially domestic tendency of even the Teutonic warriors. In one point the Romans were ensamples to the moderns in their toleration of alien religions, which led them to regard alien gods with similar attributes to their own as identical with them. Caesar's statement that the Gauls worshipped Mercury, under the name of *Teutates*, was cited in confirmation. To invert the position therefore, and contend that the half Romanised Germans, when worshipping Mars or Neptune, or other Roman gods, really worshipped, by a kind of transferred worship, their native gods, was not unreasonable. The case of the altar found in the north of England dedicated to "*Neptuno Sarrabo sino*" was cited in support, the limiting adjective *Sarrabo* standing for the river *Sarr*, in Belgium, and showing that the dedicator intended not the Roman Neptune, but Nike, the god of rivers of old German mythology. "*The Tyrian Hercules*" was a parallel, being the Roman paraphrase for *Melkok*, the local god of the people of Tyre. Examining in detail the

“gods of the auxiliaries” of antiquaries, they were declared to be inventions which had no existence save in the imaginations of antiquaries. Mogont, Vetires, Cocidio, Mapono, Belatucadro, and many other so-called gods and goddesses, were traced to topographical expressions, and shown to be not personal titles at all. In the case of the dedications to single goddesses, evidence was adduced that Freya was most probably meant. In the slides thrown on the screen the rudiments of a distinctive Teutonic art and architecture were pointed out; in particular, attention was called to two Batavian terra-cotta altars of peculiar basket-shape construction, which were then for the first time published.

At the conclusion of the lecture, in answer to a question of Mr. R. A. Macalister, the lecturer stated that the name Garmangabis had never been identified. The identifications the lecturer had put forward were the result of his own independent research, in several of which instances he was pleased to notice since that Mr. Roach Smith had agreed with him. As for Garmangabis, it might stand for a topographical appellation like Germangau, “region of the Germans.”

The Umboths-Man (Mr. A. F. Major) congratulated the lecturer on his paper, which had shed light on a subject little known and imperfectly understood. But while it had been demonstrated that there was a very large Teutonic element in the garrison of Britain in Roman times, he had been disappointed to find that the identification of the deities they worshipped with the gods of the Northern mythology rested on very vague and slender grounds, and was by no means conclusive. Even Mr. Norris’s identification of the Deae Matres or Matronae with Freya and her maidens, rested apparently on the occurrence, in one instance only, of the emblem of a boar on an altar to these deities, the boar being sacred to Freya. But, so far as he remembered, the conjunction of Freya with attendant maidens, or other goddesses, in Northern mythology was not usual. Frigga, whose handmaids were often mentioned, was at least as likely to be the deity intended, while some elements seemed

to point to the three Norns. At the same time, Mr. Norris had given strong grounds for his contention that these deities were Teutonic. He had also conclusively shown that the names of fancied deities were, in reality, place-names, used to indicate the gods whose names the worshipper withheld, or only mentioned under a Roman name. He hoped he would pursue the subject, and possibly obtain clearer evidence of identity.

Mr. G. M. Atkinson thought that the numerous dedications to the *Deae Matres* might point to a Latin, not to a Teutonic, idea. The sculpture shown on some of the altars was of a very primitive type. He had seen the so-called Roman Wall near Glasgow that ran from the Forth to the Clyde, but this was not really a wall, but an earthwork piled up, in which the separate layers of sods could still be traced. The ditch before and road behind were still distinctly visible. He should like to ask the lecturer if the name of Dover was not Celtic. It was so named from the little river Dour which still flowed through the valley, Dour meaning in Celtic "black." The thanks of the meeting were due to Mr. Norris for the pains he had taken in working up his subject. Were there not to be found on the course of the Roman Wall, as in other parts of Britain, bricks bearing the names of the legions?

The Jarl said that he wished to express the great interest with which he personally had listened to the lecture. It was a subject that he had studied very little, but what he had heard from Mr. Norris had opened up a new and surprising field for thought. If the paper had a fault, it was that there was too much detail. He remembered a story of a little boy who, allowed to help himself to some plums out of a jar, grasped such a handful that he found he could not withdraw his hand without letting go a great part of his spoil. He himself felt somewhat in the same plight mentally; but at the same time detail was unavoidable in such a paper as this, and the lecturer must have found it hard to know what to omit. Mr. Major's criticisms had indicated the impression in his own mind also; and he was bound to say that he thought the identification of Freya weak, and

that at present Mr. Norris had not even made out a case of strong presumption. Starting from Caesar's statement that the Gauls worshipped Roman deities under Gallic names, Mr. Norris assumed that this was the case elsewhere. But would the Germans be likely to bring themselves to worship their home deities under a foreign name? or, rather, when their thoughts turned to the gods of their fathers, would it not be under the names that had been familiar to them in their childhood's days?

The Saga-master, in reply, said that he would first point out, in answer to Mr. Atkinson's questions, that no inscribed bricks were found near the Wall, because in those northern counties bricks were little used, stone being abundant; but other records of the regiments quartered in the country were almost innumerable. With regard to the Wall, there were actually three Roman Walls, so-called: the one he had been describing; that of Hadrian, built of stone, having a second wall or earthen vallum running parallel as an advanced work, while the Antonine Wall, mentioned by Mr. Atkinson, was situated further north. With regard to Mr. Major's criticisms, he admitted that he had not yet fully developed his theory of Freya's identification, owing to lack of time, though in his own mind he was quite clear on the point. As to the general question whether Germanic races would worship their ancestral gods under Roman names, it must be borne in mind that the Germans in question were those who had accepted Roman pay and conformed to Roman customs, on which account they were ostracised and hated by the free Germans. But he had shown how, under the name of Neptune, it was clear that the god worshipped was Nike, the god of the River Sarr; and he thought in other cases we might fairly deduce from this a similar practice as prevailing. Besides, we know that the Romans did not worship the *Deae Matres*. The fact of the gods being constantly identified only by a locality must be traced to the German custom of never mentioning the names of their gods, which Tacitus gives as an instance of their reverence. The lecturer held Freya and Frigga to be one personality.

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AL-THING, MAY 15TH, 1896.

Mr. G. M. ATKINSON (Lawright-man) in the Chair.

The Rev. E. McClure read a paper on "Scandinavian Topographical and Personal Nomenclature in the British Islands." He began by giving a short account from the *Saxon Chronicle* and the *Irish Annals* of the first appearance of Scandinavian sea rovers on the coast of these islands between 787 and 795 A.D. The motives which led to these expeditions were discussed, and it was pointed out that the Shetland Islands were probably the first landfall made by the Norwegians in these voyages. These islands were then occupied by Picts, among whom a band of Irish missionaries had been at work from the early part of the sixth century. The invaders, as we see from the Sagas, called the islands Hjalta-land. Efforts had been made to find a Norse etymon for Hjalta, but a Pictish origin seems more probable. The Celticised form—which survives in the modified "Shetland"—was probably Shialta-land, a supposition which is supported by the term "Sheltie" for a Shetland pony. Initial Celtic *s* tends, as we know, to glide in Cymric into *h*, and the Picts of the eighth century spoke a language akin to Cymric. This was an adopted speech, according to Prof. Rhys; and "Shialta"—or Hjalta—may be an element of their original vocabulary, as probably was also the "Orc," in Orcades. Pomona in the Orkneys, if it is not a fanciful name of comparatively late composition, suggests a similar origin. With the exception of these, and a few names of other islands in these groups, the whole topographical nomenclature of the Orkneys and Shetlands is Norse—*e.g.*, Voe (*vágr* = a creek), Skaw (*skagi* = a low headland, in contradistinction to *höfða*, a high headland), Ness, Wick (*vík*), Firth (*fjörðr*), Holm, applied to uninhabited islands, Sound (*sund*), Örfiri in Orphir = ebbing, and in Urfasey (*örferis-ey* = an island connected with the mainland at low-water), Ayre (*eyrr* = a gravelly bank or spit), Ster and Sta (from *stadr*, "stead," or *sæter*, a mountain pasture), Quoy, Quay (from *kve*, plural *kviar*, a fold or pen), Skali (a shieling), Shaw (*skogr* = shady place), Noup and Nip from *gnupr* = a peak, *cf.* Gaitnip = Goat Peak, *hóp* in St.



Margaret's Hope, a sheltered haven. The place-names in the *Landnámabok* and in the *Sturlunga Saga* are very helpful in enabling us to separate pure Scandinavian names in these islands from those which owe their origin to other Low Germanic tongues. Iceland was discovered by the Norwegians about 850, and here, as well as in Orkney and Shetland and the Hebrides, Irish priests and monks had founded settlements from the sixth century. The Norwegians used the word Pappa to designate these missionaries, and numerous islands in these regions still preserve the name—Pappay, Pabbey, etc. This word was evidently borrowed, like Kirkyá, from people familiar with Greek ecclesiastical nomenclature. Whence did this pagan folk receive them? The lecturer contended that they had got them—as the pagan Angles and Saxons did the word “church”—from the Christianised Goths of the Roman Empire. The German Pfaffe was obtained from the same source. The churches, with their shrines and richly covered books, were the chief objective in their piratical expeditions. They dared the storms and the dangerous navigation of the rock-fringed islands and promontories of the western coast to pillage the shrines of Iona, Alt-Clyde, Bangor in co. Down, Menevia (St. David's) in Wales, and other celebrated ecclesiastical centres. They ran through the North Sea to ravage Lindisfarne, Croyland, and other known shrines upon our eastern coast. *The Wars of the Gaedhill and the Gaill, The Annals of Ulster, the Chronicon Manniae, the Chronicon Scottorum, the Annales Cambriae, The Saxon Chronicle*, are filled with accounts of their depredations from 795 A.D. until well on in the twelfth century. They were ubiquitous in their descents; but the western coasts of our islands preserve perhaps the most marked records of their navigation. There is not a headland, not a half-sunken rock, not the smallest scrap of an island in our western waters, which had not been charted in some way by these navigators, and which have not afterwards found their way into our maps. It would be tedious even to enumerate the points of importance to navigation among the Hebrides which had found a record in Norse speech before the names came into our sailing charts. The Skeirs and Skerries, Nesses and Fiords, Sounds and

Wicks, beyond number, besides the many Eys (islands) scattered along the west coast, indicate something of the careful mode of their navigation, as well as the retentiveness of their memories in storing up the results of their seafaring experience. Perhaps they had some means, unknown to us, of making charts, and of thus steering their way through the network of Sunds and Skerries and islands which that western sea presents. The names they gave to each of these spots all doubtless carry with them some connotation which helps the navigator; there is the ordinary Skeir, and the Hå-Skeir, and the Dea-Skeir, whatever that may mean. There is the Skellay with its shelly beach, and the Sanda with its sand, the Pabbay with its lone monastery of world-renouncing Irish monks, the Vallay that promises *vellir* or fields of rich grass behind its rocky shore. If we knew the significance of all these compound-names of the Western Isles, we should recognise an appropriateness in every designation which does not contain a personal name—Boreray, Berneray, Raray, Euskay, Votersay, Saundray, etc. The debt we owe to the Norsemen for these first lessons in navigation it would be difficult to over-estimate. We owe the names of Ireland and of three of its four provinces, besides the islands and important inlets on its eastern coast, to the Scandinavians. Ulster, with its island of Rachray (Rathlin), and its Carlingford and Strangford; Leinster, with its coast of the Fingalls, its Boldoyle, its Irelands-Eye (distinguished from Angles-*ea* on the opposite Welsh coast); its Howth Hill, its Wicklow, its Wexford, its Lambay, its Leixlip, etc.; Munster, with its Waterford (*Weðerfjörðr*), have all passed from the Norse navigators' lips to our charts of to-day. The lecturer cited many names of places and persons still to be found in these islands as indicating the extent of Norse influence. Worsaae, in his "Minder," dealt with this subject some fifty years ago, and Dr. Isaac Taylor supplemented his results by a more thorough examination of Scandinavian names in England. But the subject is not an easy one. The Lowlanders in Scotland and the Angles of our northern counties represent a people speaking a language closely related to that of the Danes and Norsemen. We cannot, therefore, always separate the Norse from the Anglian

names in Scotland and Northern England. Some names, like "force" and "fell," are thoroughly distinctive, while others are common to almost the whole Low Germanic family. Dr. Vigfusson cites from a Byzantine writer the use of the former of these words for "waterfall" in the times of the Varingar. The personal names are more distinctive. Worsaae maintained that the termination *-son* in surnames is a proof of Scandinavian influence, it being found only in regions where the Northman and the Dane have held sway—*e.g.*, North Holland, the Lowlands of Scotland, and the east coast of England. Celticised Scandinavian personal names are to be found in the Hebrides, the West Highlands, Galloway, Sodor and Man, and all over Ireland. The Macleods of the Lewis and Harris call themselves the Siol (that is, seed) Torcuil (Thorketel, Thorkill) and Siol Tormond (Thormaðr), respectively. The MacQuarries belong to the Siol Guaire (Guðriðr). In the *Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis*, the genealogies of most of the Highland clans are given, and in the majority of them familiar Norse forms appear. MacAwley (Ólafr), Haldane, and McCaldin, and McAldin (Halfdane), McDugal, MacDowell, McCoull, all forms of "Son of the Black Foreigners," McQuistin (Eystein), McLochlan, son of the Lochlannoch, or Man from the lochs or fiords, McCorkle and McCorkell (=MacThorkill), McCorquodale (=MacThorketel), McAralt (Harald), McLagman, *alias* McCalmont, all from Lagmaðr or Law Man. The Clan Somarle is so called from Somer-led = the summer soldier, McCrinnell and McCrannell = son of Ragnald, McRory (Rodrick), McIvar (Ivar), McKetterick (=MacSigtryg). In Ireland we have the same or similar names; but McAuley becomes McAuliffe; and MacMannus (Magnus-son) is more common than any of the others. In the Isle of Man the surname Casement is the modern form of MacAsmundr; Castell, MacCaskell (1511) = MacAskill, for MacAsketel; Cotter for MacOttarr (Ot-hari), Corkell for MacThorkel, Corlett for MacThor-ljotr, Crennell and Crenilt for MacRagnvald, Cowley for MacOlaf, Goree and Garry for MacGoðfreyðr, *cf.* the Irish McGuffry and McCaffrey.

In the discussion which followed, the Saga-master (Mr. F.

T. Norris) said that the lecturer's paper was so full of information that any adequate criticism must be reserved till it appeared in print. He did not think it likely that ecclesiastical terms were introduced into the North through the Christianised Goths, as the change of faith of the Northern people took place at a much later period. With regard to racial characteristics, the lecturer's statement, that in Denmark brachycephalic skulls were found very similar in type to skulls admitted to be Celtic, was noteworthy. He had also noticed in Denmark and Norway river names that appeared to be Celtic, such as *Afwen*, recalling the Avon; either the English Avon was not Celtic or the Norse *Afwen* was not Norse. He had, however, doubts as to a Celtic population appearing in Denmark; and he questioned whether some of the brachycephalic skulls were not Huguenotic, as the Huguenot immigration into both Denmark and Norway was considerable, so much so that the importance of the town of Bergen was largely due to their settlement there. The identity of Herethaland, from which the first "Danes" who invaded England came, according to the *Saxon Chronicle*, was much in dispute; and though many thought, with the lecturer, that Heredeland in Jutland was meant, the theory that it was Hordeland in Norway was no less tenable. The lecturer had compared the forms Shetland and Hjaltaland, and ascribed the name to a Celtic original; and he thought this was borne out by the other Celtic forms mentioned, such as Sabrina and Hafren for the river Severn. The history of ancient place-names would be greatly elucidated by anyone who would compile a key of the consonant interchanges incident to the Latin, Teutonic, and Celtic tongues. In stating that the early inhabitants of Britain were the Gaedhill and Gaill, was not the important contribution of the Belgae overlooked? These formed a portion of a Teutonic element in Britain in the period supposed to be purely Celtic. Too much stress should not be laid on the identification of "Orkney," etc., as Celtic words, for the Roman form Orcades might just as easily be a Teutonic donation by some one of the earliest Teutonic settlers here prior to, or contemporaneous with, the Roman

period. The lecturer had traced religious terms in the North to the Greek Church through the Goths, and the parallels of *church* and *kirk* with *κυριακή* were instanced in point; but if such terms were so derived, they might just as well have come through the Christianised Greeks of Marseilles. With respect to the earliest inhabitants of the Orkneys, however, the name of Egilsay, if so called from the church on the island, and not from the personal name Egil, pointed to a Latin origin rather than a Greek, as the word *ecclesia* must have been got from Latin-speaking monks. With regard to there being no analogy in Teutonic speech for the word Pomona, this was hardly so; for there was a Belgian tribe of Paemanni who might just as conceivably have penetrated to Orkney as their kinsfolk conquered and settled the south of Britain. He thought the evidence that *Hamar* meant solely "rock" was not conclusive, as on the Thames we have the names Hammersmith, where Hammers stands for *holms*, or islands, just as does Ham, in East and West Ham below London. The paper opened up a variety of matters for discussion, but its appearance in print must be awaited before full justice could be done to it.

The Umboths-man, Mr. A. F. Major, said that he thought the last speaker, in several of his criticisms, had missed the lecturer's point. With regard, for instance, to the introduction of ecclesiastical terms from a form of Greek Christianity, the speaker did not understand Mr. McClure to argue that those terms were introduced as a result of any conversion, but merely that Scandinavian and Teutonic tribes, while still heathen, learned those terms from kindred tribes who had been converted. From the fact that the terms were found in Germany, as well as in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland, and in the islands off the Scotch coast, the language must have acquired them long before Christianity was introduced among them: and the lecturer's suggestion seemed very plausible. As to Egilsay in the Orkneys, if named from *ecclesia*, it in no way conflicted with this theory, as in that case the name of the island must be another Celtic survival, due to the early Irish Christians who preceded the Norsemen in the islands. Again, the lecturer had probably not over-

looked the possibility of Teutonic settlement in or influence on Britain in pre-Roman times; but in the absence of any proof of such influence extending as far as Orkney or Shetland, it was fair to assume that the Roman names of the island were of Celtic origin. The paper had one point of very special interest to members of the Viking Club, which, perhaps, was as new to most present as to the speaker: namely, the revelation of a Scandinavian origin concealed under what seemed at first sight typical Scotch and Irish names. One wondered what limit there was to Scandinavian influence when the clan of the "Macs" stood revealed as Norsemen masquerading in a Celtic dress. It was another warning not to give an opinion on the origin of a word till it had been traced back to the earliest form ascertainable through the various changes it had undergone. Another very important point, to which the lecturer had given prominence, was the testimony borne by the place-names on our islands and coasts to the seamanship of the Norsemen. It might well form the subject of a separate paper, and in the hands of a scholar, such as the lecturer, would probably give valuable results. So far as the speaker had read, there was nothing in the Sagas to show that the Norsemen made any endeavour to chart their sailing-courses or discoveries; but there were many proofs that keen observation and vivid description enabled them so to describe a place that after-voyagers could recognise it. Thus Bjorne intending to sail to Greenland, where he had never been, and being storm-driven to the coast of North America, knew from the description he had not reached his goal; but when he came to Greenland, after making land at many points, he recognised it at once. The best thanks he could give to Mr. McClure for his valuable paper was to hope that he would favour the Club on some future occasion.

Dr. Jon Stefansson said it was difficult to attempt criticism, as it was clear that the lecturer had plenty of forces in reserve to reply to any point. Dr. Vigfusson had supported the theory of overpopulation being a main cause of the wave of migration and foreign conquest, which we generalise under the term "Viking age"; but latterly many students have

come to the conclusion that the love of the Norsemen for the sea and for adventure, as well as the colonising tendencies of the race, were the mainsprings of it. Overpopulation may have been the cause in a few districts, but not everywhere. The conditions of life are very different in the south of Norway, and in the narrow, gloomy valleys of the north and west; and the causes are likely to differ in the different localities. Although at first the Norsemen only coasted along the shores, later they struck boldly out to sea, even across the Atlantic. Their seamanship, as shown in the Sagas, needs to be studied far more deeply than it has been; but it wants one who is a seaman as well as a scholar to do it. They seemed, as the lecturer said, to map out the countries they came to, but he knew of no record of anything in the shape of a map or chart among them. In Western Norway they had a country of islands, rocks, and fiords, very similar to that which they found on the western coast of Scotland. He was very glad to have had the Celtic side of the subject so well treated in this paper, as it needs one who is both a Celtic and Scandinavian scholar, and who knows the different Celtic dialects, to deal with that phase of it effectively.

Mr. G. M. Atkinson said that with regard to the finding of round skulls in round barrows, as there is considerable variety found in their indices, it can hardly be said to prove that all the round skulls are those of Scandinavians. There is no doubt the Norwegians are a round-headed race—in fact, the roundest known; and, singularly, we find the Esquimaux, opposite to them, the longest-headed race on the earth. A pure Scandinavian skull was very difficult to get: the exact type has not yet been settled, but Prof. A. Macalister, at Cambridge, is collecting specimens that will soon enable him to decide the question. Mr. Atkinson had not known of the Huguenot element at Bergen and elsewhere mentioned by Mr. Norris; but such an immigration, while it might affect the modern population, did not touch the general question of racial type, which was founded on remains of undoubted antiquity. He would be glad to know whether the word "Ogam" was a Celtic one. The Ogam stone from Bressay has a Norse inscription in the Ogam character, whatever may

be the meaning of the often found inscribed word *Muoi*, following *Maggi*, generally interpreted as "son". On the Bressay Stone we have "daughter". Some of the first noted Ogam inscribed stones were found near the little harbour of Smerwick, in the south of Ireland. Its name implies a Scandinavian settlement. Indeed, it seemed doubtful if Ogam inscriptions were found where there was no possibility of Scandinavian influence, not excepting the Silchester example; and the record of the introduction of this character found in Trinity College Library, Dublin, by the late E. O'Curry seems to confirm it. ("Hither was brought in the sword-sheath of Lochlan's King the Ogam across the sea. It was his own hand that cut it.") An interesting question connected with the paper was the origin of the Irish art found in the *Durham Book*, the *Book of Kells*, on the Tara brooch, etc., and its bearing on Scandinavian art. We have little knowledge of its growth. The evidence given in writings is not convincing—nothing comes from nothing. Very interesting, also, is the survival of the early Greek, often mentioned in the *Irish Annals*; but we have very little of their art, unless we get it through the interlaced strap work common in Roman pavements. The art found on the Borneo shields is very like the Celtic. Perhaps it represents a phase of culture. We are all much indebted to the lecturer for his very instructive paper.

The Lecturer, in reply, said that with regard to the evidence of the skulls, he relied on Prof. Rolleston, Canon Greenwell, and others, who were great authorities on the subject. The theory as to round-headed men being found among the Scandinavian peoples is that the Aryan intruders found a round-headed race dwelling in the Scandinavian peninsula when they entered it, and that, though these were conquered by the invaders, they remained among them, and the pre-Aryan type had survived to the present day. The same question as to Britain had been fought out by Profs. Huxley and Freeman. The latter contended that the Saxons drove out or exterminated the earlier inhabitants; but Prof. Huxley had proved that this was only partially true, and that the earlier inhabitants had survived and transmitted their typical characteristics to the present day. In particular, the skull of



the Midland navy, it was contended, was of an earlier type than that of the Saxon invader, probably even pre-Celtic. The Goths he referred to were the Christianised Goths of the empire. They started from the shores of the Baltic, and pushed southward and eastward until they reached the Danube, where they encountered Christianity; then, with a backward sweep, they crossed the whole of Southern Europe, and had got as far as Spain before the Norsemen began to move. In their migration they must have met their pagan kinsfolk—Franks, Saxons, and others—and through them probably such terms as “papa” and “church” found their way into Teutonic speech before the conversion of Scandinavian or Anglo-Saxon. The Norsemen were, with the exception of the Prussians, the last people in Europe to accept Christianity. The name Sabrina was probably Latinised from a Goidelic and not from a Cymric form. In reply to Mr. Atkinson he must point out that in the valley of the Severn Ogam stones occurred and were all associated with purely Goidelic names. They were found also in southwestern England, and one had been discovered at Silchester, probably in the territory of the Belgae, whom he regarded, in common, he thought, with most antiquaries now, as a Celtic tribe. He was rather surprised to find Mr. Norris still holding the theory of their Teutonic origin. Ogam stones occur which are clearly Christian, and belong to the sixth or seventh century, as their inscriptions prove. The word has been derived from Ogmios, the name of a Celtic god, but the whole question is very obscure.

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AL-THING, OCTOBER 30TH, 1896.

The REV. A. SANDISON (Jarl) in the Chair.

Dr. Hildebrand, State Antiquary of Sweden, read a paper on “The Monuments of the Island of Oeland,” a summary of which is given on another page.

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AL-THING, NOVEMBER 20TH, 1896.

The REV. A. SANDISON (Jarl) in the Chair.

The Rev. J. Sephton read a paper entitled "Extracts from the Sagas relating to the Norse Colony in Greenland," which will be reproduced in the next *Saga-Book*.

The "Extracts from the Sagas," translated by the reader of the paper, offered a series of pictures of life in the most western European settlement in the middle ages. Eric the Red, a Norse chief who had found Norway and Iceland unwilling to endure his presence, led a colony of his friends and retainers, at the close of the tenth century, to Greenland. As Eric's Saga is well known to English readers in translation and paraphrase, the lecturer's extracts were chosen from other Sagas, less known and perhaps less picturesque, relating to Greenland—the Floamanna, the Fostbrœdra, and the Grœnlendinga. The Floamanna describes the sufferings of a shipload of colonists led by an Icelandic hero, Thorgils, who had been invited to settle in Greenland by Eric the Red. The ship was wrecked amid the floes of the east coast of Greenland, and after three years a miserable remnant of the crew reached Brattahlid, the home of Eric. Mr. Baring Gould has paraphrased the story of the voyage in his book on Iceland. Thorgils made but a short stay among the Greenland people, but his visit was beneficial, for he rid the colony of a band of outlaws, that had made one of the outlying islands their home and preyed upon the other colonists. The Fostbrœdra relates the adventures of the Poet Thormod in Greenland. He had sailed there to avenge the death of his foster-brother, slain in Iceland by a Greenlander. Thormod had several "hair-breadth 'scapes" in accomplishing his purpose, one of which incidentally throws a wonderful light on the position held by woman in the North, and the power which the wise women wielded by their witchcraft. The Grœnlendinga tells the pathetic story of one Einar, a Greenland yeoman who visited Norway to obtain a bishop for the Greenland churches, and having taken him home, was slain in an attempt to support and enforce clerical rights and

privileges. These Sagas are all possibly of the fourteenth century in their present form, but undoubtedly contain genuine tradition. The "Speculum Regale," a work of earlier date, contains among much interesting matter a description of Greenland, to which, in point of truth, modern travellers can add little. Such accuracy in the early accounts strengthens the belief in a sound historical basis for the Northmen's discovery of America. Notices of the Greenland colony appear in the Icelandic annals down to the beginning of the fifteenth century, when it was swamped or absorbed by the Eskimo, probably after it was weakened by epidemics. As far as can be judged from the Sagas, the Eskimo do not appear to have had permanent settlements in Greenland until this time. The earliest Icelandic historian, Ari, born 1066, states positively that the first colonists found traces of the Skrælings, or Eskimo. The later colonists also found traces of their sojournings in the far north, beyond Disco Island; but of their visible presence, there is not a word from A.D. 1000 to A.D. 1400. The last notice of the colony is followed by eighty years of oblivion, and the next mention of it is found in the Papal archives—an interest excited probably by Columbus's projected voyage across the Atlantic. After John Davis's re-discovery of Greenland about 1585, many expeditions were sent forth in search of the old colony, the east coast being chiefly selected for exploration, because the Sagas described the main settlement as the Osterbygd. It was not until the present century that search on the east coast of Greenland was recognised as fruitless, and that the main settlement had lain in the south-west, in the district of Julianshaab. Here the Danes have been making a thorough exploration for some time past.

Mr. G. M. Atkinson (Lawright man) said that the paper just read contained so much interesting matter and related to so many extraordinary things that it was hardly possible then to get through them all, but he would like to mention a few points. The description of the ceremony of initiation into brotherhood was very curious, and he should like to know more about it, as it seemed impossible to raise and creep under a sod of earth without the sod breaking. He

did not understand the ecclesiastical position of the colony in Greenland, which was said to be dependent on Norway, for in St. Olaf's time, Lund in Sweden was the only archbishopric in the North. With regard to fasting, it was recorded by old ecclesiastical writers that the flesh of seals was not allowed to be eaten on fast-days, though whales were not prohibited. It would be interesting if we could obtain any anthropological evidence of the truth of the Sagas. The Eskimo were the longest headed of the races we knew, the Norwegians among the roundest. If any interments of undoubted antiquity could be discovered, an examination of the skulls and remains should be very interesting.

The Umboths-man, Mr. Albany F. Major, said that Mr. Sephton had given a most interesting paper on the fascinating subject of the Norse colony established in Greenland in early times, and its strange and mysterious disappearance. Outside the Scandinavian records some few gleams of light were thrown upon the causes which led to this. With regard to the uncertainty of communication, we have the instructions issued to Bishop Henry in 1388-9, in which he was told to keep the king's revenues in a safe place in years when no vessels came to the country. The attacks of the Skrælings or Eskimo are witnessed to by a brief of Pope Nicholas the Fifth, in 1448, to the Bishops of Skalholt and Holum in Iceland. This states that the inhabitants of Greenland had asked for the services of priests and a bishop, as thirty years before they had been attacked and dispersed by the heathen of the neighbouring coast, but had now gathered together again. What action was taken in consequence is not known, but we may infer that no success attended any effort to reach the colony from another brief of 1492. In this the colony of Greenland is described, and it is stated that for some eighty years all communication with it had been cut off. Consequently the greater part of the inhabitants, without priests or bishops, had lost the Christian faith, and the Benedictine monk Mathias had offered to go out as a missionary. This effort also must have failed, and after this date the colony is shrouded in darkness. The union of the crowns of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark in 1387, under Queen Mar-

garet, was one great factor that led to the interruption of communications, as under the Danish rule trade with Greenland, Iceland, the Faröes, Halogaland, and Finmark was made a government monopoly. This, following upon the Black Death in 1349, may well have so greatly weakened the colony that, when the Eskimo attacked it, it could not maintain itself without external aid. The interruption of communications seems also to have been due to some extent to a change of climate, which caused great accumulations of ice off the coast, and would probably make the country less habitable. That the climate was less severe in the days when the colony flourished is borne out by the discovery in 1824 of a stone with a Runic inscription, on the island of Kingigtorsok in Baffin's Bay, in latitude  $72^{\circ} 55' N$ . The runes record that Erling Sighvatsson and Biorne Thordrsson and Eindrid Oddsson, on Saturday before Ascension week, raised in 1135 these marks and cleared ground. It follows that they must either have wintered on the island, or that the waters in those high latitudes were then navigable far earlier in the year than at present. In either case they must have contemplated settling there. In addition to the documentary evidence of the existence of the colony, the accuracy of which has been disputed, its actual ruins have been discovered in the present century in Greenland. The speaker had been fortunate enough, on returning from Iceland in August last, to meet on board the *Botnia* a Danish officer, Lieutenant Daniel Bruun, who conducted researches among the ruins in 1894, and who kindly supplied much interesting and valuable information on the subject. His visit to Iceland had been for the purpose of studying the modern buildings and ruins of ancient dwellings there, in order to compare them with the ruins in Greenland. His explorations in the latter country, with those of earlier investigators, have resulted in the discovery of something like one hundred and fifty out of the one hundred and ninety farms or townships once existing in Eystribygd, the Eastern Settlement. Besides this, five of the twelve churches belonging to the settlement have been discovered, one, cross-shape in form, being probably the cathedral. The buildings discovered have been generally in groups, each consisting

apparently of a dwelling-house, with stalls and stables for cattle, sheep, and horses, storehouses and granaries, besides various enclosures which may, in some cases, have been hay-fields walled to keep the cattle out, in others cattle-pens or sheep-folds. The houses have been built of stone cemented with clay, or of layers of stone and turf. Wood occurs rarely, as any wood used could only be driftwood or imported from abroad. The objects found are mostly made of steatite, metal being rarely met with. Runic inscriptions and various forms of ornament have been found, the workmanship of the latter being for the most part of a low order. Cooking was done in steatite vessels. Human skeletons are not mentioned; probably the investigators explored for the most part the dwellings near which no interments had been made; but the bones of cattle and horses, both of a small species, and of sheep, goats, and dogs, occur. Bones of the blue fox, the polar bear, several kinds of seal, etc., have been found, but bird and fish remains are surprisingly few, only two species of the former being represented, the great guillemot and the puffin, *fratercula arctica*, and one of the latter, the plaice, *pleuronectica*. The presence of cattle is interesting, as it is found difficult, if not impossible, to keep them in Greenland at the present day: and some writers, for instance Mr. Samuel Laing in his translation of "Heimskringla," have questioned the authenticity of the Saga accounts, because of their statement that Karlsefne took cattle with him on his voyage from Greenland to Vinland, arguing that such details must be fictitious and that at best the Saga-writer is filling out his traditional knowledge of Greenland with details drawn from countries he knew. Possibly in the presence of cattle, thus indisputably proved, we have again evidence of a change of climate. The tradition among the Eskimo is that they drove out or slew white men whom they found in the country when they came there, and among legends relating to this, Lieutenant Bruun mentioned one which describes how they surprised one settlement by covering their kayacks with white, and so crossing the fjord unnoticed on a night in spring when it was covered with blocks of floating ice.

Mr. F. T. Norris (Saga-master) asked if the Runic stone

which the lecturer had referred to was the one mentioned by Mr. Major.

The Jarl said that he had found the lecture charming, and for his part not one whit too long, for there had not been a dull line in it from *a* to *z*. The human interest in it was very great, and he thought the Sagas pointed a moral too. On this he would not enlarge at that late hour, but would merely ask the lecturer to accept the very hearty vote of thanks of the meeting for his paper, and for his kindness in coming so far to give it to them.

The Lecturer, in reply, said in answer to Mr. Atkinson, that many instances of sworn brotherhood occur in the Sagas, and the actual ceremony of creeping under a sod without detaching the ends from the earth is quite possible, if the sod be cut long enough and supported so as to bring its elasticity into play. At the time of St. Olaf the Scandinavian Bishops were probably Court or Missionary Bishops, having no territorial rule or designation. Arnold went to Lund to be consecrated Bishop, as the Archbishopric of Nidaros, the metropolitan see of Norway, Iceland, Greenland, Sodor and Man, was not founded till thirty years later, the middle of the twelfth century. What Mr. Atkinson said about the finding of skulls was very true, and we must hope that skeletons would be found in Greenland by the Danish excavators. According to Dr. Nansen, there is possibly a hybrid race among the Eskimos, but this may have come into existence since the time of the Danish colonization of last century. In reply to Mr. Norris, he said that the Runic Stone he mentioned was the one Mr. Major had referred to. It is described in "*Antiquitates Americanæ*." He had been much interested in Mr. Major's account of Lieutenant Bruun's discoveries. New knowledge confirms the old, and the discovery of the actual bones of cattle and the ruins of cattle-stalls in Greenland had upheld the veracity of the Sagawriters. To himself, one chief interest of the Sagas was psychological. The struggle depicted between the old faith and the new was very dramatic. The way in which the Norsemen in danger turned to the old faith was very true to human nature. The character of Thorgils in the *Floamanna*, and his

steadfast holding to the faith, was drawn admirably. Again, the episode of the two old ladies in the Fostbrœdra, each trying to outwit the other in witchcraft, was very fine. It is usual to say that the high position held by women in modern Europe is due to the ideas of chivalry. But the Sagas show woman's position in the North in ancient times to have been equally high; women held their own among men there by their intellect, cleverness, and good sense. The Norsemen of the Sagas, in spite of their rudeness and constant strife, show great nobility of character, and have all the germs of a high civilisation, and he hoped the Viking Club would do its part towards making that grand old Northern literature as widely known as it deserved to be.

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AL-THING, DECEMBER 11TH, 1896.

The REV. A. SANDISON (Jarl) in the Chair.

The Umboths-man, Mr. Albany F. Major, read a paper entitled "Sea-fighting in Saga-time," which will be reproduced on a future occasion. It was followed by a discussion, in which Messrs. G. M. Atkinson, F. T. Norris, Dr. Jon Stefansson, and the Jarl took part.

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## VIKING NOTES.

THE title page, contents, and index of the three parts forming Vol. I. of the *Saga-Book* will be issued with Part IV.

THE *Icelandic Antiquarian Society*, which was founded in 1881, has already accomplished some useful work. Since its foundation several excavations of mounds and investigation of ruins have been undertaken. The Society's plan is to send out each summer a qualified man to explore a particular tract relating to one or other of the Sagas. A brother of the late Dr. Vigfusson, ex-professor of Icelandic at Oxford, has been indefatigable in connection with these researches, which have resulted, in many cases, in materially elucidating and explaining the Sagas. The annual Proceedings (*Árbók hins íslenska Fornleifafélags*) contain much that is valuable. The President for 1897 is Dr. Björn Ólsen, Reykjavík, and the Secretary, Eiríkur Briem, Reykjavík.

AN interesting collection of "Manx Ballads and Music" has been made by Mr. A. W. Moore, M.A., and published by Mr. Johnston, of Douglas, I.M. The music is traditional, and has been written without alteration as heard from those acquainted with the airs. The words of the Ballads are accompanied by English translations.

THE latest view of American kinlorists as to the earliest races on the North American Continent places the Red Indian in the foremost position, and dates his first entry into the country at a hundred years or so before Columbus's voyage. This harmonises with the Saga records as to the dwellers in Vinland in Leif's time, no mention being there made of the Red Indian, but only of the Skrælings or Eskimos.

A SERIES of articles on "Notable Manx Bishops," written by the Rev. John Quine, M.A., Vicar of Kirk Lonan, has appeared in the *Ramsey Church Magazine* (Mr. Heyes, Ramsey, I.M.). The four first of the series, Jan.—Apr., 1896, contain notices of Michael the Cistercian, d. 1203, Reginald, 1226, Symon, 1245, and Mark, 1300, who held the see of The Isles, or Sodor, during the dynasty of Godred Crovan, and who were suffragans to the Metropolitan of Nidaros.

DURING the past year Lieutenant Daniel Bruun of the Danish navy has been making investigations on the supposed sites of the early colonies of the Norsemen in Iceland, the Faroes, and Greenland. A daily journal thus speaks of the outcome of his labours: "The most important results obtained were at the old heathen temple of Torkel Gode, on Ljofavate, on the Oefjord. Torkel Gode was the introducer of Christianity, and he himself set fire to his temple and threw the old idols into the Goda Fall when he had induced the Althing to accept Christianity. Lieutenant Bruun found ashes, cinders, and the remains of a sacrificial vase with bones of animals in the northern part of the

ruins. He also succeeded, led by a peasant, in ascertaining the position of a 'Hill of Law.' Old sheep cotes and stalls showed that the breeding of sheep in ancient times was carried on much the same as now, while the number of cows was far greater in the legendary time than now. Ruins of cattle stalls were found large enough to hold thirty cows, whereas now the small farms can only keep a couple of animals. The ruins in Tjorsaadaal were specially interesting, as there they were all buried under volcanic ash, so that the place might be called a northern Pompeii. Judging from what has been found, the Northmen of the Saga period lived in Norway, on the Faroe Islands, and in Greenland under the same conditions, and their manners and customs partly prevail up to the present day, so that the study of the present inhabitants throws light on the legendary times. Lieutenant Bruun made a collection of antiquities which will be placed in the museum at Reykjavik later on."

ONE cannot but hail with a certain measure of satisfaction the fact that the early doings of the Vikings are increasingly influencing popular writing, albeit in the majority of cases the grip of historical facts is often grotesquely weak. It may be regarded as a sign of the re-birth of a national, as distinguished from a cosmopolitan, spirit, which only needs perhaps direction and encouragement to produce the best results. Too much insularity is certainly a blemish, but that cosmopolitanism which sunders a man from the past of his kin and history is an undoubted evil. The precept of the Jewish writer, who, in a period of national decadence, advised the "seeking out of the old paths," is undoubtedly applicable to our modern Englishry. The work which has induced these remarks is "The Last of the Vikings," which is an attempt to treat in a popular manner the life of Harald Hardrada up to the time of his death on Stamford Bridge. The author's excellent aims are unfortunately marred by such solecisms as combats of his hero with lions and Moors. When the early history of his race is taught the English schoolboy from its uprisings on the Germanic continent, instead of from the Norman Conquest, as hitherto, improvement in this regard may doubtless be looked for.

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### *DEATH-ROLL.*

SIR JOHN PENDER, G.C.M.G., M.P., Jarla-man of the Club, died on the 7th July. He was born in the Vale of Leven, Dumbartonshire, in the year 1816; and in the course of a very successful business career, in which his firm became the great distributing medium of the products of the weaving industries of Glasgow and Manchester to India, China, North America, and the British Colonies, he became associated with the company for laying the Atlantic and other cables, with which

his name is imperishably associated. These manifold demands on his time did not prevent him from taking great interest in all antiquarian matters relating to Scotland and Great Britain. He was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, the Royal and Antiquarian Societies of Scotland, and other learned and scientific Societies, and occupied the office of Vice-president of the Viking Club in 1895, in whose labours he took considerable interest. He was a J.P. of four counties, a Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire, and received Royal recognition of his services to submarine telegraphy by being made a G.C.M.G. in 1888.

W. A. CLOUSTON, Göfgir-man (hon. member) of the Viking Club, died suddenly on the 23rd October last at a comparatively early age. He was a native of Orkney, and was born at Stromness. He was a writer on varied subjects, but was specially interested in folklore, and being well versed in old and out-of-the way literature was able to throw much light upon the history and migrations of stories. A full abstract of his paper on "Norse Tales and their Eastern Analogues," read before the Viking Club in November, 1892, appears in Vol. I., Part I. of the *Saga-Book*, and the paper in full was printed in the *Orkney Herald* in December, 1892, and January, 1893. He also contributed to the Club "Notes on the Folklore of the Raven and the Owl," which is printed with Mrs. Saxby's "Inaugural Address on Birds of Omen in Shetland." Besides many works on Eastern folklore, he published in 1889 "Popular Tales and Fictions, their Migrations and Transformations."

WILLIAM MORRIS, who was elected a Jarla-man of the Club in 1893, and Viking Skald and a Fræthi-man in 1895, died on October 3rd. He was born on March 24th, 1834. Originally designed for the Church, he took up with architecture, and eventually, as a member of the firm of Morris & Co., laboured in the cause of the artistic revival of the arts and crafts. He early made his mark as a poet, being drawn to the romantic Hellenic and mediæval past. About 1870, to quote the words of a well-known writer, he fell under the influence of the "Norse revival in its purest form—that of the Icelandic," the result of which was the production of some of the finest creations of his poetic nature. Chief among these are "The Lovers of Gudrun," founded on the Laxdæla Saga, included in "The Earthly Paradise," and "Sigurd the Volsung," which appeared in 1876, and was regarded by himself as his best work. Besides his noble version of the Volsunga Saga, a prose rendering of it is included in the series of Sagas done into English which we owe jointly to him and Dr. Eiríkr Magnússon, another Jarla-man and Fræthi-man of the Club. This appeared in 1870, under the title of "The Story of the Volsungs and the Niblungs;" and "Grettir the Strong" in 1869, and "Three Northern Love Stories" in 1875, were the companion volumes. The translators have recently added to the series, in "The Saga Library" published by Bernard Quaritch 1891-5, versions of the Eyrbyggja Saga, Heimskringla, etc., etc. The simplicity

of the primitive life which he found to exist in Iceland on his visits there in 1871 and 1873, made an impression that coloured all his subsequent writings, and strengthened, it is said, the tendencies which he subsequently evinced towards Socialism. In 1889 appeared "The House of the Wolfings," a tale in prose and verse, and in 1889 he published "The Roots of the Mountains," considered by critics as the finest story of Northern life ever written, as also the best effort of his prose genius. Several other works followed, among them a verse translation of Beowulf in 1895. He took an active part in the work of the Viking Club, and last acted as the Chairman for the evening on Jan. 11th, 1895, on the occasion of the delivery of Mr. Major's lecture on "Survivals of the Asa Faith in Northern Folklore."

J. R. HAIG, F.S.A., and Hugh Miller, are two other members whose deaths the Club has to deplore since its formation.

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A MAN outside our ranks who made his mark as a Norse student, and whose death cannot be passed unnoticed, is SIR GEORGE DASENT, D.C.L. He died May 11th last year, in his eightieth year, at Ascot. He was educated at Westminster and Oxford. His translation of "The Prose or Younger Edda" appeared in 1842, the work being dedicated to Thomas Carlyle. In 1843 he published a grammar of the Icelandic or old Norse tongue from the Swedish of Erasmus Rask. From 1843-58 he worked assiduously at the translation of the Norse Tales, one of which, "The Master-Thief," was first published in *Blackwood's Magazine*, the first of many editions of "Popular Tales from the Norse" appearing in 1859. He was Professor of English Literature and Modern History at King's College from 1853-65. In 1861 he published "The Story of Burnt Njal, or Life in Iceland at the End of the Tenth Century," and in 1866 this was followed by the "Story of Gisli, the Outlaw;" "Tales from the Fjeld," a second series of popular tales, in 1874; and "The Vikings of the Baltic," a tale of the North in the tenth century, in 1875. As lately as 1894 his translations of the Orkney and Hacon Sagas, on which he had been engaged for many years, were published by the Master of the Rolls. Sir George Dasent was knighted in 1876.

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# THE NORSEMEN IN SHETLAND.

BY GILBERT GOUDIE, F.S.A.Scot.

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It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the historical sequence of events in the Norse occupation of the Shetland Isles. My idea rather is to lay hold of the salient features of that occupation so as, if possible, to arrive at a satisfactory answer to the query which is sometimes addressed to us, namely, whether the terms "our Scandinavian forefathers," or "our Norse ancestors," so common in our everyday talk, are historically defensible, or are merely part of our local conventionalisms, founded upon hazy traditional ideas? I hope to be able to show that the terms are not only justifiable, and essentially accurate in point of fact, but that they may at the same time be held as implying much of the racial qualities which are characteristic of the islesmen of the North Sea.

It is not necessary that I should describe to the Viking Club who and what manner of men were the hardy Norsemen who swept the seas, our own name-fathers in this Society. The conquest of Orkney and Shetland, for some time previously attempted by irregular incursions, was in the ninth century finally accomplished by these sturdy warriors. This conquest was not merely a temporary subjugation, but shaped itself into a regular colonization (as was the case about the same time in Iceland and Faroe), with all the resulting accompaniments and consequences of permanent settlement by a conquering race in a new country. First of all was the overthrow of the civilization and religion which they found existing on their arrival, and which we have warrant, both from historical testimony and from archæological induction, in assuming to have been Celtic and Christian. The illustrations which follow are interesting memorials of this Celtic Christianity.

Fig. 1 represents the St. Ninian's Stone, which I found in the island of that name in the parish of Dunrossness in 1876.<sup>1</sup> It was the second discovery in the islands of a monument

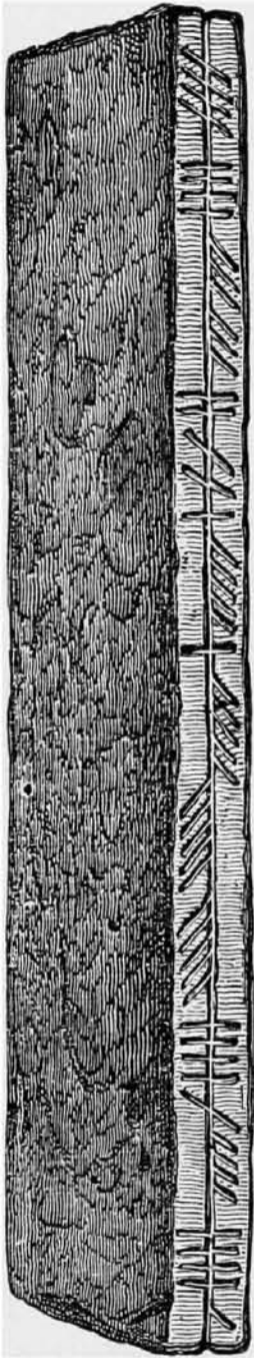


FIG. 1.—ST. NINIAN'S STONE.

inscribed in Ogam characters, such monuments being peculiar to Ireland and other strictly Celtic districts. The Burra Stone (Fig. 2), which I found in the island of Burra in 1877, is an excellent example of Celtic Christian art, in the design of the cross, the ecclesiastical and other figures, and the interlaced ornamentation. This last is the essential and most characteristic feature of Celtic monumental art.

Though, as I believe, the Celts (usually recognised in this connection as "Picts") were absorbed, and not annihilated, by the new comers, yet true it is that their civilization and religion, as has been stated, had to give way before the torrent of Odinism which was the necessary accompaniment of the new comers. At the same time we may be assured that the Celtic traditions did not wholly die out; and, with the restoration of Christianity at the instance of King Olaf Trygvesson at the end of the tenth century, the former traditions were revived. Churches in characteristically Celtic form were erected; and it is even possible that Celtic art, so graphically delineated in the decorations and inscriptions of the sculptured stones, might have been to some extent revived, though I prefer to regard the known monuments as of the

genuinely Celtic period which preceded. Upon the whole, the distinctive characteristics of the two races, in their civilization and religion, were welded together into the system of local life, in its most prominent and essential features Scandinavian, which we find portrayed in the pages of the

<sup>1</sup> This cut is reproduced by permission of the Council of the Scottish History Society.





FIG. 2.—BURRA STONE.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For this cut, and also Figs. 3 and 4, I am indebted to the kindness of the Council of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

*Orkneyinga Saga*, which existed for centuries afterwards with little material alteration, and which is the foundation of the life and culture—in some respects unique, apart from that prevailing elsewhere in Scotland—which we have ourselves inherited, and which, in a modern and increasingly diluted form, exists in the islands even to the present day.

The traces, in religion and culture otherwise, of the Celts in times preceding the Scandinavian conquest, would form an interesting study. But it is the phenomena of the Scandinavian element, the predominant, and now indeed, as has been said, the almost exclusive element, in the islands, with which we are at present concerned. And this we have to view in its broad general outlines, by briefly considering some of the main factors, some of the elemental principles which have been effective in forming the character, and fashioning the destinies, of the islesmen from age to age.

The first and most distinctive feature of the conquest was the seizure by the new comers of the lands of the vanquished Picts; and, holding these by right of conquest, they recognised no human superior, and transmitted their possessions to their descendants without forms of vassalage or acknowledgment of feudal "service," or seignorial dues. Thus was transplanted into the islands the *Odal* (or, as termed in Orkney and Shetland, "Udal") system of land tenure as it existed in Norway, whence the conquerors had come: in its independence and its absolute freedom the very antithesis of the system of landholding under feudal conditions elsewhere prevailing in Europe at the time, and since. This right of independency was not confined merely to the ownership of land, but it also followed the Udaller into the domain of civil politics, where, though he might be but of small degree, his voice and vote were, in theory, as good and effective as were those of the most influential Thingmen in their periodical assemblies. This equality and fraternity, long the blood-stained aspiration of many nationalities, agonized after for ages, were the birthright of our progenitors, acquired not by tumult or revolution, but by the natural development of the genius of the race. Every man could not, of course, be a landowner, and a residue of the "unfree" was a necessity in



the nature of things ; but practically the country was held by the people, not in thralldom as tenants at will, but by right of ownership, independent of the trammels and penalties attached to feudal vassalage, of which they knew nothing. The holdings for the most part were of necessity of small individual extent, and in virtue of constant sub-division on the co-equal succession of heirs (for the law of primogeniture was practically unknown), the Udal system had in itself the germs of dissolution. It is wonderful how, in spite of this, and of the general tendency to the breaking up of property holdings, large or small, so much of the land in Shetland has come down in small Udal possessions even to our own day.

In addition to the native landholders, the Church in Norway must also be regarded as having been owner, to a considerable extent, of landed estate in Shetland which continued to be held long after the islands became subject to Scotland. The *Brevebog* (or Chartulary) of Munkaliv's Cloister (the Monastery of St. Michael) at Bergen, contains particulars of the possessions of that monastery in the islands. Other insular possessions of the Church are known, such as that termed "The Provostry of the Dom Kirk [*i.e.* the Cathedral] of Bergen," which included four merks of land at Sumburgh, and ten and a half merks at Helliness in the parish of Cunningsburgh. The former of these holdings, now part of the estate of Sumburgh, was disposed of by the Danish owners (coming in place of the Norwegian Church and Crown) so late as in 1661 ; and a Confirmation of the Sale, in order to prevent challenge of the title from any quarter, was granted by King Frederick the Third in the following year. Since that time the lands of the "Lordis of Norroway," as they were called, have ceased to be owned in Norway, and, becoming incorporated in Shetland estates, have wholly passed out of view, and out of knowledge.

The sales, or loss by forfeiture, of the small holdings of the Udallers, and the absorption of these holdings into the larger estates, are significant illustrations of the process of disintegration, and of the transition, under Scottish influences, to modern conditions of life. Many of the deeds of conveyance from the old Udallers to the new owners are preserved. A

number of these deeds are in the Norse language, some of them written in Norway, and some in Shetland. The testimony so strikingly afforded by these legal relics to the persistence of the Norse sentiment, and to the continued intimacy of the relationship between the islands and the Norwegian fatherland, will be more distinctly referred to under a subsequent head.

During the long period from the settlement of the isles by the Norsemen in the ninth century to the close of the Norwegian era, after which our estimate of the conditions of local life rests upon a more definite historic basis, it may be safely affirmed that while the Shetlanders lived a no doubt simple and hearty life, with few of the gratifications of modern tastes, yet the enjoyment of their entire freedom under their native laws and institutions, with comparative immunity from local tyranny and from desolating assaults by external enemies, ensured for them a degree of comfort and contentment that was not surpassed anywhere at the time, and has perhaps not been reached at any subsequent period of their history until the present age. In the earlier epoch, the Shetlanders were apparently addicted in a less degree than the Orkney men to the hereditary diversion of Viking raids, and they were not long in settling down to ordinary civil life, pursuing the means of sustenance mainly by the scanty agriculture which the soil permitted, by sheep rearing, and by fishing, in very much the same way as their representatives do at the present day, and as their kinsmen still do in Faroe, Iceland, and on the coasts of Norway. In all these northern regions the *bondi*, or peasant, was first a farmer, and thereafter, as occasion or necessity required, a fisher, the combination of these industries, by land and sea, rendering the islesmen who practised them thoroughly equipped successors to the daring Vikings, their ancestors, who equally excelled in both callings. One of the earliest, and certainly one of the most interesting, glimpses of everyday life in the islands, is in the story of Earl Rognvald's adventure in the twelfth century, as an amateur fisherman, in disguise, among the Dunrossness men of that time. The circumstantials, and the local environments as related, might almost be taken as an incident of common

life, during a busy fishing season at the present day.<sup>1</sup> Another curious native sketch appears in the story of the shipwreck of the same Earl at Gulberwick, in Shetland (*Orkneyinga Saga*, 1873, chapter lxxix).

In the times we are speaking of, the independence and comfort of the Shetlander consisted mainly in this, that he was not only in the majority of cases the owner of the land he cultivated, but that he was also able, from his own industries, in fishing, tilling, sheep and cattle rearing, to furnish the whole food and raiment of himself and his family. *Landmails* (or rents), where these were exigible, and dues of every kind, were also paid mostly in *wadmell* (home-made cloth) and in oil and butter or other produce. Money was thus as little required as it was seldom seen. These remarks apply in a general way almost to so late as the beginning of the present century.

In any view of the process of historical development in Shetland and Orkney, the Church, both Roman and Protestant, must, as elsewhere, be looked upon as an important factor. True it is that, with the exception of the Life of St. Magnus, and the outburst of pious, not to say superstitious, enthusiasm which his death evoked, there is exceedingly little to be found to enable us to form an opinion of the religious life of the people during many centuries. But unquestionably the spread of Christianity, in the course of time, humanised and elevated in life and feeling, and we may be assured that our ancestors in those days were, as we trust their descendants now are, honest, God-fearing people according to their light.

The episcopal see of Orkney was founded early in the twelfth century. Its seat, for a short time at Birsay, was permanently transferred to Kirkwall, where the temple of St. Magnus the Martyr was reared as its special shrine. Shetland was administered by the Archdeacon, whose Church at Tingwall was also dedicated to St. Magnus. The Archbishops of York and of St. Andrews both claimed, and on more than

<sup>1</sup> The writer has given a translation of the story, from the Icelandic of a lately recovered portion of the *Orkneyinga Saga*, in the Appendix to *Mill's Diary* (Scot. Hist. Society), Edin. 1889.

one occasion exercised, the right of consecration ; but, as a matter of right, the metropolitan of Orkney and Shetland was the Archbishop of Nidaros (or Drontheim) in Norway. In due course, the parcelling out of the country into parishes, with parish churches, very much as these now exist, was accomplished ; and the small chapels or district oratories, which previously had served the wants of the people, fell into decay. At the Reformation more than one of the parochial charges came to be discontinued from want of funds, and many of the churches became ruinous. The remains of these pre-Reformation churches, and of the small chapels in out-of-the-way districts, are now objects of curious search to the antiquary. The dedications of most of these churches and chapels are unknown, but I have been able to identify the following, viz. :—

Dunrossness—Crosskirk.	Sandsting—St. Mary.
„ —St. Ninian.	Walls—St. Paul.
„ —St. Columba.	Delting—St. Paul.
Sandwick—St. Magnus [?].	„ —St. Olla.
Cunningsburgh—St. Colm	„ —St. Magnus.
[?] St. Paul.	Northmaven—St. Ola.
Bressay—St. Olla.	„ —St. Magnus.
„ —St. Mary.	„ —St. Gregorius.
„ —St. John.	Yell—St. John.
Burra—St. Laurence.	„ —St. Olla.
Tingwall—St. Magnus.	„ —St. Magnus.
Whiteness—St. Ola.	Unst.—Our Lady.
Weisdale—Our Lady.	„ —St. John.

It cannot now be ascertained with certainty what form of liturgical service was in use in the churches of Shetland. In earlier times it may be supposed that the form prescribed for the see of Drontheim would be observed, but as time went on and Scottish influences began more and more to prevail, the practice would in all probability be increasingly conformed to Scottish usages.

While Shetland was a Norwegian possession (for a short time it was disjoined from Orkney and administered, along with Faroe, from Norway) its government was, practically, in

the hands of the all-powerful Jarl: though, as the earldom residence was in Orkney, its immediate control was for most part in the hands of subordinate officials responsible to him. The Jarl, in turn, was nominally responsible to the King of Norway, from whom he was bound to receive investiture, and at all times to acknowledge fealty; but for all practical purposes he administered his little state on his own account, and was only occasionally brought to book by his suzerain.

While the Earl was thus the head and front of political authority, the problem of local self-government under him was solved in the islands at an early date.<sup>1</sup> In the case of Orkney the facts are somewhat obscure, but in Shetland the main features do not admit of doubt. Contemporary details, it is true, are few; but when, after the middle of the sixteenth century, we come to get a clearer glimpse at the social conditions then prevailing, we are able, by study of the transitional forms by which these conditions were regulated, to reconstruct the old system of local polity with, I believe, a fair approximation to accuracy.

Apart from the multitude of facts disclosed by legal documents, dry and formal as these are usually regarded, and the side light which these incidental notices throw upon prevailing local conditions, we have a few records of a more comprehensive kind, dealing with local life. The first and most interesting of these is the Minutes of the trial of Laurence Bruce, of Cultemalindie, in February, 1577, for his misdemeanours as Great Foud of Shetland, when acting as the deputy of Lord Robert Stewart, first of the Scottish earls of that name. All the "Commons and Inhabitants" of Shetland having been summoned to attend this judicial enquiry, which was held at Tingwall, the sworn evidence then tendered by residents in every parish may be regarded as a trustworthy exposition of the past and present circum-

<sup>1</sup> I endeavoured to explain this in some detail in an article on "The Ancient Local Government of the Shetland Islands," printed in *Blandinger* (Miscellaneous Papers) of *Universitets Jubilæets Danske Samfund*. Copenhagen, 1886.

stances of the islands as then understood by the people themselves.<sup>1</sup>

At that time the civil constitution, as existing in the purely Norse period, had no doubt been considerably impaired by the encroachment of Scottish influence: but the islanders were still in doubt as to the permanence of their connection with Scotland, and they therefore adhered as rigidly as they could both to the spirit and to the outward forms of their native polity. Upon these records therefore, upon old heritable writs and judicial documents, and upon the later recorded proceedings of "Lawting" and "Bailie" Courts, our estimate of the system of local government of the country must mainly be based.

Shetland was a *Foudrie* (Norse, *Fogderi*), in the same way as Norway is subdivided into Foudries at the present day. The supreme executive officer was the "Foud," usually termed the "Great Foud" (Norse, *Foged*), who was appointed by the Government, and was charged with the public administration, judicial and fiscal, the latter embracing the collection of *skatts*, *mails* (rents), *umboth*, *wattle*, and all other duties, which went on gradually augmenting, especially after the islands passed under the domination of Scotland. The great court was the *Althing* (the general or universal *Assembly* of the country), possessed of civil and criminal jurisdiction, which met usually once a year, but oftener when required, at the Loch of Tingwall, under the presidency of the Great Foud, with the guidance of the "Lawman" (Norse, *Lögmaðr*), who expounded the law and regulated the proceedings. On all occasions there appears to have been a selected assize of *Raadmen* (or Councillors), who acted as advisers or jurors; but in certain cases of criminal investigation doom seems to have been pronounced in accordance with the determining voice of the whole assembly. The functions of this *Althing* Court were legislative as well as judicial, and as

<sup>1</sup> The whole papers connected with this important trial were printed by the late D. Balfour, of Balfour, in his book "Oppressions of the Sixteenth Century in the Islands of Orkney and Shetland" (Maitland Club, 1859).

its membership was composed of all landholders, or "free-men," of the country, it was thus a primary and not a representative body, and its powers seem to have been without limitation, so far as purely local interests were concerned, extending to the full over life and property.

A remarkable feature of this native system was that, subordinate to the Althing, there was a similar method of local government and judicature established in every parish, and this ages before the idea of Parish Councils was seriously discussed in Britain.

The chief officer in the parish court was the *Under Foud*, appointed, like the Great Foud, by the ruling authorities, while the interests of the *bondi* (or Commons) were jealously guarded by the "Lawright-men" (Norse, *Lögrettamenn*), whose duty it was to see that justice was done, and that the country people were not harassed by undue exactions in the settlement of their *mails* and duties. In every case of trial, as between man and man, the Foud, in the same way as the Great Foud in the Althing Court, had the benefit of an assize of *Raadmen*, or assisting jurymen.

Succession to heritable or moveable estate was arranged at meetings of the parish court, or of a number of reputable neighbours, whose decision, embodied in a *Shuynd* Bill, or brieve of succession, or of division, was accepted as authoritative, and therefore permanently binding. Several examples of the *Shuynd* Bill have been preserved.

A curious method of criminal prosecution was by the compurgatorial system. According to this, persons indicted for an offence were permitted, or were doomed, to seek acquittance from the charge by the oath, in their vindication, of a sufficient number of honest neighbours. Hence the "saxter aith," the "twelter aith" (the oaths respectively of six and of twelve neighbours, who swore to their belief of the innocency of the person charged) which we frequently come upon in Shetland records. This form of purgation, common in northern countries, was not confined to Scandinavian nations, but was also recognised by the Saxon law in Britain, and a ceremonial survival of it was not abolished in England until in the eighteenth year of Queen Elizabeth's reign. The

“Lawright” oath was also a form of acquittance sometimes referred to in court proceedings in the olden time in Shetland.

Another curious system, that of *Opgestry*, as it was called, existed not only during the purely Norse period, but also, like the compurgatorial, into the Scottish times which succeeded. According to this custom persons in age, infirmity, or pecuniary difficulty made over their whole lands or means, of whatever kind, to other persons, who undertook, in exchange for a formal transfer of their property, to harbour and maintain them for the whole remaining period of their natural life. Of agreements of this kind some specimens remain.

The official system, the regulations of law and local government, thus cursorily hinted at, are thoroughly Scandinavian, very much the counterpart of what prevailed, and still to some extent prevails, in Norway, and which was transplanted in a somewhat similar way by the emigrants to Iceland. As I have on different occasions endeavoured to illustrate the nature of the Norse occupation of the islands, and the laws and institutions which were their special pride, I shall not dwell upon the subject further now. The saddest part of the retrospect is the decline and subversion of these laws and institutions after Shetland and Orkney came under the domination of the Scottish Crown. For with them passed away not only our ancient native freedom, but much also of our genuine Norse spirit. And yet this process of assimilation to Scottish and modern forms presents an interesting and instructive study of the social and administrative transition of which it was the outward expression.

The mortgaging of the islands to Scotland in 1468 did not, as some may suppose, transform the Norse islesmen into Scotsmen. For more than a hundred years later their conditions were not materially altered, though the germs of transformation were beginning quietly to work. It was only after the advent of the rapacious Stewart Earls, in the reign of Queen Mary, and under the persistent oppressions exercised by their successors, that the subversion of native laws and institutions, to which reference has been made, was accomplished after a long struggle, some of the outward semblances



continuing almost to our own day, though the spirit was gone. Crown donatories, tacksmen, lawyers, and subordinate officials, harassed the people, and, gradually acquiring the larger portion of the land, became an alien dominant caste. Another element of change was the steady intrusion of Scottish clergy, even from before the Reformation. These and their descendants had little sympathy with the natives or their traditions, and gradually swelled the dominant class; so that by degrees the proud and independent Udallers, very many of them losing their lands and sinking into indigence, were compelled to pass into the background. Scottish families, and imported fashions, thus came into vogue, along with changed laws and regulations; and the old native family names, the native language, and native customs, ceased to be considered to be in proper form.

In the course of this radical upheaval, the *Foged*, or Foud, of Norse times, was transferred into the "Steward" or "Sheriff." The *Logmadr* (or "Lawman") entirely disappeared, along with the Book of the Law; the *Lögrettamenn*, nominally permitted to exist, retained their title as "Lawrightmen;" the *Althing* became the "Lawting" Court, the "Sheriff" Court, and "Justice" Court; while the *Vard-things*, or district courts, became the parochial courts, presided over by the parish "Bailie;" formerly the *Under-foud*. Ere long the Lawrightmen, the *Raadmenn* or Councillors, and the Bailie Courts disappeared, the latter, however, dragging on existence till towards the middle of last century.<sup>1</sup> The *Ranselmen*, who had powers of inquisition for theft and petty offences, alone survived to our own day, and are perhaps not yet entirely extinct.<sup>2</sup>

It is to the records of these Lawting and Bailie Courts<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have in my possession a copy of the Minutes of the Bailie Court of the parish of Dunrossness, Alexander Sinclair, of Brew, Bailie, so late as for the years 1731-1735.

<sup>2</sup> The last authoritative appointment of Ranselmen, so far as I am aware, was for the parish of Lunnasting, by the Sheriff Substitute of Zetland, on 16th December, 1836. (Paper on the Fouds, Lawrightmen and Ranselmen of Shetland, *Proceedings S. A. Scot., G.G.*, March 14th, 1892.)

<sup>3</sup> Ancient Court Books of Shetland are preserved in the General Register House, Edinburgh, and also in the Sheriff Court at Lerwick.

that we must look for the last picturesque memorials of the old native life of the Norse islanders: and a unique and interesting study that life is, from its commencement, as perceived through the first glimmer of history in Norway, through its heroic stage of Vikingdom, its transference to the melancholy isles of the North Sea, its growth there and its decay. But when we look upon our gallant Shetland seamen, first in command in all climes, our honest toilers by sea and land at home, and our islesmen pioneers in the Colonies, we shall, I think, be justified in the belief that the ancestral spirit by which that life was animated in other days is not yet wholly extinct, that the blood of the Norsemen of old is not disgraced as it now courses through the veins of their modern representatives.

Such in brief general outline is a glance at the political, ecclesiastical, and social condition of Shetland during the Norse period, and in its modified form as it was shaded away in the later Scoto-Scandinavian or Scottish period. It only remains, within the limits at my disposal, to attempt to see what indubitable traces, what actual relics of the Norsemen still remain in the islands. In this endeavour I shall glance at (1) the remnants of the Old Language, (2) the Place-Names, and (3) the Archæological Relics, so far as these can be relied upon as trustworthy evidence in support of my contention.

## I. THE NORSE LANGUAGE IN SHETLAND.

There is a fascination in studying the survivals of an old language, and the expressive relics from the old Norse which enter so largely into the composition of the Shetland vernacular to the present day are of peculiar interest in this way, especially to native born students who can comprehend the sometimes almost hidden meaning of the terms. Let us see, then, what evidence remains of the genuine Norse (locally the "Norn") having been the common language of the islands.

Readers of the *Orkneyinga Saga* are aware of the obvious fact that the question of language presented no difficulty in

Orkney or Shetland or elsewhere in the northern countries. The *Norræna tunga*, or old Norse, was in the age of the Sagas everywhere intelligible ; but in the present enquiry we naturally look not so much to evidence of a general kind as to the earliest adminicules of proof locally existing.

First of these are rune-inscribed stones, on which, wherever they were settled, the Scandinavians carved, in their own characteristic style, brief memorials of their departed friends. These palæographic records were usually expressed in a very simple formula, such as :—

“(A) raised this stone” (or “Carved these runes”) “in memory of (B) son of (C).”

The great chamber of Maeshowe in Orkney presents a large and varied display of rune-carving, unfortunately of but little historic value ; but, though Shetland is for most part richer than Orkney in traces of archaic life, only four rune-inscribed fragments have been found in the northern group. These are : one found at Cross Kirk, Northmavine, figured by Hibbert in his *Description of the Shetland Islands* (1822), and three fragments found in the parish of Cunningsburgh and described by the present writer.<sup>1</sup> These all, with unequivocal clearness, tell their brief but pointed tale of the old Norse fatherland, whose language, traditions, and customs, were so warmly cherished by the emigrants and their descendants. The best preserved rune stone, though only a fragment, is one of those found in Cunningsburgh, and it reads as follows :—

þ| '11þ 1ʝ11R \* ʝ4þNR : '1þ þNRÆYIR(N)

... (RIS)THI STIN IFTIR FOTHUR SIN THURBAIR(N).

. . . (rais)ed (this) stone after father his Thurbair(n).

Next in order in the chain of evidence after the Runes is the testimony of legal documents in the Norse language which have been found in the islands, and which have already

<sup>1</sup> “On Rune-inscribed relics of the Norsemen in Shetland,” *Proceedings, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. xxii (1879).

been referred to. Besides six such deeds previously known, no fewer than twelve documents in the old tongue have been discovered by myself, either among the public record papers of the county of Zetland, preserved in the Sheriff Clerk's office in Lerwick, or in the charter chests of local families. The existence of these documents was not known, and not surmised, and their recovery should be an incentive to patient research in the future.

Some of the deeds have been written in Shetland, and some in Norway, in cases where the owners of the lands resided there; but in either case, the language and the legal phraseology used are practically identical. The oldest of these Shetland deeds is preserved in the General Register House, Edinburgh, and is as follows :

Ollum mennom theim sem thetta breff sae ædhr heyra sendhir Andres Wellimson quedhio gudhz ok sina kunnikt giorandhe meth thesso mino upno brefue at jak hafwir selth biskedhelik man Symon Hognason eina mark brenda i jordh som lighr i Walol undhan mek ok minom aerfwinghiom ondhir fornemdhan Symon ok hans aervinghia til aewerdelig aeighnar. Framdhelis kennist jak at ek hafwir upborit hin fyrsta peningh ok hin sedhista ok alla thær imillom saa at mek wel at nojhist thet er at seghia vj gylline i lerefthe for thesse mark. Ok for the Skuld at ek hafde enkert Insignle siaelfu thar hafr jak bedhit beskedelighe men som saa hetha Magnus Olausson ok Olaf Arnason hinghia thera Insignle for min bona stadh skuld for thetta breff er giort var i onst Anno Domini MCDLXV.

That is to say :—

Unto all men who this letter see or hear Andrew Williamson sends God's greeting and his own, making known by this my letter patent that I have sold to that worshipful man, Simon Hognason, one mark burnt [silver] in land which lies in Walol from me and my heirs unto the aforesaid Simon and his heirs for everlasting possession. Moreover, I acknowledge that I have received the first penny and the last and all there between so that I am well satisfied, six florins [worth] in linen for this mark. And whereas I have no seal myself I have requested the worshipful men who are thus called Magnus Olauson and Olaf Arnason to append their seals at my own desire unto this letter which was done in Unst, Anno Domini 1465.

The dates covered by these Shetland documents in Norse, of which a list is given in the Appendix, extend from the above

date to so late as 1607 (besides two more strictly Danish deeds of later date). From that time written remains of the old language pass out of sight and are heard of no more, though the language itself remains, in gradually diminishing quantity, in common speech.

In the period succeeding the era of the Norse deeds, when externally everything bore the imprint of Scottish forms, we come upon the literary evidence of the persistence of the language in the testimony of old writers who visited the islands. Brand (1700); Sir Robert Sibbald, whose "Descriptions" was published in 1711, and the Rev. Mr. Low, who noted his observations in 1770, are explicit in their affirmation of this, especially as regards outlying districts. Low gives not only a native version of the Lord's Prayer closely akin to customary old forms in Norway and Sweden, but has also put on record no fewer than thirty-five stanzas of a Norse ballad rehearsed to him by an old native in the island of Foula. Low, who knew absolutely nothing of the language, took down the words phonetically, as well as he could, from a narrator who himself was utterly ignorant of spelling or literary forms. The wonder therefore is that, notwithstanding these almost insurmountable obstacles to an intelligible rendering, the meaning can be made out; and a fairly successful transcript in modern Norse by a Norwegian scholar, the late Professor P. A. Munch, was published in an article by him (*Geographiske og historiske Notitser om Orknoerne og Hetland* contained in *Samlinger til det Norske Folks Sprog og Historie*. Christiania, 1838). More recently, the Rev. Biot Edmondston, in *The Home of a Naturalist* (London, 1888), has preserved some relics of ancient native rhymes, the interpretation of which will be a puzzle for the ingenious student. But apart from these literary attestations, every one possessed of distinct local knowledge is aware that to this day in Shetland the everyday language of the people bristles with Norse words and idioms. My friend Herr Jakob Jakobsen, of Thorshavn in the neighbouring group of Faroe, student of the University of Copenhagen, an expert linguist, has lately spent more than a year in Shetland, gathering up, in every district of the country, the fragments which are still preserved

of the old language ; and he claims, as the result of much patient research, to have recovered many thousands of such words still in use, many of them no doubt confined to remote districts, and some known to few speakers only.<sup>1</sup> In my own youthful days I looked back with wonder and regret to the days when the language of old Norway was the speech of our forefathers, ignorant of the fact that my own ordinary vocabulary was largely made up of survivals from that tongue. It was an awakening when, later in life, it fell to my lot to describe native Runic monuments subsequently discovered, and from time to time to bring to light and expound a variety of documents in the old language which had been found in the islands. Unfortunately, in recent years the increasing intimacy of connection with Scotland and England, the accession of new settlers from the south, and other causes, have had the effect, to a large extent, of brushing aside many of the most interesting localisms in thought and language. It is well therefore that attention should be directed at the present time to the essential characteristics of the hereditary vernacular, ere they become so blurred as to be scarcely discernible. The extent, however, to which the Norse prevails, or till recently prevailed, in the islands, in a corrupted form, is evidenced by the large collection of native words, in more or less common use, contained in the "Etymological Glossary of the Shetland and Orkney Dialect," by the late Thomas Edmondston of Bunes (Edinburgh, 1866), which indeed could have been largely augmented.

## II. THE LOCAL NAMES.

This, too, is a department of our enquiry which would require a treatise by itself. As, however, the present is a mere sketch, it is not necessary to enlarge in details. In point of fact, to illustrate by example the prevalence of Norse in the local nomenclature would be simply to transfer to these pages almost the whole place-names of the islands. For if it be the fact that the native Celts (or "Picts") were not annihilated

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Jakobsen's publications, *Det Norrone Sprog på Shetland* and *Shetland og Shetlenderne*, have just reached me (April, 1897).

ated by their Norse conquerors, it certainly cannot be denied that their language and place-names in the islands have, with very few exceptions, perished. Sacred sites, and the dedications which these bore, have in several cases survived; but the long dominance of the Norse element in the population has well-nigh obliterated the ordinary traces of their Celtic predecessors. Take as examples the following names of parochial divisions of the country, viz. :—

Lerwick and	}	Norse, Lervik.
Gulberwick		„ Guldberuvik.
Dunrossness		„ Dynröstnes.
Sandwick		„ Sandvik.
Cunningsburgh		„ Konungsborg.
Tingwall		„ Thingvölr.
Whiteness		„ Hvid-ness.
Weisdale		„ Veis-dalr.
Sandsting		„ Sandsting.
Aithsting		„ Eidsting.
Unst		„ Örnyst.
Fetlar		„ Faetilör.
Yell		„ Yala.
Delting		„ Dalathing.
Northmaven		„ Nord-maveigen.
Nesting		„ Nes-thing.
Lunnasting		„ Lundeidsting.
Whalsay		„ Hvalsey.
Bressay		„ Brusey.
Fair Isle		„ Fridarey.

It is unnecessary to multiply these larger names. It is in the minor nomenclature that the Norse is most strongly prominent. A few of these from the parish of Cunningsburgh are significant, *e.g.* :—

Englamurvatn	Ildegard	Tordale
Laxadale	Culbinsgarth	Hammerfeld
Clivigard	Starkigarth	Musnafeld
Vatsgard	Valdigard	Aith
Scarpigard	Swarthoul	Fugla Stack

In short, the place-names throughout the islands are intensely Scandinavian, the old names clinging to field and hill, to loch and rock, to shore and *geo* and bay, and refusing to be dislodged, so long as the native-born inhabitants remain. But the process, in the present century, of abolishing run-rig holdings, and of consolidating small farms into large grazing tacks, has caused to some extent a displacement of the population, the tendency of which is fatal to the preservation of the minor place-names, as well as to the old traditions of the country. Enough, however, still remains to show that no more telling evidence of the presence of the Norsemen exists than the quaint descriptive Norse names which cover the islands as with a garment.

In speaking of local names it is not necessary to confine the reference to *place*-names merely. Personal and family names, either genuine old Norse or of purely native growth, which is very much the same thing, everywhere abounded until, in later times, disguised or transmuted in deference to a mistaken notion or prejudice (begotten of the continued invasion of Southerners, ignorant of the history, language and traditions of the islands), that the old names were common-place, vulgar, and therefore better to be discarded or recast. Thus "Hackie" (Haco) became Hercules; "Sigmund" became Simon; "Engster," an occupant of meadow land, found himself dubbed for all time *Inkster*; "Bjornson," or "Berntsen," became Bairnson, the "son of a child" (save the mark!); "Osla" (Aslaug) was dressed out as Ursula; and the fine old female name Sunniva came (as "Sinnie") to be regarded as only a fit name for old wives. And so with many more. In a few instances "Turkell" (Thorkell or Torquil), "Rasmie" (Erasmus), "Tirval" (Thorvald), "Inga" (Ingagarth or Ingaborg) survive. But the almost universally prevailing patronymic forms, Manson (Magnusson), Gilbertson, Anderson, Williamson, Rasmusson, Hoseason, Johnson or Yunson (Johansen), and many others speak eloquently to us, down through the course of ages, of the parental Norsemen from whom these varying "sons" descended. The reversal of the family name to that of the immediate parent, thus changing from generation to generation, was not uncommon in Shetland even within the present century.



Increased knowledge of the past, and a better understanding of the fitness of things, have already led to a revived sentiment of veneration for old customs, old names and traditions ; and this may no doubt result in exploding prejudices and in restoring the Scandinavian idea to a due and healthy place in the affections of the people.

It may be added that a number of years ago I made an attempt to collect the minor place-names in different localities, and succeeded in bringing together several pretty full lists. The labours of the Ordnance Survey Department have fortunately put on record since then very many of the smaller names, especially along the coasts ; but a vast deal more yet remains to be done to preserve these still audible voices of the Norsemen's past, recorded upon the surface of the ground they so long occupied, but every day becoming more and more faint, with the risk of their being obliterated for ever. In the meantime the standard authority on the place-names of Orkney and Shetland is, and will probably ever remain, the learned article by the late Professor Munch of Christiania, which appeared in the *Memoirs* of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries (Copenhagen, 1850-1860). In his investigations, however, the major names were chiefly dealt with.

### III. ARCHÆOLOGICAL RELICS OF THE NORSEMEN.

These, in Shetland, are but scanty. In Orkney we have the great temple of the Norsemen, a monument of their skill and also of their devotion—if not perhaps of their piety in any very strictly modern sense. For in the twelfth century, when this cathedral of St. Magnus, was in its earliest portions, reared, the islesmen were yet, to a large extent, roving soldiers of fortune, for whom the sea and distant forays had not yet lost their fascination. Most of the other churches of this early period, both in Shetland and in Orkney, have disappeared, though precious fragments may yet be traced by the patient antiquary. The towered church on the island of Egilsey still looks on the scene of St. Magnus's slaughter, but the three churches with round towers in Shetland—at Tingwall, in Burra isle, and at Eyrrland ("Ireland") in Dunrossness—have left scarcely a wrack behind. A portion

of the crypt (or "vault") of the church of St. Magnus at Tingwall may yet be seen, as also portions of the churches at Sandsting, Cullinsbrough in Bressay, Ness in Yell, Uyea, Lind in Unst, and one or two more, some of these being perhaps the remnants of foundations of even earlier date than the advent of the Norsemen. What appears to have been a really fine old church, Cross Kirk of Dunrossness, was swept into ruin, and its stones removed for other buildings, so late as in the beginning of the present century. It seems to have been the parish church from early in the Norse period, and an important edifice in 1506 when, by his will, dated at Tingwall on the 9th of July of that year, Sir David Sinclair, of Sumburgh, Great Foud of Shetland and Governor of the Castle of Bergen in Norway, bequeathed to it one-third of his black velvet coat (the other two-thirds going to the church of St. Magnus, at Tingwall); his gold chain, which he got from the King of Denmark, being left at the same time to St. George's altar, in the Cathedral of Roskilde, in that country.

Other ecclesiastical remains in the islands owing their origin to the Norsemen are all too scanty to be further referred to; and if it be so that these, the most enduring monuments of that age, have so woefully perished, what can be expected of the relics of civil and domestic life? Dwellings of the people, even in an advanced social state, are always of a more or less temporary character, apt to fall into decay, and constantly subject to alteration and renewal; and very few of such domestic structures of any considerable antiquity are consequently to be found in any country. It is only the more massive stone- or brick-built castles of the lords of the soil—very many of these in ruins—that can with any success resist the persistent assaults of time, and war, and weather. We have reason to believe that in Shetland, at all events in the earlier Norse period, the dwelling-places even of the more substantial of the *bondi* were constructed of wood and other more or less perishable material, as in the Norwegian motherland and in the colonies of Iceland and Faroe, the surrounding strengthening material of stone and earth being equally subject with the wooden fabric to decay and reconstruction. The only architectural remains of remote antiquity which we

find are the massive round towers—*borgs* (or “boroughs”) as designated by the Norsemen—which they found on their arrival in the islands. I have no hesitation in assigning these fortalices, mysterious as in some respects they are, to the Celtic race (the “Picts”) who were in possession of the country before the Norsemen’s arrival.

If, therefore, we must admit the absence of specific structural remains of the Norsemen, I yet claim that the social organization in country districts, in its material shape and form, is essentially Norse to the present day. The ancient run-rig system is scarcely yet abolished. Many of the old hill dykes, enclosing townships from the hill and moorland, some of these of stone, some of turf (“feals”), are very many centuries

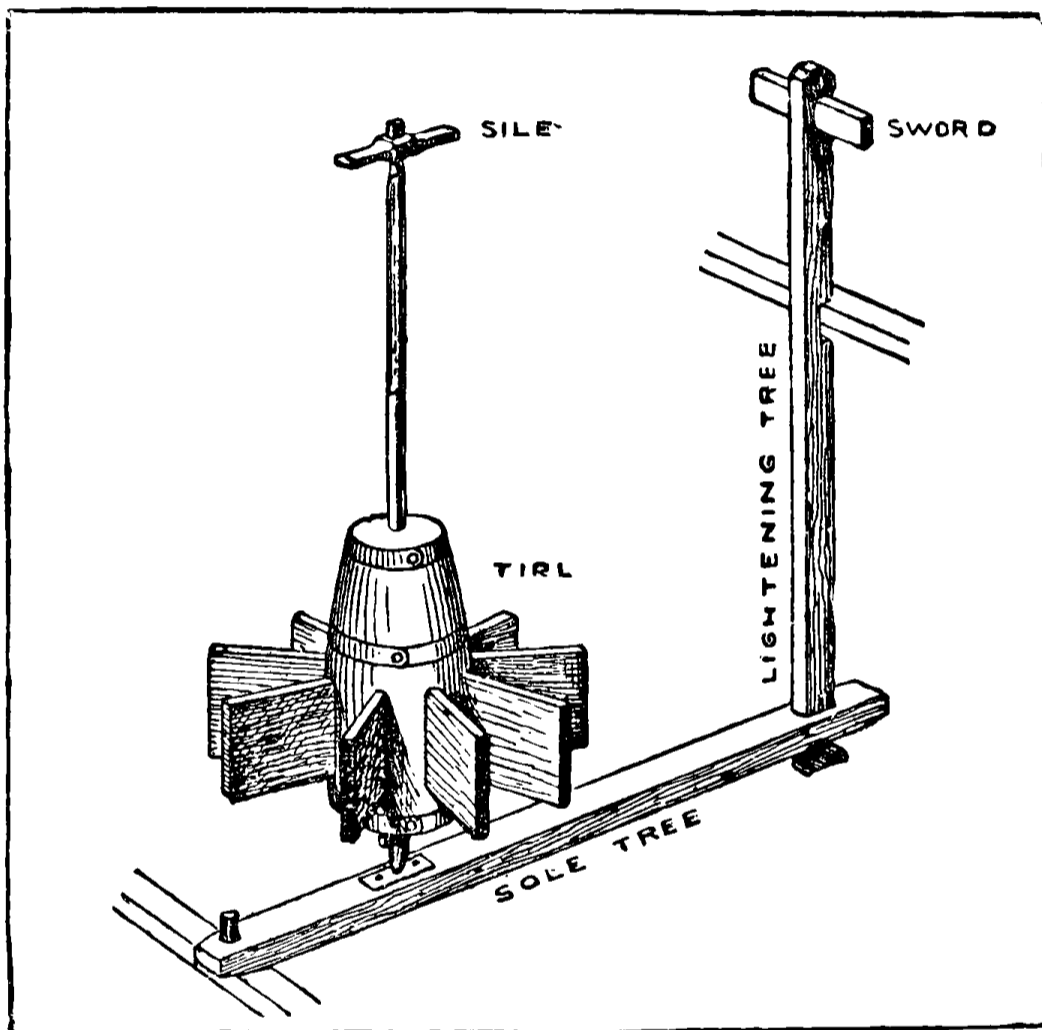


FIG. 3.—OLD SHETLAND MILL AT SOUND, LERWICK.

old, some it may be approaching a thousand years, patched and repaired from age to age as circumstances demanded. Up to fifty, or even twenty, years ago the distribution and arrangement of townships and of dwelling houses and offices in the older villages, we have reason to think, may have been but little changed from the days when the Norsemen, after displacing the Picts, settled down and completed their system of rural economics. A striking, if not perhaps very salubrious, illustration of this is the village of Sound (or “Sund”), near Lerwick, a place of great antiquity, as is expressed in the couplet :—

Sund was Sund when Lerwick was nane,  
Sund will be Sund when Lerwick is gane

It is to be apprehended that the broom the Sanitary Inspector of the County Council may ere long incur the anathema of antiquaries by the destruction of some of the most pregnant and significant characteristics of this and other old-world looking communities. Again, the mill-burns, and the quaintly diminutive native mills, working horizontally, to



(Drawn by Mr. J. Romilly Allen.)

FIG. 4.—TIRL (OR WATER WHEEL) OF MILL AND ADJUNCTS.

be found in every quarter of the country, and only now falling into decay, are other most telling survivals from a remote age, and thoroughly Norwegian in their design and practical working, as I have had occasion to point out elsewhere at considerable length,<sup>1</sup> and I shall not therefore allude to these further.

<sup>1</sup> "On the Horizontal Water Mills of Shetland," *Proceedings S. A. Scot.*, vol. xx., 1886.

Except deeds and documents, and always of course excepting what may be of local composition in the *Orkneyinga Saga*, we have in Shetland little or nothing of local literature from the early or even the late Norse period. The same may be said of personal ornaments or property, though it is true that a good many years ago a fine specimen of the large oval-shaped Viking brooch, which must have decorated the breast of a Northern warrior, was found in the island of Unst. It is now to be seen in the National Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh.

The "Visecks," or songs, and ballads, which were formerly recited and sung, and the "Sword Dance" of Papa Stour, may be last flickers of survivals from the Norse period; while many burial mounds, stone circles, and standing stones, in different parts of the islands, may commemorate departed Norsemen; but it is difficult, without examination by excavation, to discriminate what is Norse from what is Celtic in such remains. The learned Worsaae, Minister of Public Instruction in Denmark, now deceased, in his book which has been done into English as "An Account of the Danes and Norwegians in England, Scotland, and Ireland" (1852) has included Orkney and Shetland in the scope of his researches, and has given some valuable observations on the traces of the Norsemen in these islands, as these traces present themselves to the eye of a learned and sympathetic foreigner.

There are only two other characteristic objects of native use to which I may allude, viz., the Shetland Boat and the Bysmar, both essentially Scandinavian survivals in their form and equipments.

The larger trading and fishing boats, with high prow and stern post and square sails, to be seen on the Norwegian coast, are strikingly suggestive of the Viking ships of other days: and the smaller boats, though the points of difference are very apparent to the eye of an expert, wonderfully resemble in their general look the small craft common in Shetland. And when, in Bergen, we call a boat with the summons "Ho, flöt!" (or flöd), the mental apparition for a moment of the Lerwick "flit-boat" is irresistible, though the

flit-boat has acquired a more specific meaning in Shetland than its congener has in Norway, the significance in the latter case being much more general. It is no wonder that this strong resemblance should exist between the boats of Shetland and Norway, seeing that the boards for the clinker-built Shetland boats were, until comparatively recently, imported ready-made from Norway.

The bysmar, for long the ordinary weighing instrument in Shetland, as in Orkney, is now wholly discontinued, though I have myself seen it in use. Bysmars were formerly tested periodically, and stamped if correct, and a standard bysmar was kept for reference. The weights and measures, which corresponded with those formerly in use in Norway, were as follow, viz. :—

8 Ures (or ounces, Norse, <i>öre</i> )	=	1 Mark.
24 Marks	=	1 Lispund, Span, or Setteen.
6 Lispunds	=	1 Meil.
24 Meils	=	1 Last.
48 Cans of Oil or 15 Lispunds Butter	} =	1 Barrel.
12 Barrels, 180 Lispunds, or 576 Cans	} =	1 Last.

In the measurement of land 8 ures made 1 mark, and 18 marks 1 last: this land measurement being not a matter of *extent*, but of estimated value. Thus a mark of land of good quality might be small in extent, while a mark of inferior quality would be very much larger. The graduation of quality was fixed at an early date as so many pennies the mark—4, 6, 8, or 12, as the case might be (probably the amount of skat or other duty originally levied upon it). These distinctions in the description of land continued in legal instruments from age to age, and are probably still in use, though for long unintelligible even to the conveyancer, and practically of no value.

Wadmell (cloth), used in payment of rents and duties, was measured by the *cuttell*, or ell; and this native cloth was used for clothing until recently, if indeed it is not still in use.

These weights and measures, and the partition of the land descriptively into marks and ures, have been in use probably

from the early days of the Norse settlement; but the British standard of Imperial weights and measures has written the doom of all these, and the bysmar itself is now only a relic preserved by the curious. It has fallen out of use in Norway and Sweden in the same way; and I have seen it in one museum at least in those countries, preserved as an object of antiquity, precisely as it is in the National Museum in Edinburgh. But from very early times it was, with the *Pundlar*, the universal steel-yard, or weighing machine, of Scandinavia. It is figured somewhat roughly, but fairly accurately, in the *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*, by Olaus Magnus, Archbishop of Upsala, in Sweden, printed at Rome in the year 1555.

It is perhaps unnecessary to allude to the native Kollie, or oil lamp, now also fallen into disuse, though it was in almost every dwelling-house in Shetland, and in many houses in Orkney, until after the middle of the present century, because its use was not confined to these islands, an almost exactly similar form of oil lamp having been common in former times throughout Scotland and elsewhere. It is only its name, which is simply the Icelandic or old Norse *kola*, that gives to it its significance in connection with the present enquiry as a direct derivative in name and in use from the primitive lamp of the early Scandinavian settlers.

I have not, in this fragmentary sketch, referred to physiological tests, whether of stature, form, cranium, or complexion, nor to characteristic predilections, such as the love of the seaman's life, the stern courage that confronts danger and death on the ocean wave, though these all testify emphatically to the Shetlanders' claim of affinity to the Sea-Kings and the Vik-ings of ancient story. But I have endeavoured to glance at some of the outstanding features of the settlement of the isles by the Norsemen, at the form of land tenure and social condition in the course of time developed, at the Church and her possessions in the islands, and at the native laws and system of local administration during the Norse period, gradually subverted and assimilated to Scottish forms after the pledging of the isles to Scotland in 1468; while the still surviving traces of the Norsemen in the language, the place-

names, the historical remains, and the forms and usages of common life, have also passed briefly under notice. The fact of this kinship with the Norsemen for which I have contended has been recognised by competent authorities in Norway and Denmark. Reference has been made to the works of Worsaae and Munch, and to the philological researches of Mr. Jakob Jakobsen; and quite recently I have received from Dr. Daae, of Christiania, an extremely interesting pamphlet (in Norse) on the points of connection between Orkney and Shetland and the motherland of Norway since the date of the mortgage to Scotland in 1468.

There is also in my possession a Danish book entirely relating to Shetland, "*Eda. Et Sagn fra Shetlandsöerne*," i.e. "Eda. A Tradition of the Shetland Isles," published at Copenhagen, 1862. It contains sixteen poetical sketches, among others the following, viz. :—

<i>Shetlandsöerne,</i>	<i>i.e.</i>	The Shetland Isles.
<i>Patrick,</i>	„	Earl Patrick Stewart.
<i>Fiskerlejet,</i>	„	The Fisherman's Station.
<i>Hytten i Melby,</i>	„	The Cottage at Melby.
<i>Markedet i Lerwick</i>	„	The Market in Lerwick.
<i>Grunista,</i>	„	Grunista.
<i>Natten paa Scalloway,</i>	„	Night at Scalloway.
<i>Natten paa Grunista,</i>	„	Night at Grunista.

As is well known, *The Pirate* was translated into Danish, ("*Söroveren*") as into most European languages; but this was due no doubt rather to the fame of the author than to its specialty of interest. But upon the whole, in view of these contributions from Norwegian and Danish sources to the literature of the isles, it is a gratifying reflection that if we continue to cherish a longing esteem for our friends of Scandinavia, they too are not forgetful of us.

I trust that in working together the material which has passed under review I have in some measure succeeded in my contention that the Shetland Islands have been, and are, truly and essentially a settlement and home of Norsemen.

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DEEDS IN THE NORSE LANGUAGE RELATING TO  
SHETLAND.

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I.

No fewer than twenty-five deeds, in the old language, relating to Shetland, some in the Arna-Magnæan Collection, Copenhagen, and mostly printed in the *Diplomatarium Norvegicum*, have been reproduced in the *Diplomatarium Hialtlandense*, published (anonymously) by the late Mr. Arthur Lawrenson, Lerwick, 1886-1888.

II.

The following are printed in "Deeds relating to Orkney and Shetland, 1433-1581"—a small collection of ancient northern documents printed anonymously at Edinburgh in 1840:—

1. Deed of Sale, land in Walol, from Andrew Williamson to Simon Hognason. Signed in Unst, 1465.

2. Deed of Conveyance, by Olave Persson, Fedie, Norway, to David Sanderson, Reafirth, Yell; land in Whalsay. Bergen, 24th April, 1567.

3. Deed of Conveyance, by Niels Monson, native of Shetland, to David Sanderson; land in Yell. Bergen, 27th April, 1567.

4. Deed of Conveyance, Marion Sigursdaughter, of Bergen, to her dear relative, David Sanderson Skott; land in Fetlar. Bergen, 16th August, 1575.

5. Deed of Conveyance, Anna Sandersdaughter, widow of Hans Fonbois, Bergen, to her dear brother, David Sanderson Scott; land in Reafirth. Bergen, 18th August, 1575.

III.

The following documents have been discovered in recent years (1873-1894) by the writer of the preceding paper, either among the public records of the county, or in the charter chests of Shetland families. All of them have been translated and described in the *Proceedings* of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, from time to time:—

1. Confirmation, dated at Ayth, in Aythsting, 26th April, 1545, of a Succession settlement (or *Shuynd* Bill), of date 1516.

2. Confirmation, dated at Bergen, 1544, of a Sale by Niels Angusson to Jon, son of Magnus the Bønde, of land in Shetland. Done at Bergen, 1536.

3. Confirmation, by King Frederick the Third, of Denmark and Norway, of sale of land at Sumburgh, parish of Dunrossness. Dated at Copenhagen, 20th October, 1661.

4. Attestation of Sale of land in Unst, by Ingemund Endresson (Henderson) to William Skogsson. Dated at Sodereyd, 2nd August, 1551.

5. Agreement by Christian Jonnson Forsell (Fraser), burgher of Bergen, a native of Shetland, in reference to certain lands in Yell belonging to him. Dated at Bergen, 1594.

6. Mandate by the said Christian Jonnsson in favor of William Donnellsson Forsell, in Shetland, to act for him in drawing the rents of his property in Shetland. (Endorsed on preceding document.)

7. Receipt by Marete Suensdaughter (Margaret Shewan?) to James Spens. 1602.

8. Acknowledgment by William Monson (Manson) of his indebtedness for nine and a half dollars to Söerren Spens. Dated 18th December, 1607.

9. Deed of Sale by Herluff Lauritzon (Laurenson), burghess in Bergen, acting for behoof of Urim in Hardanger, of lands in Hillswick Bay, Shetland, to Andrew Smith. Dated at Bergen, 27th July, 1601.

10. Deed of Sale by Anna Oluffsdaughter to Magnus Thomessone (Thomson) in Scatsta, of a farm in Hamnavoe in Lunnasting. Dated at Bergen, 1537.

11. Acknowledgment by Anders Maath, of Houckeland (Andrew Mouat, of Hugoland), and his dear wife Else Trondsdaughter, of Erisfiordt, in Norway, of their indebtedness to the extent of 300 Rix dollars to Effuart Sincklar (Edward Sinclair) in Shetland. Signed at Gierisvig (Gierswick), in Norway. 20th June, 1597.

12. Commission by King Frederick the Fourth of Denmark to Magnus Sinclair, Captain of the ship *Leoparden* (The Leopard). Issued at Copenhagen, 21st April, 1627.

It is singular that, while so many original documents in Norse have been brought to light in Shetland, only one such document is known to have been found in Orkney, viz., Deed of Sale by Henrik Soost to Guttorme Georgeson and William Georgeson, of the land of Holland in Papa Westray. Dated 1452. One other Norse deed is in the possession of the representatives of my deceased friend, Mr. Arthur Laurenson, Lerwick. I despair of ever having the opportunity of introducing any more of these interesting old waifs and strays to public notice.



# A BOAT JOURNEY TO INARI.

BY ALFRED HENEAGE COCKS, M.A.

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It will hardly be offering an insult to the geographical knowledge of the members of even so learned a Society as the Viking Club, if I venture to assume that very few among my audience had ever heard the name Inari before they read it in the announcement of this evening's meeting.

And yet Inari, in Finland (or Enare, as the Norwegians call it; Swedish—Enåra; or in Lappish—Anar Javre), is one of the principal lakes of Europe, only exceeded in size by, I think, four others in Russia, and one in Sweden.

The Swiss and North Italian lakes, which probably a large majority of well educated persons take to be the principal lakes of Europe, are very considerably smaller. The largest of these—the lake of Geneva—is only some fifty miles long, by ten at its greatest breadth, while Inari covers something like seventy miles from north to south, by fifty from east to west; or, while Geneva is not much more than one-third the size of the county (Buckinghamshire) in which I live, Inari is far more than double the area of that county; that is to say, Lake Inari is just seven times the area of the Lake of Geneva.

Its surface is said to be studded with 1,700 islands, on which Scotch firs grow, without taking the smaller holms into account.

The boat journey I propose to describe was along the frontier of Norway and Russia, and into Finland, up the river Pasvig (as it is called in Norwegian, but more correctly by the Lappish name Patsjok), and across the magnificent Lake Inari, of which this river is the principal outlet. The river is not the mere "silver thread" that one usually

associates with the word, but is rather a succession of beautiful lakes, connected by short reaches of river tumbling over numerous waterfalls and rushing over frequent rapids; in some places two rivers, and even two series of lakes, run parallel for several miles, before they again join their forces in another lake. The whole of this tract of country, and many hundreds of miles further than I penetrated, is covered with virgin forest, except in those places where low mountain ranges raise their grim heads; and no accurate map of it exists. As I could not learn, while in the country, that any good map was to be had, I subsequently made enquiries in the Map-room of the Royal Geographical Society, where the courteous librarian showed me all that there are, but without adding much to my knowledge.

In venturing to give the following sketch of my journey, I may say that I have less hesitation in doing so, because, so far as I have been able to discover, in no language has this route been described, though three scientific Norwegian gentlemen of my acquaintance have published an account of a journey they made over a portion of it, and a French friend of mine, and whilom fellow-traveller, has likewise published in *Le Tour du Monde* an account of his journey over about the same portion. I also have been told of an Englishman who traversed about a like distance. Even in my own case, a friend started with me, but he was tied to a fixed date for his return to England, and had to turn back on the way.

Therefore, however badly I may tell my little tale, it will at any rate be one that you cannot find, better told, elsewhere.

Neither Murray, nor Bædeker, nor any other guide-book has a word to say about this part of the world. There is no road through it, but the swirling river provides the only means of transit through the virgin forest; and on the approach of night one is thankful if one finds oneself within reach of the tiny hut of a Laplander, or of a Finnish colonist, instead of having to pass a cold, very possibly frosty, night in the open air.

Along the river banks, as just suggested, is found a very sparse and partly migratory population, consisting of a few



Russian Laplanders; and Finns, or, as the latter are more properly called, to save confusion, Kvæns; the name Fin being, throughout Scandinavia, generally used to signify a Laplander. Towards the coast are a few Norwegian Laps, and further inland are a few Finnish Laps.

Of course the Kvæns or Fins are a civilised nation, and I need only mention the name of one individual—Baron Nordenskiöld—in proof; but those families who, forsaking civilisation, push their way to these out-of-the-way parts as colonists, are, in many instances, the scum of the nation, and include some very rough customers, far more brutish than the wildest Lap; though it would be ungrateful not to record that even among these Kvæn colonists some are most worthy and kindly members of society.

With the exception of the Samoyeds, living in the north-east of Russia—exclusively to the east of the White Sea—the Laplanders are far and away the most primitive people in Europe. They have diminished in numbers and prosperity very considerably since the harsh law was passed by the Russians, in 1811, which stops all Laplanders who are not Russian subjects from grazing their herds of reindeer on Russian territory. As the greater portion of Lapland proper is now included in the vast domains of the Czar, while comparatively few Laps cared to become his subjects, and those few have hardly any reindeer, it will be in some degree understood how cruel an edict this was to this diminutive people. I say diminutive advisedly, because few Lap men exceed five feet four inches in height, while the women are very frequently under five feet—four feet eleven inches being perhaps their average height.

The Laplanders are now divided among four nations, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Each have their own idiosyncrasies; but while excellent accounts have been published of the two former branches, very little is known in literature about the two latter divisions. The Laplanders have always had an attraction for me since I first, as a very small boy, saw a highly coloured fancy picture of a Laplander travelling in his *kjerris* or reindeer sledge, with the aurora borealis blazing away behind him. But in later days I find

the reality hardly less interesting—for instance, their extreme primitiveness, and the fact that they do not belong to the great Aryan family of mankind. That is to say, before the nations now looked upon as the natural inhabitants of very nearly the whole of Europe, first made their appearance on this continent, the Laplanders were already in Europe; and, though their early history is a mere blank, there is no doubt that they were distributed much further south, and were an infinitely more important nation than now.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Friis, of Christiania, in his “Lappisk Mythologi” (published 1871) estimates their numbers to be:—In Norway, 17,178, besides 1,900 half-breeds; in Sweden, 7,248; in Finland about 1,200; and in Russian Lapland about 2,000. That is, under 30,000 in all.

A fortnight after leaving England, if we go direct, one arrives, bag and baggage, at the nastly little town of Vardö, at the north-east extremity of Norway. On this most dreary little island I have spent, in different years, many weeks, as it is about the best place to see whales and whaling.

Whales getting scarce as the season of 1888 came to an end, my friend Captain Ingvald Bryde, of the whaler *Thekla*, gave my companion Mr. Balfour, and myself, a passage across in her to Syd Varanger, where he was going for the double purpose of visiting his wife's relations and putting his ship on a convenient ground for scraping the barnacles, etc., off the bottom before running home.

On our passage we passed three whales being towed in by whalers to the whale establishments in Bussesund; and in due course entered Bögfjord, and, steaming some forty miles up it, and up the inner Klosterfjord, we dropped anchor just at the mouth of the river Patsjok, and right in front of the windows of Elvenæs, the hospitable house of another old friend of mine—Herr Klerk<sup>2</sup>—whose ancestor—by name Clark—had emigrated from Scotland some two centuries or more ago.

After a sojourn at that desolate spot, Vardö, the only variety

<sup>1</sup> Even if we do not accept the theory that these people are the modern representatives of Palæolithic man.

<sup>2</sup> Since then, I regret to say, deceased.



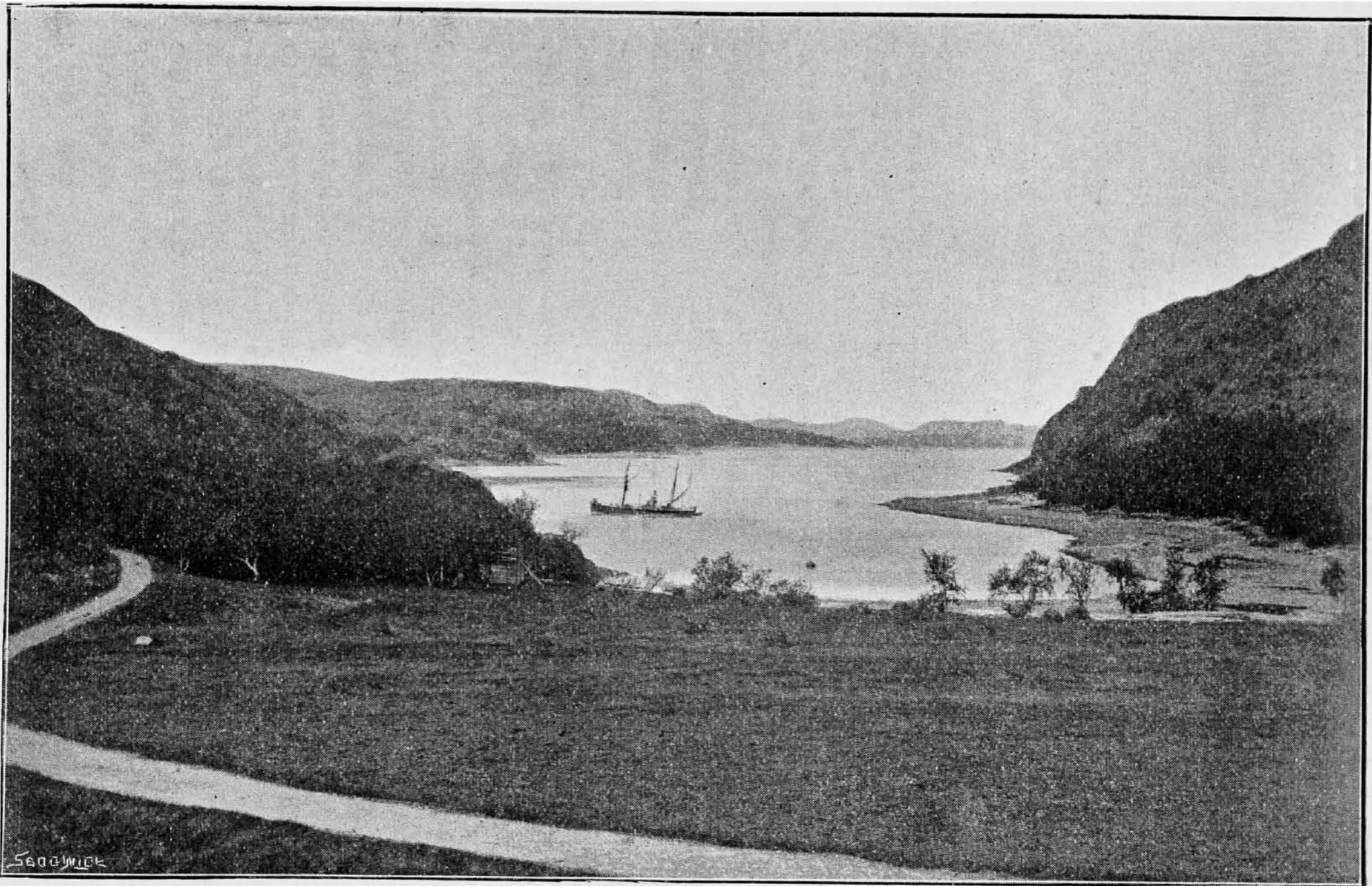


FIG. 1.—KLOSTERFJORD FROM ELVENÆS, LOOKING N. (MOUNTAINS 40 MILES DISTANT, THE WHALER POINTS TO MOUTH OF PATSJOK, OR PASVIG).



to which during some weeks had been the frowning cliffs and barren rocks of all the rest of the Finmarken coast, the contrast afforded by the comparatively low hills, and valleys thickly covered by birch and other trees, that we find all around us on entering Klosterfjord<sup>1</sup> is extremely pleasant.

The view of Klosterfjord from Elvenæs, looking north [Fig. 1], I took just in front of the house, so that this is actually the view seen from Elvenæs. The mountains far down the fjord are about forty miles distant. At anchor, at the head of the fjord, lies the little whaler *Thekla*, which brought us to this beautiful spot. Just behind the low bushes, almost at the spot to which the vessel's head points in the view, the river debouches into the fjord. The road which is seen running across the foreground is something to be made much of, for it is not less than fourteen miles in length, and runs from Kirkenæs on the west, to Jarfjord on the east, and is the only specimen of a road within hundreds of miles.

The second illustration [Fig. 2] gives a view taken a few hundred yards from the previous one, but looking in the opposite direction—south or *up* the river. The nearest piece of water shown is the actual head of the fjord, and is sea-water. Immediately above is the house “Elvenæs,” which means “River-promontory,” and there the promontory is, dividing, up to the very last possible moment, the salt water from the fresh. It is a lovely country, possessing almost every combination of hill and mountain, wood and water, that is wanted to insure charming scenery. A short scramble up the hills to the left of the picture, the view is even more beautiful; I counted seventeen lakes in sight at once, without reckoning small mountain tarns. A short distance up the west bank of the river, that to our right hand in the picture, Russia begins; and at the bend, about two miles distance from Elvenæs, is the little Russian Lap village of Boris Gleb. It is past there, and away into the dim distance, that our journey lies. Those two miles of water which look so smooth are really far worse to get up, even at the best of times, than the Thames is in the biggest flood; and at ebb-tide it is simply an impossibility to do so.

<sup>1</sup> Monastery fiord.

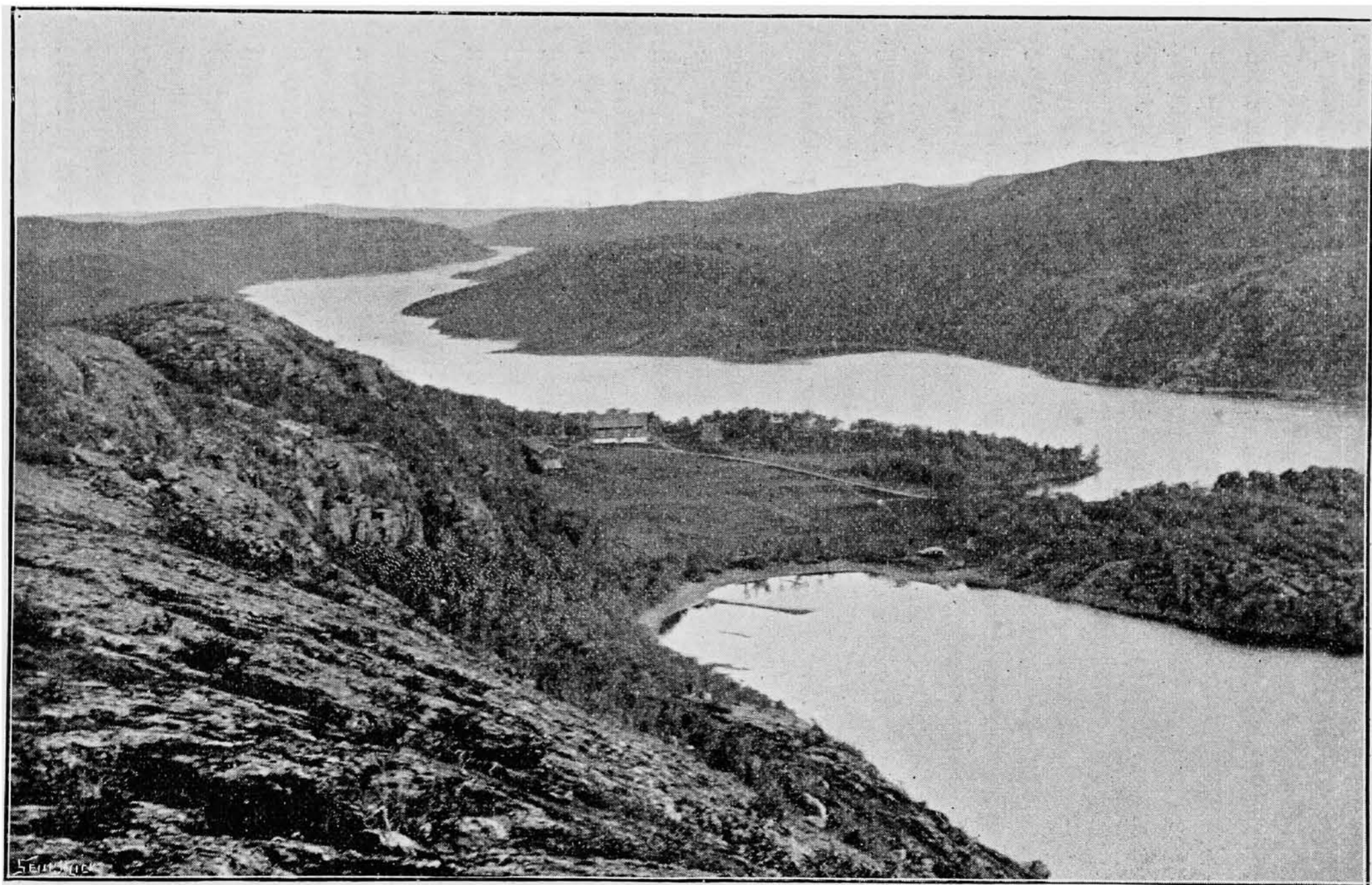


FIG. 2.—ELVENÆS, LOOKING SOUTH (RUSSIA IN BACKGROUND, HEAD OF FJORD IN FOREGROUND).

Herr Klerk kindly sent a messenger to the Russian Lap village to say we wanted men, and made the preliminary arrangements for us, specially arranging that a man named Philip Ivanivitch should be one of the number, because he could speak Norwegian fairly well—which, as my knowledge of the Russian language is limited to about a dozen words, and of the Lap language to an even smaller number, was a point worth considering.

Philip had once sailed a voyage in a Norwegian sailing-smack to the White Sea, as cook ; and had accompanied the smack all the way back round the coast as far as Throndhjem, and in consequence, considered himself quite a man of the world. Amongst other accomplishments, he had learned to smoke, being the only *Skolte* (as the Russian Laps are called), at least among those that I have met, who does so. It is perhaps rather incongruous that I, who am a non-smoker, should be putting forth the use of tobacco as a sign of civilisation, but if you will just think how universal a habit smoking is, you will realise that its non-practice, which may be overlooked in an individual, becomes very marked when characteristic of an entire nation, or of a branch of a nation.

A characteristic of the Russian Laps, differentiating them from the other three divisions of their nation, is their extreme light-heartedness and cheerfulness ; and Philip having a full share of this individuality, he was, at least in this respect, a very good travelling companion. He was a great character, and many of his sayings and doings were extremely comic.

It was a matter of some interest, in meeting so simple a child of nature, who had once in his life been to a town (Throndhjem), to glean from him what had specially struck him in this artificial state of society. I found that what had principally impressed him was the immense aggregate of lights in the windows of the houses after dark. In their primitive way of living the Russian Laps have neither candles nor lamps, and their only way of distinguishing objects in their huts at night-time is to stir the wood fire into a blaze. What they do during the long winter darkness I do not know. We may, therefore, to some extent appreciate the astonishment of this man, suddenly landed in a town, at

finding a bright light shining from one or more windows of every house wherever he wandered in the long streets.

When we had come to terms to our mutual satisfaction at a personal interview, we suggested a start within the next day or so; but the idea of hurry was quite beyond the Laps' comprehension. They said they could not be ready under some three days, and explained, in answer to my enquiries, that they would have to wash their clothes. If you could see these dirty little scarecrows, the idea of washing their clothes would be irresistibly comic, and also the further idea which suggested itself, as to what they were to do while their wives were busy at the wash-tub; for, by their own showing, the clothes they stood in were their only suit. They must, it followed, go about meanwhile *in puris naturalibus*, for lying in bed would not solve the difficulty, because they possess no bedclothes!

However, on August 29th we at last made a start. The boats have to be as small and light as possible, on account of the *portages*, and also because a tiny boat can dodge in and out in innumerable instances between rocks in a rapid, where a large boat would stick hopelessly fast. My friend and I each therefore occupied a separate "Bask," as these little Lap boats are called, accompanied by two natives apiece; Philip being headman of my boat, and the spokesman and general "gaffer" of the party.

When we reached the Lap village [Fig. 3], our men begged leave to go home and dine. These Russian Laps are, as I have already said, with the exception of the Samoyeds, the most primitive people in Europe; and except that they nowadays buy most of their clothes instead of making them for themselves, and have added to their food-supply such luxuries as coffee and sugar, are living now almost exactly the same manner of life as their ancestors did thousands of years ago, ages before Julius Cæsar first set foot in Britain. They have huts built in various localities, some singly, others in groups forming quite a little village, as this one; and they migrate from one to another according to the fishing season.

This tribe or community, consisting of twelve households, has its headquarters at a spot about three days' journey

higher up the river. At Christmas they come down to a place about one day's journey above Boris Gleb, and they only reside here (at Boris Gleb) for a few weeks about Easter; and even then the men are away a great part of the time at the sea-fishing. Individuals, however, move about as suits their own convenience, and there are generally, as was the case at this time, some few residing there, from among whom we had engaged our boats' crews.

Boris and Gleb were two Russian Saints, and their names are given to a tiny Russian church, built of logs, which has been standing here for some three hundred years. The history of it is as follows:—Some time in the sixteenth century a monk from Novgorod, named Trifan, set out for the north to convert the savage inhabitants to Christianity. After, as we may well suppose, long wanderings, about which I regret that I know nothing, he reached this beautiful spot fully eight hundred miles from Novgorod as the crow flies, but we should be safe in estimating his journey at more like double this. At first, and before he had established himself in that neighbourhood, he used to live in a cave in the face of the cliff, near the head of the fjord, which is only accessible at high water. (He may, of course, for all I know, have got over the inconvenience of being dependent on the tide, by a ladder, but tradition does not mention this detail.) To this day "Trifan's Hole" is considered an object of great veneration among the Russian Laps; in fact, except in name, it is regarded precisely in the same way as were the old heathen *Seidas*, or idols, consisting of some particular rock or boulder, of which I much doubt whether the worship has entirely died out even now. Whenever Russian Laps pass down the river on their way to the sea-fishing, they stop at Trifan's Hole, and try to ensure good luck by a propitiatory offering to the Saint of a small coin, or a little bit of bread that has been blessed by the priest.

There are, also, up the river, a few Norwegian Laps who are Lutherans, and when *they* pass down to the sea-fishing *they* also visit Trifan's Hole, not to propitiate the Saint with further offerings, but to appropriate to their own use those which they may find there. When the Russian Laps return





FIG. 3.—RUSSIAN LAP HAMLET OF BORIS GLEB (SNOW SHOES ON SIDE OF HOUSE, REINDEER SLEDGES BENEATH).

from the sea they again visit the cave, and, far from being upset at the disappearance of the votive gifts, are delighted to think that the holy Trifan has deigned to accept their little offerings! On a visit I paid to the cave I found it decorated with a dilapidated old Russian sacred picture, picked up from a wreck, and several little scraps of mouldy bread, too far gone then to be worth any Norwegian Lap's while to appropriate.

Most of the Russian Lap villages or settlements are only used for a certain number of years—I think a little over two generations, or, say seventy years, would be about an average; then when the fuel within easy reach is all burnt, and the bulk of the fish caught, they desert that exhausted spot and build fresh huts elsewhere. Boris Gleb however, being handy for the sea-fishing, and also no doubt partly on account of the sacredness of the spot associated with the holy Trifan, is a permanent settlement.

The huts are very tiny: they consist of a single room eight or nine feet square, some having the addition of a small entrance-lobby or passage. In the room is an open fireplace (no grate, of course, as the fuel is wood, not coal). A plank bench running along one or two sides, forms the family's beds; there are no bedclothes of any description, everyone sleeping in his or her clothes. If the family are more in number than they can squeeze, small as they are, on to the benches, they lie about on the floor.

Sometimes there is a small bracket table, and occasionally a low stool or two; but these are not universal luxuries. A small *eikon* (Russian sacred picture) of the commonest kind, a woman's workbag, a flint and steel and tinder bag, an iron pot, a small kettle, and perhaps a knapsack or box, and one or two wooden spoons (Russian pattern), complete the furniture. As not one of them can read or write, one never finds a book of any description among the Russian Laps. This is in marked contrast to the Norwegian and Swedish Laps, who (so far, at least, as my experience goes) can very nearly all read and write, thanks to the excellent provision of itinerant school-masters provided by Government.

The cupolas of the church visible in the picture are not those

of Trifan's little old church, which lies to one side, but they belong to a more imposing modern edifice, which was built by command of the Czarivitch (the last Czar), after a visit he paid to the place in 1874. No doubt the Czarivitch was a very good man, who, struck with the senile decay of the little old church, in a very commendable spirit of paternal care for the spiritual welfare of this handful of despised Laps, thought they ought to have a newer and larger church: but, at the same time, one cannot help the uncharitable thought that this spot is a sort of *promontory* of the Russian Empire, a wedge running far into other people's territories, which might at some not distant date prove of great value, and so old-established a church would be a very good title-deed.

The only Russians here are the priest and his family, and the clerk and *his* family. The priest, or *pope* as he is styled in Russian, is an old friend having made his acquaintance in 1881. His name is Constantin Schecoldin. I photographed him standing at the doors of the new church: the old church would almost pass through them. He cannot talk much Norwegian, and as he has a habit of bursting into a laugh every time a word fails him, his conversation in that language is not easy to follow. His wife, however, speaks Norwegian well. They are a most kindly couple, and while the Russian priests generally bear, if one is to credit even half the stories one hears about them, very indifferent characters, this pope is, I fully believe, a most worthy man. I have travelled occasionally in company with him and his wife; and have several times been in his house, and on one occasion had supper there, and I hope it is not a breach of hospitality to say a little about this supper. Before supper-time, we refreshed ourselves with a glass or two of *vodki*, the universal Russian spirit, besides a cup of tea from the never failing *samovar*, or urn. When supper was ready, the principal dish consisted of a *bolshai pirok*, or big pie, and big it certainly was, for it consisted of a whole salmon, skin, bones, and all, rolled up in pie-crust. To drink we had unlimited libations of tea. Russians always drink tea out of a tumbler, and add a slice of lemon instead of milk; but my hosts, being aware of the eccentric habits of foreigners,



provided me with a cup and saucer. When I had drunk some half-dozen cups, I pulled up, and declined any more; but found I was so completely out of it that, for company's sake, I was obliged at last to ask them to let me change my mind, and began again. Finally, I suppose I disposed of about a dozen good-sized cups, but I do not think I am exaggerating in saying that the Russians drank about thirty tumblerfuls a piece.

To resume the journey: When the Laps returned from dinner, we made our first portage to the top of the neighbouring waterfall, called *Russian Lap*, or *Paste Waterfall*: but did not have to drag the boats, as the Laps had others already on the upper water. An hour's row thence, with one short turn overland, brought us to the second waterfall, which is a double one; the upper fall is perfectly smooth, with about fifteen feet drop; the lower one is about thirty yards further down the stream, and is entirely broken water, and perhaps twenty feet drop. The salmon get up the first waterfall by the Lap village, but this one stops them. It is called *Hare Waterfall*, because, according to the Laps, when its sides are frozen in winter the hares cross the river at it, jumping from one piece of ice to another.

Thus we proceed—sometimes a row for a while against a moderately strong stream, sometimes fighting our way inch by inch up a swirling rapid, while the water flows into the boat, all over our baggage—*anyhow!* If things get very bad, one of the Laps will suddenly jump overboard, breast high, or even nearly to his armpits, and hold the boat in position while the other tries to gain ground by poling or punting. Then if even that won't do, we go ashore, and the work of portaging is gone through.

The Laps, especially Philip, are very communicative, and point out all the objects of interest as we pass. We reach a lake, at the near end of which Philip has a "house"—that is, a tiny hut—for these migratory people, living entirely by fishing, have various abodes, according to the season. This lake is called by the Laps, though it is not its official name, "Whale Lake," from a rounded boulder which shows above the water much resembling a moderate-sized whale—in fact



FIG 4.—DINNER TIME AFTER PORTAGE ROUND MAIDO-GUÖSK.

“very like a whale.” Further on, a little holm is called “The Lap’s Hat,” from its supposed resemblance to the knitted caps worn by the Russian Laps. Further on again, I am shown “The Seal Rock,” looking very like one of those animals swimming high in the water. A portage past a waterfall at the top of this lake brings us to another lake, and we proceed up this, while it gradually gets dark, but presently a waning moon comes out brightly, and we keep on until past eleven o’clock, when we reach the house of a Kvæn named Per Pedari. We found, as usual with these people, the whole family sleeping in one room, to which group our Laps were soon added, but they made a shake-down of hay for the two English guests in an outhouse.

I must not stop to tell you how incorrect the maps proved hereabouts, or of other geographical details; but pass on, just mentioning that as we went on our way next morning it was a pretty sight to see an osprey swoop down on to the water and carry off a trout of nearly half-a-pound weight for his breakfast.

Fig. 4 shows dinner-time at the end of a portage. The boats have been dragged round Maido-güosk, which means “the Milk-white Fall,” and before relaunching them a halt is called for refreshment. The figure on the left is Philip, wearing his greasy old sealer’s cap; next to him is Ivan Ivanivitch. The elderly man who looks like a lascar is Ilya (Elias); he is an illustration of the reason why these people are commonly known as *Skolter Lapper*—“Skull Laps”—for the nasty complaint, ringworm, from which they nearly all suffer, has entirely denuded his head of hair. The fourth man is named Féodor Jephimvitch.

Late in the afternoon we reached the biggest waterfall on the river, being, according to my estimate, not far short of 300 yards in width. The portage round the falls took us over two hours, and entailed some pretty hard work. It was quite late in the evening when I took the photograph of this fall [Fig. 5] which is named in Lappish *Rämä Güosk*; and though, owing to the bad light, it is not a good photograph, yet I have thought it worth producing here.

Our progress all day was very slow, owing to a strong



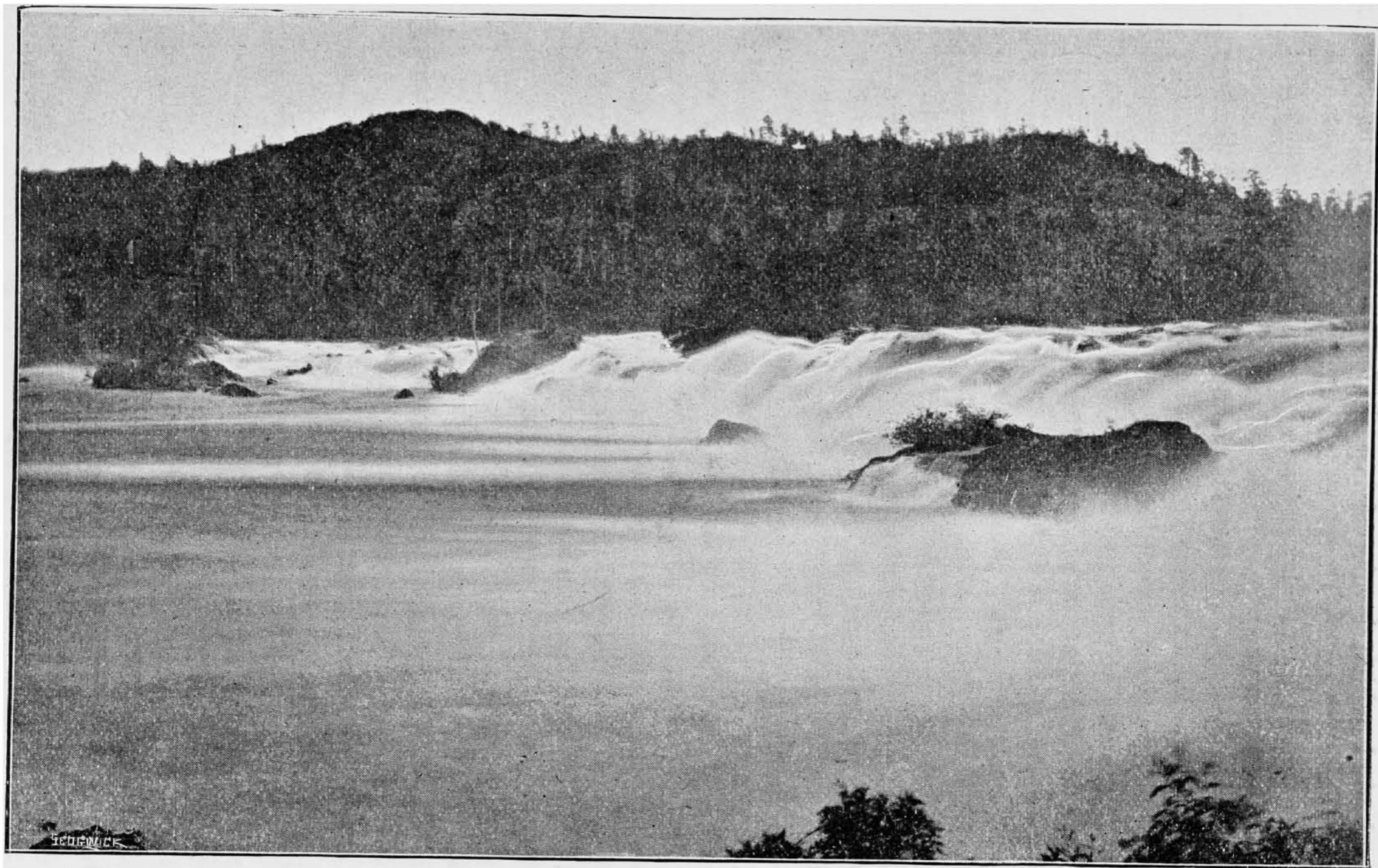


FIG. 5.—RÄMÄ-GUÖSK, THE BIGGEST FALL ON THE RIVER.

head wind, which developed latterly into a furious gale, and we had to abandon all hopes of reaching a hut to pass the night in; so we hauled the boats ashore and slept under one of them turned up.

A summer trip down the Thames has of late years become so universal an experience, but remains with so many their only experience of a boat journey, that I may perhaps remark how different an affair that is to an autumn journey on a river above N. lat. 69°. The one is playing at roughing it, the other is the real article. Not only is there the difference in temperature to put up with—we frequently had to lie out in the open at night, with no covering but a little boat turned over, in several degrees of frost—but whereas at home, if we discover we have forgotten something, or lost something, or get sick of bad weather, we never have more than a couple of miles or so to go before we come to a public-house, where we can obtain all necessary accommodation, and if by some accident our boat suffer shipwreck, or we ourselves get sick or sorry, we are at no point any great distance from a railway station, and in the course of a very few hours we are at home; and even if we do not feed entirely in the public scattered plentifully along the riverside, we can always get a loaf of bread, fresh meat, and any other luxury, several times a day. Here, should anything have been forgotten, it has to be done without; anything lost overboard, or left behind at a portage, cannot be replaced. The boats are very tiny, and a large supply of food cannot be taken: you must trust chiefly to your fishing-rod and your skill in using it, and in a lesser degree to your gun. All the food at each meal has to be cooked by yourself, except where, in one or two places, a Kvæn's hut is reached, when the goodwife will do this much for you. No food, except, just at that time of year, a few small potatoes, can be bought on the way, and no fresh bread procured until you arrive at the terminus of your journey, where you are kindly given some as a present. Instead of friendly locks to take the place of rapids, each waterfall or rapid in turn has to be overcome in the best way one can, and though I never suffered complete shipwreck, all my belongings got soused, more or less completely, several times.

My French friend, already mentioned, who traversed a portion of this route a few years ago, came to complete grief at one of the rapids, the boat being capsized, and its occupants left to fight their way out of the turmoil of waters as best they could, while of course all the less buoyant articles of his baggage took advantage of their opportunity and were no more seen—a very serious disaster.

At all the waterfalls and worst rapids we have to make a portage, dragging the boat overland, and then carrying all the goods and chattels in loads on our backs, to the further side of the broken water; and sometimes this is a long distance; I think our longest portage on this river was about two miles. In places where the rise of the land is sudden, it is as much as all hands can do to get a boat up; but where the portage was an easy one, and all plain sailing, I used to leave this to the Laps, and hurry on to the other end, and make the most of my time fishing for the day's commissariat, so as not to waste time from the journey.

At one such place, I was wading over the smooth, rounded boulders forming the bed of the river, in my smooth-soled sea-boots, which of course have no nails in them, when I slipped, and fell flat into the water. You know how at home under these circumstances one would run home and change, or at least, if up the Thames, put in to the next public and do so, but there, I merely spliced the top of my rod, which was broken in my fall, and went on fishing; and on the arrival of the boat, got in and proceeded, for up there you don't take your clothes off night or day, whatever happens.

The next day, after landing five times at as many big rapids (besides small ones, up which the boat is forced without the business of landing)—in lovely scenery—we reach a beautiful lake called Vagetim, and, four hours later, we arrive at an island on it named Sevi Suolo, on which is a little village of some ten huts, one of the abodes of the same tribe or community of Russian Laps that we first meet with at Boris Gleb near the mouth of the river, and from which our crews are drawn.

The huts here are of much the same style of architecture as they were at Boris Gleb, but among them there is one

consisting, like the rest, of a single room, but a good size larger than any of the Laps' huts, which belongs to Herr Klerk, and which he had built for the rare occasions on which he comes up here, and, meanwhile, it is made free use of by the Laps, and as a matter of course was allotted to our use as a guest-house. The Laps kept walking in and out, however, all the evening, without ceremony.

In every fresh hut we entered I found Philip's loquaciousness of great use in a way he little dreamt of. In wandering among primitive people I have got almost to *dread* the arrival among a fresh household, from the constantly recurring catechism one is put through—"Where are you from? Are you an Englishman? Where are you going to? Are you very rich? What is your name? How old are you? Are you married? Is your father still living?" and so on *ad nauseam*. To Philip, however, it was always a very proud moment to be in a position to give information as to the Englishman, and he never tired of it; and as the simple Laps always look at you while they are talking about you, I knew from the length of his conversations that he must have known (or at least professed to know) a very great deal about me; though, as the conversations were always carried on in Lappish, I had no means of gauging the accuracy of his statements. However, if I was saved the catechism,—that was all that mattered to me.

The bed-place in this hut consisted, Lap-fashion, of a wide shelf, on which were the well-worn remains of birch-branches, and a few scraps of filthy rags. I got our men to remove all these, and to bring instead some fresh birch boughs, than which one can wish for nothing cleaner: but, to my horror, all our numerous Lap visitors used the bed as a seat, and manners, of course, forbade my mentioning that I should feel obliged by their not depositing their filthy little carcasses on my fresh bed!

The next picture [Fig. 6] will give you some idea of our company as taken next morning. The very tall figure on the right is a Norwegian Fish, or Sea, Lap, named Anders Frederiksön; he has no doubt got some Norwegian blood in him from his size, as has the man behind him. The man on



Philip  
Ivanivitch.

Maria,  
Philip's wife.

Ivan  
Ivanivitch.

Ilya.

Anders'  
wife & child.

Jon  
Anderson  
Sare.

Anders  
Frederiksön.  
Féodor Jephimvitch.



L  
2

FIG. 6.—GROUP OF LAPLANDERS AT SEVVI SUOLO, ON VAGETIM JAVRE.



whose shoulder Anders's hand rests is another Norwegian Lap, and a very intelligent, nice fellow, by name Jon Andersön Sare. He wrote down for me several of the local names, which are, of course, difficult to catch correctly orally, and drew a little map of a portion of the lake I was asking him about. At his feet sit Anders's wife and little child. The man in the corner is Féodor, holding a puppy, which struggled just at the wrong moment. Next to Jon Sare comes bald-headed Ilya, and Ivan next to him. In the extreme further corner of the photograph appears just half of Philip, and the old woman between him and Ivan is Maria, Philip's wife.

Jon Sare afterwards stood for his portrait in full winter costume, and wearing a very handsome silver-gilt belt, which was the property of Anders Frederiksön's wife until I bought it.

Having shown what the gentlemen in that part of the country are like, I next exhibit a picture devoted exclusively to ladies [Fig. 7]. I need not descant upon their charms, because you can see them for yourselves.

We saw here the remains of a Black-throated Diver (*Colymbus arcticus*), which had flown so hard against a fir-tree that its pointed beak set fast in it, and so remained on our arrival.

Féodor left us here, to go and see after his reindeer, his father Jephim taking his place; the facetious Philip promptly dubbed him "Gamel Papa" (Old Papa).<sup>1</sup> It was nearly eleven o'clock before we were off, because Ilya's breakfast wasn't cooked. Uncivilised people have no idea of time, and I have constantly in other journeys with Laps had to rout them out.

We put up that night at a Kvæn's house. There are two families at that spot, each having a tiny, one-roomed house "semi-detached," with a door communicating between the two. We occupied the house of a family whose name I don't know; all the members of it (an unknown quantity) apparently contrived to squeeze somehow into the other house,

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps intended by Philip to signify "Grandpapa," but it is not the Norwegian for that relationship.

whose owner's name was Isak Kivilompola, but I don't know how they managed to do so, for, though the Laps slept outside, it would leave at least four adults and several children to curl up in a mansion barely eight feet square, from which area has to be deducted not only the usual fire-place, which cuts off a large corner, but there was also a loom, which



FIG. 7.—RUSSIAN LAP WOMEN AT SEVVI SUOLO.

occupied considerably over one-third of the remaining space.

For beds the women brought us in reeking wet grass, and though they put over this a thin stratum of hay, our beds were more than decidedly *damp*.

The next night, not reaching any hut by 9.15, we again lay in the open, with a boat turned over us; and it may be noticed here that one of these boats is so small as scarcely to cover

two men lying lengthways. It was so dark as to be difficult to carry out the various details of unpacking, cooking, etc., but whenever a light was specially needed "Gamel Papa" came to the rescue with what Philip called a tallow candle, in the shape of a fir torch.

The forest, on the edge of which we camped, stretches away for hundreds of miles, and has never been cut, and except that Laps have, doubtless, at different times been through portions of it, is practically unexplored.

While ashore at one of the portages this day, I first met with what, in my opinion, is the best fruit I have ever tasted, the Arctic raspberry (*Rubus arcticus*); it is very sweet, with a delightful flavour of honey; there are no pips in this rare fruit, and the stems are without thorns. The common raspberry, I may remark, is very common everywhere in the north of Europe, from England upwards. There is a third species, *Rubus saxatilis*, found in northern Lapland, not so rare as *arcticus*, but the fruit is like a bad raspberry; it has very large pips, and the stems have slight thorns. The two northern species have very similar leaves.

In the evening we saw a fire on the bank, so made for it, and found two Finnish Laps from the direction of Inari. We camped with them, and turned a boat up again for bedroom.

In the morning the two Finnish Laps also travelled in the same direction as ourselves, going homewards.

We met a party of two more Finnish Lap men and one woman, who had caught (in nets) a large quantity of fine trout. Some distance on again, we saw smoke on the river bank, so made for it, and found the picturesque little encampment of Finnish Laps [Fig. 8], together with a lad who does not appear in the picture. Besides this *Gamme* (=hut) of bark, there was a small tent; and by the side of the old gentleman may be noticed a rifle, quite recently made by a Lappish smith, with a flint-lock of the pattern known as snaphaunce, which was in use in England about the time of Elizabeth or James I.

The two Laps we met last night also pulled up here, and I now engaged one of them, named Petter Nellim, as pilot

across the Lake Inari, and to provide a larger boat, as the little cockle-shell used on the river would not have lived long in a very moderate sea on the huge lake we were now approaching. My friend being due at home by a fixed date kept on as he was, as his time was nearly up; and soon afterwards turned round and made the best of his way back.

Three hours' row above this little encampment 'brought us



FIG. 8.—ENCAMPMENT OF FINNISH LAPS AT GAVOS (BIRCHBARK HOVEL AND SNAPHAUNCE RIFLE).

to Petter's house (Nellim), beautifully situated in a creek close to the outlet of Lake Inari into the river, where he has made quite a clearing in the forest.

Petter hospitably invited the Russian Laps to dinner, so, though it was only 6 o'clock, we decided to stay the night there. This is a most flourishing place, Petter being the most energetic Lap I ever remember meeting.



The Laps being, as already mentioned, now divided among four nationalities, many, perhaps most of them, speak not only their native Lappish, but the language of the country to which they belong as well; thus Petter being a Finnish Lap, spoke Kvænsk as well as Lappish; also a very little Swedish, and, for all I know to the contrary, may have spoken a little Russian also; anyway his dual nationality gave him a complete *alias*, for while in one language he was known as Petter Nellim, in the other he was called Pehr Pehrsön Sajets. He is a somewhat truculent-looking individual, and perhaps somewhat morose, a man who could hardly see a joke, and, even if he did, would look rather surprised than amused at it, forming a great contrast to the merry little Skolter Laps, who, enjoyed a joke to the utmost, and never tired of it, but would keep on repeating it day after day. For instance, in the course of conversation one day, but *à propos* of what I forget, I remarked that we had a saying in England that it was no use to lock the stable door after the horse was stolen. They quite saw the force of the remark, and were delighted, and kept on repeating the proverb several times a day all the rest of the time I was with them, with roars of laughter.

At Petter's house I picked up an implement of considerable interest, ethnologically: namely a tool made of wood and reindeer horn, for breaking up the large sheets in which the inner bark is stripped off the Scotch fir-trees. This inner bark is boiled down and made soup of. I have never met with another example of this tool; though formerly in times of scarcity, even in the south of Norway, the inner bark of the Scotch-fir was used to eke out the supply of flour in bread-making.

In Finland everyone who gets into trouble has his conviction recorded against him in the register of his parish, and so I found, later on, that Petter was convicted in 1880 of receiving stolen goods. For all that, I liked Petter, and should be very glad to renew my acquaintance with him.

We had a fine sailing breeze, fresh to strong, from about N.E. by E., and we made progress in a way which was quite astonishing after our continual struggle up the strong stream of the river. Petter proved himself a capable boatman and a

competent pilot, knowing his way among the hundreds of

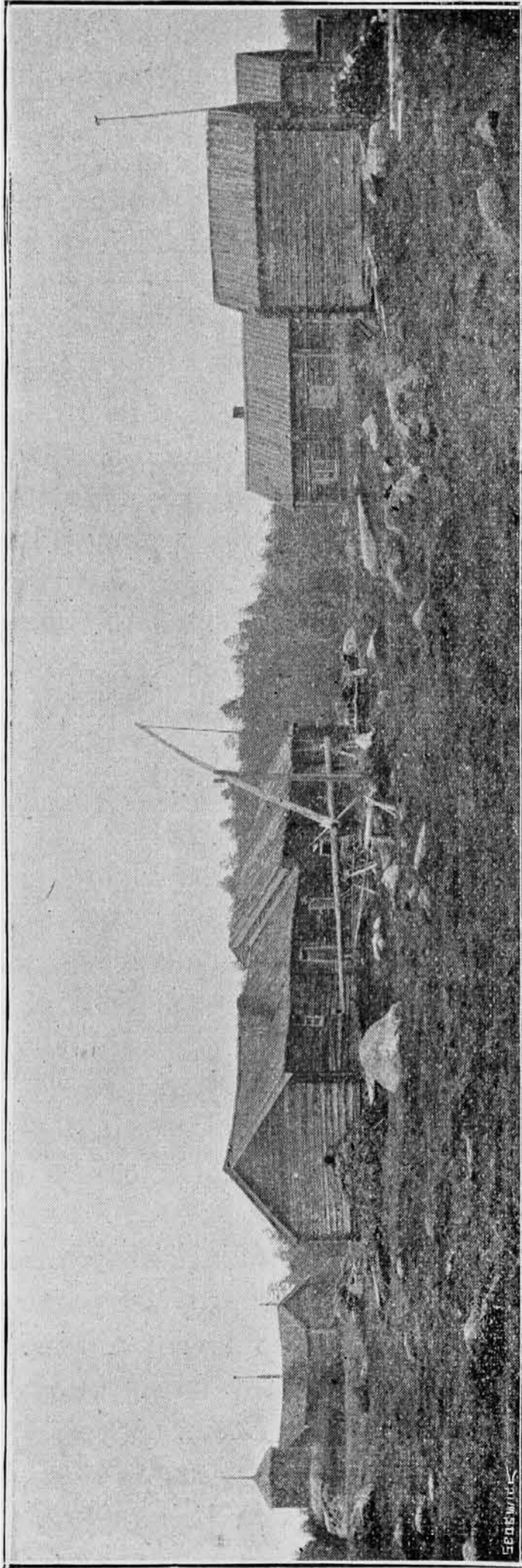


FIG. 9.—OLD HAMLET OF INARI, WEST SIDE OF LAKE (NOW DESERTED).

islands. The only drawback was a steady downpour of rain, and at three we landed, at a hut provided by Government on one of the islands, so wet and wretched that it required a strong effort to shake off our lethargy sufficiently to go and collect fuel. However, a good fire and some dinner put a different complexion on matters; and the breeze holding out, we arrived at the new parsonage house at Inari, on the west coast of the lake, late in the evening. It is said to be 50 English miles from Nellim: it took us (actual sailing time)  $10\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

I was very kindly received and hospitably entertained here by the Finnish priest Kyrkoherden (= the Rev.) Matti Hinkula, and his wife Fru Adèle Hinkula. You must not suppose that as there is a priest

here there is a town, or even a village: nothing of the sort. It is merely a sort of centre of the enormous parish—I don't know its boundary in any direction, so cannot tell its acreage, but it must be over, rather than under, 100 square miles.

The parsonage house was quite new at the time of my visit, and Kyrkoherden Hinkula had only been there a month; and the house had still very little furniture in it, from the extreme difficulty of carriage. He hoped, however, to get a joiner there before long, to make furniture on the spot! The church was close by, and a more hideous specimen it would be hard to imagine; it was begun five years previously, but even here in the wilds the jerry-builder turns up; the State, however, intervened, and caused it to be redone. It was only just finished; and, on the very morning of the day on which I arrived, the workmen had set off to walk home (to Kittila in Finland), a distance of over 200 miles—and all the way through forest, not along a road with inhabitants.

Besides the church and parsonage, Inari boasts of three or four Kvæn houses; one Lap hut and a hut built by the various Laps of the district, to lodge in when they come to church—all equally new.

The old settlement of Inari—church, parsonage, and two or three other small houses [Fig. 9], which are as picturesque as the new ones are ugly—lies several miles away in the bush; but it was highly inconvenient for the congregation, after rowing or sailing some fifty miles or so, to have to push their way on foot through the bush, without even a road, for about a couple of hours further, before they at last reached the church; so the change of locality is easily accounted for.

In *Kuopio Stifts Matrikel* (1863) the date of the old church [Fig. 10] is said to be 1760, but there is a quarry of painted glass in the south porch, representing a man in a *kjerris* drawn by a rein-deer (horns shed); in the background a landscape, with two castles on eminences. Below is <sup>1</sup>—

<sup>1</sup> “The angel Raphael, who guided Tobit, will guide my undertakings, both early and late.”

Raphael engel som tobiam  
ledsage wilde handwerc min ledsager  
baade aarle oc silde

LAUVIDTZ

FAAG

1680

There is also a copy of the printed form of the service to be

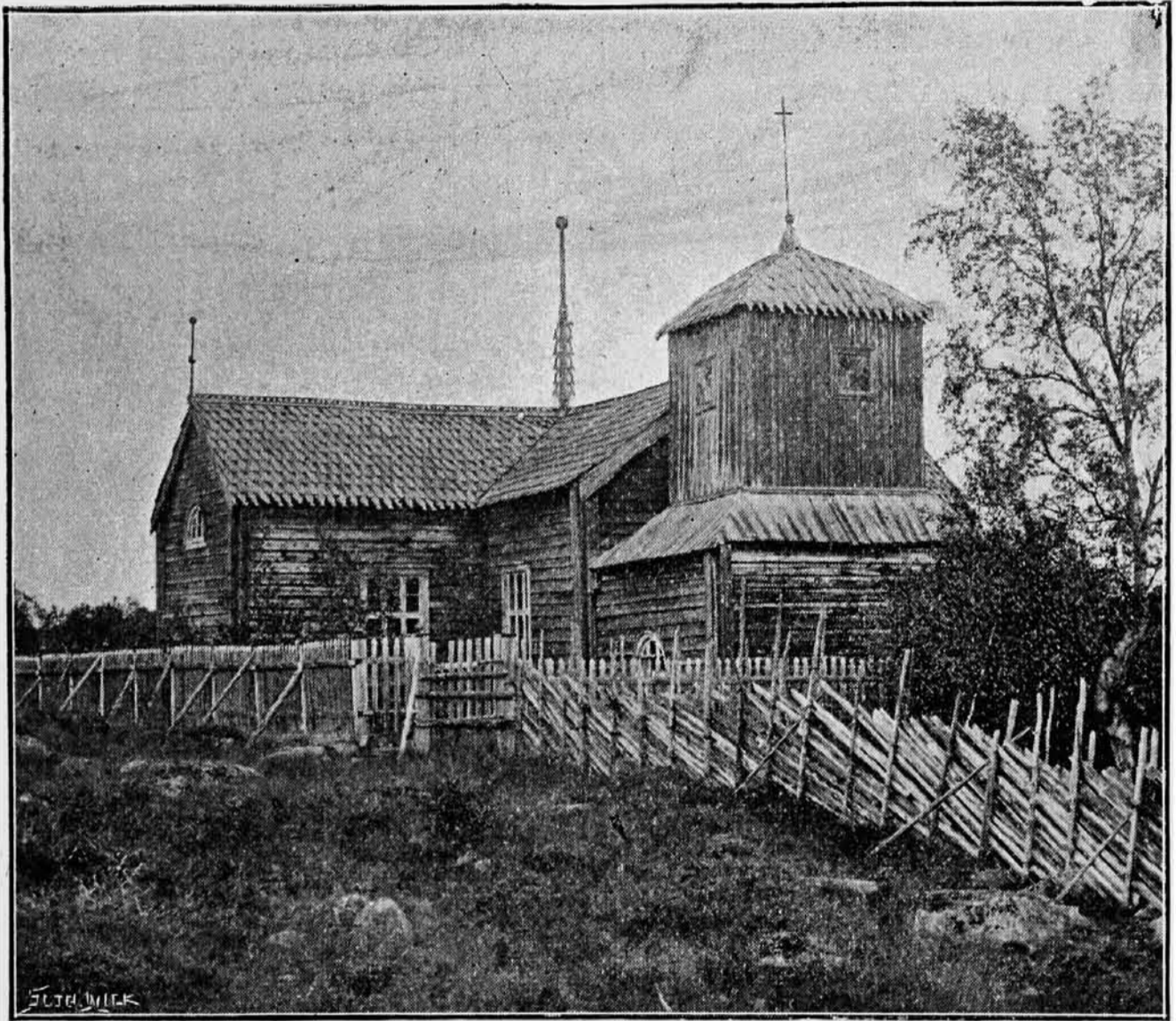


FIG 10.—OLD CHURCH OF INARI (NOW DISUSED).

used at the funera. of Tzar Car. XI., who died 1697. It would almost seem as if the church were at least as old as the glass.

Not very far out in the lake from Inari new settlement is a peculiarly high, almost conical-shaped holm, forming a very conspicuous landmark from a long distance over the lake; this the Skolter liken to a *boil*. It is an old sacrificial place from heathen times, and is called *Uko*, which means "the old man,"



or "the ancestor." Uko was the second God in importance in the Finnish mythology, and was equivalent to *Horagales* among the Laps. The principal God was called *Ibmel* by the Laps, and *Jumala* by the Kvæns. Uko, however, must have been of considerable importance considering his sway extended over the sky and the air, the weather, wind and water. The mythology contained plenty of other deities, but these two were the chief in rank.

I was told that on this island there still exist the remains of some of the Laps' sacrifices, which naturally made me very anxious to pay it a visit; but when the start was made some days later, for the return journey, we were again favoured with such a splendid sailing breeze, that I was loath to lose such an exceptional opportunity of crossing the big lake; and, moreover, to reach this holm would have entailed crossing a long stretch of exposed water, which it was by no means certain the boat would live through in that breeze, and I was not prepared to risk unnecessarily three men's lives, besides my own, to say nothing of the baggage, the loss of which there would have caused considerable suffering, if nothing worse,—so regretfully gave it up.

The next river in importance to the Pasvig or Patsjok, which flows out of the lake, is called in the Finnish language *Ivala*. According to Philip this word means "I don't know," and he told me a little bit of folklore about it, to the effect that once upon a time a traveller asked the name of the river; the answer was "I don't know" ("Ivala"). "How long will it take to get to so and so?" Answer, "I don't know," and so on to all his other questions; from which it came to pass that the river was called "I don't know," or Ivala River.

I feel that I shall already have trespassed too long on your patience, so will not attempt any account of the return journey, beyond just mentioning that, there being, as already stated, not unfrequently duplicate series of lakes and stretches of river running parallel, we in many places passed through entirely new country, and eventually returned safely to Elvenæs, which looked as pretty as ever as we approached it, and it was with real regret that I finally bade good-bye to my dirty little savages.

It will give you some idea of the grim reality of their filth, if I mention that in cleaning my gun one evening, I barked a knuckle—simply knocked off a fragment of skin. That finger immediately festered, and the whole hand became very soon affected. Before long the poison spread from that hand to the other hand, on which I had not a scratch; and from then until after I had returned to England, and been at home for a month, I only had two or three fingers which I could use at all. The doctors, both Norwegian and English, all told me that this poisoning was to be attributed simply to the filth that I had been living in the midst of.

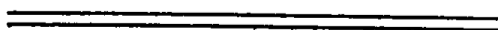
I left Elvenæs for Vadsö in a large Lap sea-boat, *sewn* instead of *nailed* together, with a party of Russian Laps, and my friends the Russian priest and his wife. Instead of arriving in a few hours, as we had fondly calculated, the wind shifted dead ahead, and the boat was far too heavy for the little Laps to row under these circumstances; so we were forced to put ashore on an island and wait until the wind changed again—which it did next day, fortunately, for our food supply was not calculated for a long detention, and there was not much chance there of replenishing it by rod or gun.

In conclusion, I am very sensible of how imperfect an account I have given of these interesting little people; but will only add the remarkable fact that they have a habit of expressing their thoughts aloud in extemporised song, or *sing song*; and it is also interesting to note that, though they cannot read or write, each individual has his mark or mono-



MARK OF IVAN IVANIVITCH.

gram, which is as well recognised as initials, or even the full name, would be among other people.



# SAGA ILLUSTRATIONS OF EARLY MANKS MONUMENTS.

BY P. M. C. KERMODE, F.S.A.Scot.

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THE Isle of Man is well known to be rich in Scandinavian remains, the Runic inscriptions in particular having been published, reviewed, and discussed by well-known Norse scholars such as Munch, Vigfusson, and others; but there is one aspect of these Scandinavian Christian monuments, curious and of great interest, which has not hitherto attracted attention. It appears of sufficient importance to be brought under the notice of this learned Association. I refer to the illustrations which are afforded by them of the old Norse Sagas, and, in particular, of that most interesting and beautiful of tales, the *Völsunga Saga*, or the lay of Sigurd Fafnir's-bane.

Long and close contact with the Christian Celt had not caused the Viking to forget his old Norse legends and his Pagan lore; they became blended with the new culture, and thus in this distant settlement, in the midst of the British Isles, it comes to pass that we find sepulchral Christian monuments with scenes depicting the slaying of Fafnir by Sigurd. We have three such in all. The first I discovered ten years ago, at Kirk Andreas, in the north of the island. Having at the time no sort of clue, and not understanding the sculpturing, I had the stone photographed, and copies were sent, among others, to Mr. Romilly Allen and the Rev. G. F. Browne of Cambridge—now Bishop of Stepney, the latter having just returned from studying this very subject in wood carvings in Norway. Between them they worked out the interpretation. This stone was subsequently figured and described by Mr. Allen in a paper on the Early Christian Monuments of the Isle of Man, read before the British Archæological

Association in January, 1887 (*Journ. Brit. Archæol. Assoc.* vol. xl., p. 158), and by Mr. G. F. Black, in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, June, 1887, pp. 325-328.

In the summer of 1890, Mr. Browne visited the Island expressly to study its early crosses with a view to his series of Disney Lectures on Archæology, and he then recognised the figure of Sigurd roasting the Dragon's heart sculptured on a slab at Malew, in the south of the island.

Having now had my eyes opened, I eagerly looked out for other examples, and later in the same year was fortunate in finding one more at Jurby, on the north-west coast.

Besides these there are a few other fragments which bear figures having reference to the Old Norse Mythology. Before describing the monuments in detail it may be serviceable to call to mind those portions of the Sagas which appear to be illustrated by them.

#### VÖLSUNGA SAGAS.<sup>1</sup>

I begin with the death of Sigmund. Odin himself interposed in the battle, and broke the sword Gram which he had formerly given him. At night came Hjordis, his wife, whom he directed to take the fragments of his sword and keep them for the son she would bear him, who should become the greatest of his race. At the day-dawning he died, and Hjordis was carried off by Alf, son of Hjalprek, king of Denmark, who was sailing with his power along the land. After the birth of her son Sigurd, Hjordis was married to Alf, and Sigurd was brought up in King Hjalprek's house, fostered by Regin, the clever dwarf-smith who taught him all manner of arts, the chess play, the lore of runes, and the talking of many tongues, even as the wont was with kings' sons in those days. At his instigation Sigurd asked a horse of the king, who allowed him to choose one, and, under the advice of Odin, he chose Grani ("the grey steed") of the kin of Sleipnir, the eight-footed steed of Odin.

<sup>1</sup> I follow the translation by E. Magnússon and W. Morris. Pub. by Walter Scott, 1888.

But Regin kept egging him on to go in quest of Fafnir's gold, and thereto told him this tale:—"Hreidmar had three sons, Fafnir, Otter, and Regin himself. Otter was a great fisher, and in the likeness of an otter dwelt ever in the river; but Fafnir was by far the greatest and grimmest. Otter was wont to fish in Andwari's force, and, on a day, Odin, Loki, and Hænir, passing by, spied him, slumbering on the river bank. Loki cast a stone and killed him, and the gods, well pleased, took the skin to Hreidmar's house. He laid hands on them, and doomed them for weregild to fill and cover the Otter's skin with gold. So they sent Loki, and he came to Ran, goddess of the sea, and got her net and went to the force and caught Andwari in the form of a pike. He forced him to give up his gold, and when he had but one ring left that also Loki took from him; then the dwarf banned the ring and all the gold, which should ever prove the bane of its possessors. When the gods had filled and covered the Otter's skin with gold, Hreidmar espied one of the muzzie hairs and bade them cover that; then Odin drew the ring and covered up the hair, Loki warning them of the curse. Thereafter Fafnir slew his father, seized the gold, and became the worst of all worms."

Then Sigurd got from his mother the fragments of his father's sword, and Regin made of them a sword which would cleave an anvil and cut through floating wool.

Having avenged his father's death and gained great wealth and honour, Sigurd went with Regin to slay the dragon. Odin met and advised him to dig "many pits and let the blood run therein; but sit thee down in one thereof, and so thrust the worm's heart through." And, as Fafnir crept over the pits Sigurd thrust his sword into him and slew him. After a few words with his slayer, Fafnir handed on the curse and died. Then came Regin, who had been hiding under a heather bush, and, when Sigurd cut out the dragon's heart, asked as a boon that he should roast it over the fire and give him to eat. So Sigurd roasted it on a rod, and trying if it were fully done he burnt his fingers and put them into his mouth; and when the heart-blood of the dragon touched his tongue he straightway knew and understood the voice



sword Gram and struck off Regin's head, and ate some of Fafnir's heart and carried off the treasure.

Later on, we are told how Sigurd was done to death by Gunnar and others, his own foster-brothers: and how the curse still followed the gold, for Gunnar was beguiled by Atli, who cast him into a serpents' den, his hands bound behind him. But Gudrun threw in a harp, whercon he smote with his toes, and so well he played that the serpents all fell asleep, save one which bit him to the heart, and he died.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE STONES.<sup>1</sup>

The first (Fig. 1), from Andreas, is a fragment about two feet long, showing on each face a Cross and Circle, the head, however, broken off. One face has the shaft occupied by figures of three dragons with tails and topknots interlaced. The space to the left has had interlacing, apparently of one or more dragon forms; while that to the right shows—at the bottom, the figure of Sigurd (broken off at the middle), helmeted and armed with his sword, in the act of piercing the Dragon, which is represented by conventional knotwork; above, we have Sigurd in profile stooping over the fire, of which the flames are represented by three triangular figures, in his left hand a wand on which three rings represent the heart of Fafnir cut into slices; his right is raised to cool his burnt fingers in his mouth; at his back we see the head of one of the Talking Birds, and above is the steed Grani. The other face of this stone (Fig. 2) has had a similar Cross, the spaces right and left of the shaft ornamented with knotwork now too broken to decipher. The shaft itself bears characteristic Scandinavian interlacing, the bands terminating in the heads of serpents. In the midst is the figure of a man in peaked cap with wrists and ankles fettered, one of the serpents' heads touching his shoulder; behind him is a smaller serpent knotted on itself. Dr. March in a paper "The Pagan Christian Overlap in the North" (*Trans. of the Lancashire and*

<sup>1</sup> Figs. 1 and 2, are by kind permission from Proc. Soc. Ant. Scotland, from photographs by Mr. G. Patterson; the rest are reduced from the Author's full size drawings of the stones.



*Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, vol. ix.) takes this to represent that later scene in the story where Gunnar, who had treacher-



FIG. 2.—KIRK ANDREAS. LOKI BOUND.

ously compassed Sigurd's death, was himself cast into the serpents' pit. But an essential detail in the case of Gunnar

was that he had his feet free, and that he so played on the harp with his toes as to charm all the serpents but one. In this case not only do we find no trace of the harp, but the ankles are distinctly fettered, which is not so in other known examples of Gunnar, but is distinctly seen in the bound Loki of the Gosforth Cross. The reference here may be to the end of Loki, whose mischief in slaying the Otter was the beginning of the bane on the gold hoard.

The end of Loki is told as follows:—"After Loki had enraged the Gods by his many treacheries, he was chased by them, and took refuge in the waterfall in Frarangr where he was caught by the Gods in a net under the form of a salmon. After his capture he changed to his human form, and, as a punishment, the Gods caused him to be bound to a rock with the entrails of his own son Nari. After he was bound Skadi (a goddess, daughter of Thiassi and wife of Njörd) took a venomous serpent and fastened it up over Loki's head. The venom dropped down from it on to Loki's face. Sigyn, Loki's wife, sat beside him and held a basin under the serpent's head to catch the venom, and when the basin was full she took it away to empty it. Meanwhile the venom dropped on Loki, who shrank from it so violently that the whole earth trembled."

Our next piece has for many years been sadly misused as a gatepost to a field at the entrance to Jurby churchyard, the carving being completely hidden. It was with the utmost difficulty I gained permission to take it down in order to have it cast, and thus for the first time brought to light the most interesting sculpturing upon it. The stone (Fig. 3) is now seven feet long; each face has borne a cross with circle in high relief. The shaft of one face has a design of four bands—plaited with diamond-shaped rings, pelleted—the execution being irregular. The space to the right is unfortunately broken off; that to the left bears, at the bottom, remains of some geometrical pattern, above which is figured one of the Talking Birds by the side of a very conventional tree; above, is the steed Grani; above this, Sigurd sucking his thumb; above again, a beautifully drawn figure of the Dragon with Sigurd in the act of piercing



FIG. 3.



FIG. 4.

JURBY AND MALEW CROSSES, SHOWING SIGURD SLAYING THE DRAGON  
AND ROASTING ITS HEART.



him with his sword. A unique detail is that Sigurd is here represented crouching in the pit, through the open mouth of which he pierces Fafnir to the heart. The Dragon, "snorting venom," is lashing out in the agonies of death, his head turned to discover and to curse his destroyer. The other face is almost worn away, but shows, above the circle, the figure of a Cock which we find on several of our Scandinavian monuments; while used probably as a Christian symbol of the Resurrection, it may also have had reference to the Norse mythology; a black cock, "Sooty-red," sings in the Scandinavian Nifelheim, or "Land of gloom," and the sign of the dawn of Ragnarök is to be the crowing of a gold-coloured cock, "Gold-comb."

Finally, at Malew we have remains of another slab (Fig. 4), now five feet by one foot six inches. One face shows the shaft of a cross, and we can just detect the spring of the surrounding circle. The shaft has a beautiful device of a looped twist breaking into a plait; to the right we see the steed Grani, below which have been panels, now broken off. To the left we have, above, Sigurd armed with his sword, and holding a wand on which the Dragon's heart is being roasted over the fire. A broad band separates this from the next figure, which, by the light of the Jurby piece just described, I am now able to recognise as that of Fafnir pierced by Sigurd from the pit in which he lies concealed. The other face (Fig. 5) has knotwork and a characteristic looped twist at the sides; and, on the shaft, a twisted and interlaced figure which I suggest may be intended to represent the Otter.

Besides these three monuments, with their very distinct Saga illustrations, we have a curious and interesting carving on a stone at Jurby (Fig. 6). It represents a bird-headed man with a pole over his shoulder, hanging from a rope at the end of which is a smaller monkey-like figure. This may be intended for the landing of the Dwarf Andvari when Loki forced him to redeem his life by delivering up his gold-ward, or, perhaps, more likely it may be meant for Loki himself, who is expressly stated to have changed after his capture to his human form. It would thus serve also

as a Christian symbol—the overcoming of the power of evil!

This Jurby fragment shows also the figure of a Stag. Is this the sacred Hart?—

“Eikthyrnir the hart is called  
that stands o’er Odin’s Hall,  
and bites from Larad’s branches;  
from his horns fall  
drops into Hvirgelmir,  
whence all waters rise.”—*Grimnis-mal.*

On a cross-slab at Michael, which I exhibit, we find among figures of men (bird-headed) and animals, one of a fish. Can this be the Pike, in whose form the dwarf Andvari was caught? or, is it the Salmon in the likeness of which Loki was captured? or, must we consider it as the well-known Christian symbol, or merely an ornament without any special significance? I must say there is nothing else in the carving on this piece to remind one of the Sagas, and the inscription is an ordinary one,—“Grim erected this cross to the memory of Hromund his . . . .”

At Andreas is a fragment of a small cross, showing a well-drawn figure of a fish, here undoubtedly used as the Christian symbol, and placed alongside the figures of a man with a book (*plenarium*) in one hand and a cross in the other. Above and below are serpents. The other face bears the figure of a man armed with a spear, and attacked by a wild beast in whose mouth is placed his foot; on his shoulder is an eagle.<sup>1</sup> The eagle, or it may be meant for a raven, no doubt, is intended to signify that it is indeed Odin who, at the last great battle, is swallowed by the wolf, as in the lay of Vafthrûdnir:—

“The wolf will  
the father of men devour;  
him Vidar will avenge:  
He his cold jaws  
will cleave  
in conflict with the wolf.”

<sup>1</sup> On reading this paper, it was suggested by Mr. A. F. Major that this represented Widar rending the jaw of the wolf Fenrir, or Odin meeting his bane. See Figs. 4, 5, in the writer’s “Catalogue of Manks Crosses,” from *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scotland*, 1888-9.

The figure of a cock I have already referred to. It occurs eight times in all and always on Scandinavian pieces.



FIG. 5.—MALEW STONE. CONVENTIONAL FIGURE OF OTTER.

A very interesting fragment at Michael (Fig. 7) shows on the space at the left of the head of the cross the giant Thiassi

in the form of an eagle, carrying off Loki, as told in "The Rape of Idwyn." It is unfortunate that only fragments of many of these monuments have been preserved.

One more instance I submit from the head of a cross at Jurby (Fig. 8). Here we see the figure of a man with a sword at his side, holding to his lips a long horn or trumpet. I take this to be intended for Heimdall, the warder of the gods, who guards the rainbow bridge to heaven, and who is represented as carrying in one hand a sword, in the other a trumpet, the sound of which could be heard through all the worlds. His path from Asgard to the outer world is by the rainbow, Bifröst, and the Milky Way.<sup>1</sup> He calls the gods to the last great battle by a blast on the Gjallar horn, kept under the sacred tree—

"Loud blows Heimdall,  
His horn is raised."

#### OTHER INSTANCES.

There are some well-known examples of the story of Fafnir's-bane sculptured on wood and stone in Scandinavia; and a few have been found in England. Of those on stone the most noted are the rock-tracings at Ramsund and Goek on the southern shores of Lake Mälär,<sup>2</sup> Södermanland, Sweden, discovered by Prof. Carl Säve, who remarks of the former that the Sigurd or Holmger of the inscription believed they were descended from Sigurd Fafnir's-bane. This shows the Otter's skin, smith's tools, Sigurd roasting the Dragon's heart on a wand over flames of fire and cooling his thumb in his mouth, the steed Grani tethered to the Tree on which are the Talking Birds, and the Dwarf with his head cut off. Below, we see Sigurd piercing the Dragon's body, on which is cut the inscription. The tracing on the Goek stone is smaller

<sup>1</sup> Can this have any bearing on the Manks tradition that King Orry when he landed in the island was asked whence he came, and he pointed to the Milky Way and answered, "That is the road to my country."

<sup>2</sup> Curiously, the Andreas stone in the Isle of Man is not far from an ancient lake, now drained, of the same name—Lough Mollow, or Mälär, possibly so called by the Scandinavian settlers after that in Sweden.



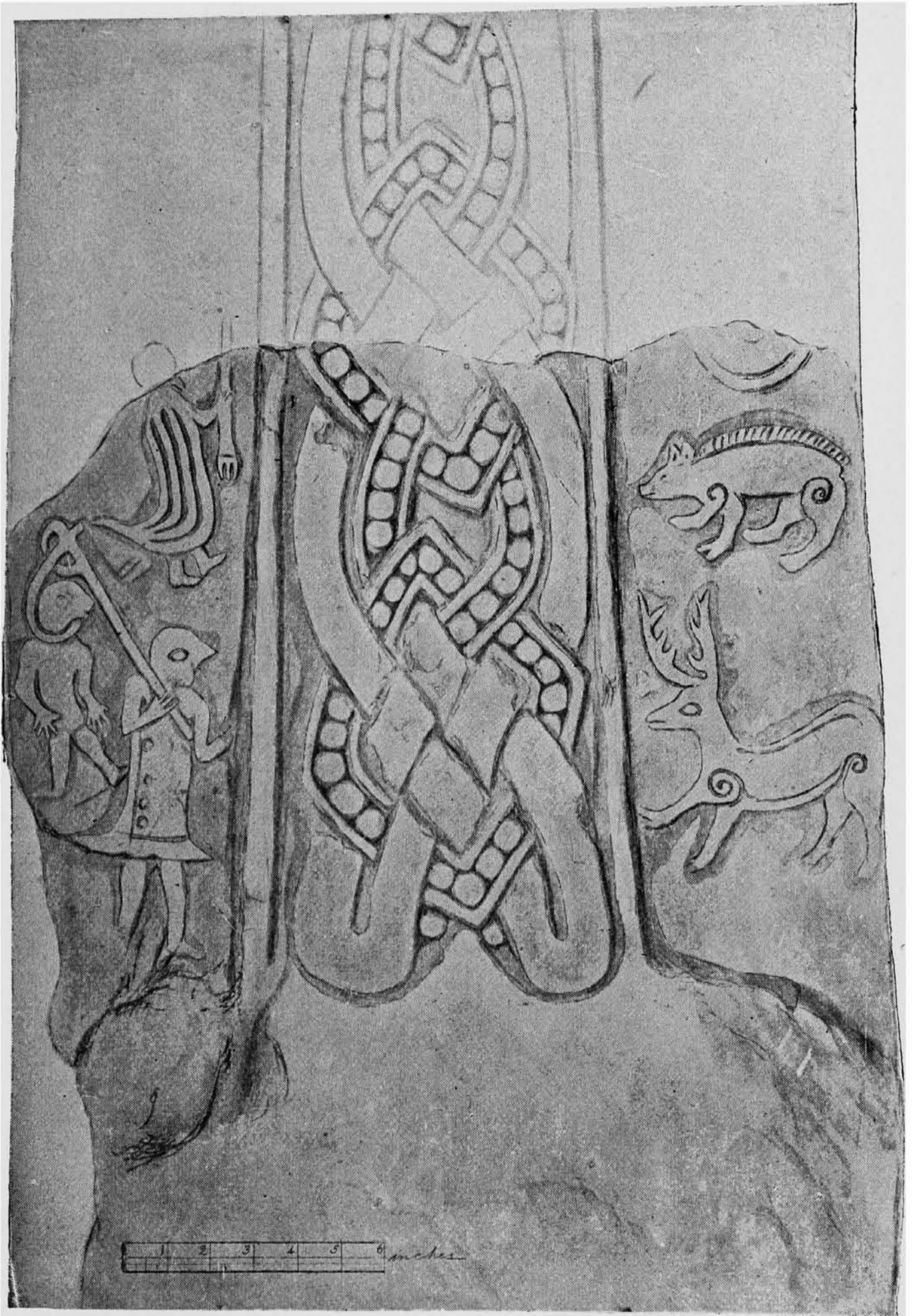


FIG. 6.—JURBY FRAGMENT, SHOWING CAPTURE OF LOKI.

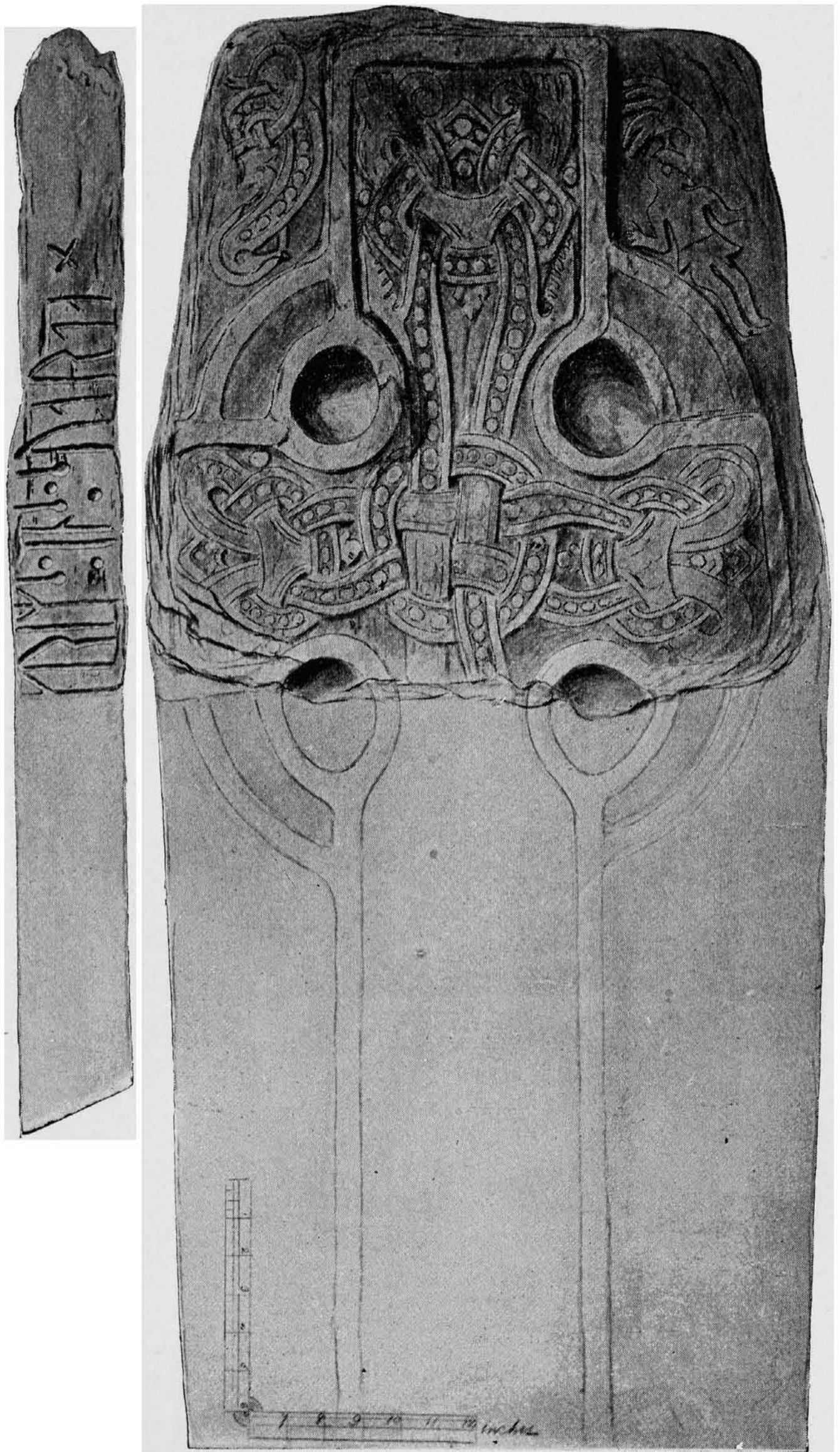


FIG. 7.- MICHAEL. THIASI IN SHAPE OF AN EAGLE CARRYING OFF LOKI.



and looks almost like a rude copy of the former.<sup>1</sup> Prof. Stephens ("Northern Mythology," p. 373) considers both of these to be "early Christian from the beginning of the eleventh age, and were so carved because the deceased claimed descent from Sigurd." At page 372 of the same work he refers to a "Swedish funeral stone from Dräfte in Upland, on which is sculptured Sigurd slaying Fafni the dragon. But for the first time in Europe it shows us also Andwære the dwarf reaching forth his only remaining golden jewel, the fatal Ring with which the Ases covered the last hair of the death-struck Otter." This piece, adds the Professor, is from the first Christian age, is incised with the later Runes, and must date about 1000-1050.

The Rev. G. F. Browne described in the *Journ. Brit. Archæol. Assoc.* (vol. xli., pp. 138, 139) a cross-shaft at Leeds showing in one panel smith's tools and figures apparently of a man and woman; on another panel the figure of a man and sword. Mr. Romilly Allen in the same Journal (vol. xlii., p. 331), describes a cross-shaft at Halton, Lancashire. Dr. H. C. March, in his paper on "The Pagan-Christian Overlap in the North" (*Trans. Lanc. and Cheshire Ant. Soc.*, vol. ix.), describes and figures two sides of this stone. On one we see the forging of the sword, Regin with his head cut off, Sigurd roasting the Dragon's heart, and the Talking Birds with the sacred Tree; on the other, the steed Grani, and what Dr. March takes to be the Wormpit. Mr. Black, in his notice of the Andreas stone referred to above, mentions all these instances, as well as several of the following woodcarvings, but with an expression of doubt as regards the last two.<sup>2</sup>

Several examples on wood have been found in Norway.

<sup>1</sup> "Sigurds-ristningarna å Ramsundsberget och Göks-stenen."

<sup>2</sup> In a letter received since this was written, Mr. Black informs me that as regards the Halton stone he now believes that "on two panels at least subjects relating to the Sigurd Saga can be made out." He calls my attention also to another example on a font from Narum, Bohuslän, Sweden (now in the Museum, Stockholm), a representation of Gunnar in the worm-pit, his hands tied in front, his harp under his feet (figured in Satin, *Studien i Ornamentik*, p. 98). Stephens' *O. N. R. Mon.*, ii.

At Gaulstad, Jarlsberg, is a church door-pillar showing in five circular panels Sigurd with a shield; the otter skin covered with gold, and the ring; Regin at his forge; the Dragon, and Sigurd in the act of slaying it ("Norske Fortidmindesmerkers Bevaring," 1855, pt. vii.).

Another door from the Hyllestad, Setersdal, now in Christiania Museum, supposed to date from 1150, shows in panels—the forging of the sword, the testing of it by Sigurd, Sigurd with sword and shield piercing the body of the Dragon. The second pillar shows at the bottom Sigurd roasting Fafnir's heart—represented, as on the Andreas stone, by three rings—on a wand over flames of fire; the Tree and the Talking Birds; the steed Grani; Sigurd slaying Regin; and Gunnar playing on his harp in the serpents' pit ("Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie," 1870, pt. xiv.).

A church door at Viegusdal, Robygdalag, on which are scenes from this Saga, shows Sigurd roasting Fafnir's heart, the Tree and Talking Birds, the testing and forging of the sword, the steed Grani, and the slaying of Regin. On the other side of the portal Grani appears again, and Dr. March recognises in the elaborate interlacing Fafni slain and dismembered. This, Nicholayson places at the beginning of the thirteenth century ("Norske Forlevninga," p. 252).

At Osstad Church, Setersdal, are figures of Gunnar bound in the snake pit, a man showing him the heart of his brother the brave Högni, and the trembling heart of the thrall Hialli; and of the cutting out of Högni's heart (Du Chaillu, "The Viking Age," vol. ii., p. 244).

At Opsdal Church, Numedal, in the centre of one of the door-jambs we see Gunnar in the serpents' den, his hands bound behind his back, at his feet his harp (Du Chaillu, ii., 266; "Norske Bygningen fra Fortiden," pt. iii.).

Du Chaillu also figures (ii., 256, 257) two carved chairs from Hitterdal Church, Thelemarken; on the one is figured Gudrun confiding to the messengers of Atli a ring warning Gunnar and Högni of their danger; on the other is Gunnar in the pit, his wrists bound, his harp at his feet.

A church door at Versos, Vestergötland, Sweden, shows Sigurd slaying the dragon; below, the Talking Birds (ii., 248).



FIG. 8.—JURBY. HEIMDALL BLOWING HIS HORN AT BIFROST BRIDGE.

Besides this favourite subject, other scenes from the Sagas are occasionally figured, especially the last great battle of Doom. Thus, Dr. March explains the Hogback stone at Heysham to represent this subject. He figures also a fragment at St. Andrew's showing Odin, his Raven at his side, defending himself with his sword against the attack of Fenri's wolf.

Another piece at Drainie may represent Vidar, Odin's son, rending the jaws of the Wolf. On this subject Dr. March read a paper before the same society (vol. xi.) in which he mentions and figures several instances, particularly at Limè Church, Jutland, and at the Cathedral of Lund in Sweden. Referring again to the St. Andrew's stones, he considered also a group on the Cross at Kells (*i.e.* the Street Cross) and one at Kilcullen as "a direct descent from a Scandinavian myth." But these have been taken as representing David overcoming the Lion, and we find a similar treatment on the following Irish Crosses—the side of the churchyard Cross, Kells; the lower part of the shaft, east side, of the West Cross at Monasterboice; and a panel on the south side of the Cross at Arboe, Tyrone.

The finest and fullest example of all these sculptured crosses is the wonderful one at Gosforth, admirably described by the Rev. W. S. Calverley (who also identified the World Ash, Yggdrasil on a Cross at Dearham, and the Midgardsworm on a Cross socket at Brigham) in a paper read before the Cumberland and Westmorland Archæological Society, 1885. Upon it we find the following figures—Loki bound hand and foot, the Serpent dropping venom, and Sigrin with the cup, Fenrir's dire progeny, Heimdall with his trumpet, Odin on Sleipnir riding to his doom, the Hart Eikthyrnir, the Wolf bound and gagged, death of Baldr, Odin on the Tree, Vidar the silent rending the cold jaws of the Wolf.<sup>1</sup>

#### HISTORICAL REFERENCES.

The most interesting question in regard to these scenes on Manks Monuments is to account for their presence so far from

<sup>1</sup> See also "The Ancient Crosses at Gosforth, Cumberland," by C. A. Parker, published since above was read.

their native home, in a Celtic and a Christian community. When were they erected? By whom and in whose memory set up?

We have seen that the celebrated stone carvings in Sweden probably date from the beginning to the middle of the eleventh century, while the wood-carving in Norway is assigned to the middle of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century. It is reasonable to suppose that our examples fall within this period.

Most unfortunately in each case the edge of the stone, which very likely bore an inscription, has been chipped off; our only means, therefore, of dating them is to compare them with known examples elsewhere, and, as regards their other decorative features, with other Scandinavian monuments in the Isle of Man. One thing certain is that they are Christian. Not only do they bear the Cross as a symbol and special feature, but it is the typical form of the Irish Cross found on so many of our monuments, the evolution of which has been satisfactorily worked out by Mr. Romilly Allen in his work on Christian Symbolism.

Without dwelling at length on the history of the Scandinavian occupation of the Isle of Man, it will be interesting to refer briefly to the most notable personages living in the period in question. When the Scandinavians arrived about the end of the ninth century—Harald Harfagr's visit in 889, mentioned in the Sagas, being, I think, the earliest record of that event—they were undoubtedly heathen. Christianity was probably accepted by them generally about the beginning of the eleventh century when Norway was Christianised, for we find it recorded in the "Chronicon Manniæ" that about 1050 "Roolwer" (Hrolfr), a Scandinavian, held the highest ecclesiastical office as bishop, and that he was buried at Maughold—"apud ecclesiam Sancti Machuti." Below (Figs. 9, 10) is a view of the handsome cross which I believe was set up to his memory and which, therefore, I date about 1050-60.

A landmark in Manks history is the change of dynasty in 1075 or 1080. After the battle of Stamford Bridge, in 1066, Godred Crovan, son of Harald the Black of Islay (probably grandson to an earlier king Godred, slain 989), who, as vassal





FIG. 9.—MAUGHOLD. ROWLER CROSS, DATE circ. 1050.



FIG. 10.—MAUGHOLD. ROLLER CROSS.

either of the King of Norway or of the Earl of Orkney, had fought with Harald and Tostig, escaped to his kinsman Godred Sygtrigson, King of Man, by whom he was hospitably received. The Manks king died, and was succeeded by his son Fingall, and, in 1075 or 1080 Godred Crovan, who had left the Island, returned with a hostile fleet, defeated Fingall, and established his rule in Man and subsequently in Dublin. Fingall appears to have been slain in an unsuccessful expedition against Man in 1087, as after that we hear of him no more.

In 1095 Godred died at Islay.

In 1098 a great battle was fought at Santwat, between the Manks of the north and south of the islands, the former doubtless, as suggested by Munch, descendants of the oldest settlers from Dublin and the Isles, the latter possibly supporters (old and new comers) of Godred Crovan. The two leaders, Earls Other and Macmarran, were slain.

Immediately afterwards Magnus, King of Norway, arrived, established fortresses, and encouraged new settlers and colonists. In 1103 Magnus met his death when raiding in Ireland, and was buried at St. Patrick's, Dublin.

He was succeeded by Olave, a son of Godred Crovan, who reigned till 1153. Olave was succeeded by his son Godred, who, in 1187, died in the Island of St. Patrick in Man.

In the reign of Godred, Olave's son, there was trouble with Somerled of Argyle, who had married his half sister and wanted to make their son Dugald king over the Isles.

Godred sought assistance from Norway, and returned in 1164 to find that Somerled was slain at Renfrew, but that his own brother, Reginald, had been declared King of Man.

I cannot find in our Chronicle any name later than this which can reasonably be connected with these monuments. Of those mentioned, Godred Sytrigson, who died 1075, and Fingall, slain probably in 1087, and the Godred who died at St. Patrick in 1187, are the only individuals likely to have had such monuments erected to their memory, but it is a mere guess that either of them was so commemorated. Only we must assume that there was some special reason for the story of Sigurd to be carved on these monuments, and that reason probably was that, as in the Swedish instances, they

were erected to supposed descendants of the great-hearted Sigurd. Now Fingall and his father Godred were the last of a line of kings intimately connected with the reigning family of Dublin, whose first Scandinavian king, Olaf the White, a near connection of Harald Harfagr, king of Norway, claimed descent from Aslaug, daughter of Sigurd, and the brave Brynhild. But the Godred who died in 1187 was grandson of Godred Crovan, a relation of Tostig, who also claimed descent from Sigurd.

Some assistance in assigning a period to these three pieces may be obtained by comparison of their decorative art with that of our other Scandinavian crosses. Two of them, Jurby and Malew, appear to be undoubtedly by the same hand, and the Andreas piece shows some characteristic treatment of the interlacing which connects it also with that at Malew.

But the Jurby one shows affinity with a cross at Nappin, in the same parish, and with the Onon piece, also at Jurby; the treatment of the head inclines me to think it was carved by Gaut Björnson, whose name appears as the sculptor of the Ufeig Cross, Andreas. There is much in the treatment of the Ballaugh piece to connect it with the same sculptor. Its inscription Vigfusson considered one of our earliest. The Rumun Cross, and another with the words "crus thna aft," and the Malbrikti Cross, all at Michael—on the latter of which Gaut claims to have carved it and all in Man, "ala i Maun"—may each be by the same hand; the bind-rune Cross at Andreas shows his favourite loop form of twist, as does also the Truian Cross at Bride.<sup>1</sup> The character of the Runes, and peculiarities of the grammar and language, show these pieces to belong to the first half of the eleventh century.

To sum up, therefore, I think these three pieces illustrating the story of Sigurd may all have been carved by the same artist, and that was the famous Gaut Björnson, of Cooly, who claims on the Malbrikti Cross to have carved all in Man, and to whom we may with some certainty assign about twelve of those now remaining. I think they may date from

<sup>1</sup> For description of these, see Author's "Catalogue of Manks Crosses," 2nd ed. London: Williams and Norgate.

as early as 1050 to as late as 1150, and that they must have been erected to members or connections of the reigning family who claimed descent from Sigurd. But, the inscriptions having been broken off, it is scarcely possible to guess the individuals to whom they may have been erected. If, however, a guess may be hazarded, I suggest that Godred Sigtrygson, 1075, and his son Fingall, 1087—the last Scandinavian kings of the first dynasty—are as likely as any whose names appear in the *Manks Chronicle* to have been thus commemorated.

This, however, does not account for the presence of these monuments at Malew, Andreas, and Jurby—and we have no reason to suppose that they are removed to any distance from their original site; it must be admitted, therefore, that in the present state of our knowledge we have no real ground even to suggest the names of the *individuals* to whose memory they were erected.





# THE MONUMENTS OF THE ISLAND OF OELAND.

BY DR. HANS HILDEBRANDT.

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OELAND is an island sixteen miles long by ten miles broad, situated near the south-east corner of Sweden. It is largely composed of Siluric limestone, only thinly covered in parts with soil, which where it exists, is of a fertile character. The island has been made the object of excavations during several years by myself, and has been found to be particularly rich in antiquities of the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages. Near Bornholm I found a perfect collection of all the monuments common in England, cairns of stone, stone rings, upright stones, gravehills, etc. The cairns are seldom covered with earth, and the upright stones are not only arranged in circles but as triangles and squares. The burial mounds are of various form, including the ship shape. The number of these monuments is surprising, especially on three such isolated islands as Bornholm, Oeland, and particularly Gothland. When my attention was first directed to these numerous monuments, the enquiry presented itself to me as to where so numerous a population had lived, and led me to the discovery that, in the neighbourhood of all these monuments, the remains of the dwellings of the ancient inhabitants might be found; the latter on the lower fertile lands, the position of the former being usually on the hilltops. On Carnsoe I found a cavern completely filled with the remains of human occupants. It had been the summer dwelling of the earliest whalehunters. Evidence was forthcoming of communication with the European continent in the shape of Roman coins, principally silver, in large numbers, also gold coins of the Roman and Byzantine Emperors, which had been brought from the Baltic, the mainland of Sweden, and there-



after to these islands. The series end with the reign of the Emperor Leo I. The coins of the Emperor Anastasius which have been found were probably brought by the Heruli tribes when emigrating to Gothland, as mentioned by Tacitus. It is not sufficient, I would point out, to observe these monuments alone, but it is necessary to see them in connection with their sites and dependencies, when they yield rich archæological evidence.

The ancient laws of Sweden give indications of the places proper to build cairns. According to Swedish custom, each village has its *gard*, or place where the houses are built—(actually the fence surrounding it)—being the equivalent to the English garden, garth, and yard, and the German *garten*. A farm was also called a *tun*, which may also be a *gard* (*tun* = English town). *Stad* (English farmstead) is also present. Each village has its graveyard, or *stud*, or *gard*. The fields around were the common property of the villages, each villager having the right to send his cattle into the common field or wood *pro ratâ parti*. These divisions have overlived to the present time. The old inhabitants had great predilection for placing their tombs in high places, for admiration and preservation.

Wherever tombs are found, a town should be looked for. On close scrutiny I always found, near by, traces of foundations of houses. Subsequently, stone fences of small and large fields were found. And this was afterwards the constant sequence of objects discovered. On the last day of my investigations a group of thirty-four cairns was discovered. Now the land is solely used for pastoral purposes, but formerly it was most thickly populated by a population which was content with a very poor subsistence. The tombs generally consist of a cairn and stone circle; sometimes a tomb is concealed in the earth or under the earth. Upright stones occur as memorials of distinguished persons or events. Sometimes they bear a Runic inscription stating they are raised by such an one to the memory of his father, or brother, or mother. Some circles were used for other than burial purposes, by certain observers held to be judicial, but I incline to the belief that they were for religious purposes.

Confirmation of this supposition is afforded by a series of circles found at places with the suffix *Ve* in their names, meaning holy place. This was confirmed in other cases by the occurrence of the names of Norse gods, some of them unknown to Norse mythology. Several of these approximated to the terminal gods of Rome, being found on borders of districts.

It was curious to observe that the oldest cities were placed in Sweden, not in the centre of districts, but on the confines of two districts, probably as posts where goods were exchanged.

With respect to the contents of the various classes of tombs, a ship grave, 37 metres long, composed of flat limestone blocks, contained nothing but burnt bones. In my view, ship graves do not necessarily import a Viking burial, for they are found inland. They probably suggest the last voyage of the spirit.

Oeland in olden time was very wealthy; at least 3,000 gold, silver, and copper coins have been found; and 5,000 Arabic, Anglo-Saxon, and German coins carried over from Gothland in great numbers have also been found; indeed, no fewer than 11,000 Anglo-Saxon coins of different reigns have been found, while England only possesses 1,000. The collection of Anglo-Saxon coins in Stockholm is greater than in the British Museum. In my view, the coins were brought to Sweden by commerce, and not by war, and I base this view on the fact that more of these coins are found in Sweden than in the whole of Denmark and Norway—whence the conclusion that they must have come by commerce, as Sweden made no war on England.

Near Stockholm has been found eleven ship tombs with wooden ships, within which was the body, together with very costly arms. Besides richly chased weapons the tombs likewise contained caldrons, trivets, and other household tools, remains of animals—two horses, two oxen, two swine, two falcons, etc. This kind of burial must have taken place about the time when the Anglo-Saxons became Christians, and the religious meaning of the ship burial was the suggestion of sailing to another land. Eponymous heroes also always came in boats.

I would also point out that the fortifications in Sweden are always placed behind the cultivated land in the interior of the country, as if for places of refuge in cases of invasion. Churches were used for this purpose in the Christian times.

