



THE LIFE OF GUDMUND THE GOOD, BISHOP OF HOLAR

Translated from the original Icelandic sources by

G. TURVILLE-PETRE

and

E. S. OLSZEWSKA

The Viking Society for Northern Research
Printed for the Society by Curtis and Beamish, Ltd.
Northfield Road, Coventry

1942

GIVEN THROUGH THE GENEROSITY
AND IN MEMORY OF
THE LATE ERNEST PAYNE, M.A.,
MEMBER OF COUNCIL

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Preface	ix
Introductory Notes - .	xix
Translators' Note -	xxviii
The Life of Gudmund the Good	1
Genealogical Tables	113
Sketch-map of Iceland -	114

PREFACE

FOR a full appreciation of the story of Gudmund the Good, a short account of early Christianity in Iceland will perhaps be helpful. The Icelanders had adopted the Christian Faith in the year 1000. The chief instigator in their conversion was the King of Norway, Olaf Tryggvason (995-1000). Olaf was a ruthless and fanatical teacher. Not content with preaching to his own subjects, he resolved to convert the Icelanders to the new faith. As their teacher, he sent a German priest called Thangbrand to Iceland in 997. Thangbrand was a spendthrift and a robber, and a man of violent temper. One of the reasons why Olaf sent him to Iceland was, no doubt, that his lawless conduct could only injure the Christian cause in Norway. Thangbrand remained in Iceland for two years. He made some friends and converts in Iceland but was, on the whole, unpopular, and was eventually expelled from the island for manslaughter. When Thangbrand returned to Norway, and delivered a report of his mission to King Olaf, the King was enraged to hear of the obstinacy of the Icelanders. He threatened to take reprisals against them, but was finally calmed by two Icelanders present at his court. These were Gizur the White and Hjalti, the son of Skeggi, and they undertook to return to Iceland and to persuade the people to accept Christian teaching.

In the year 1000 Gizur and Hjalti pleaded the Christian cause before the Icelandic Assembly. At first the rulers of Iceland could not agree whether Iceland should be heathen or Christian, but, finally, the heathen and Christian parties agreed to elect Thorgeir, one of the wisest men present at the Assembly, to make the decision alone. Thorgeir lay with a cloak spread over his head for a day and a night, while he thought the problem out. When he arose, he announced that henceforth Iceland should be a Christian land. Nevertheless, some heathen practices, such as the exposure of children and sacrificial banquets of horseflesh, were allowed to continue for several years to come. Even worship of the heathen gods was countenanced, so long as it were not made a public scandal. The restraint exercised by advocates, both of the old faith and the new, should have been a model for subsequent reformations and conversions. The ruthless methods used by King Olaf in Norway were not copied in Iceland. Neither the Christians nor heathens used violence against their opponents. Restraint, liberty and tolerance were to remain the dominant characteristics of the Icelandic Church for the next century and a half.

At first the Icelanders depended for their teaching on foreign clergy. Among foreign bishops who visited Iceland in the 11th century, we read of Jon the Irishman, Bjarnhard, who was probably an Englishman, and of Rodolf, who remained in Iceland for nineteen years. This Rodolf is probably identical with Rudolf, who was made Abbot of Abingdon, near Oxford, in 1050. There were also three "Armenian" bishops in Iceland during the 11th century. It is believed that they were heretics of the Paulician sect. It appears that they were forbidden, by the Archbishop of Bremen, to teach in Iceland, but evidently they gained a fair number of adherents.

It was not long before native Icelanders began to study for the priesthood. Perhaps the most distinguished of Icelandic clergymen during the 11th century, and the first Icelanders to be ordained Bishop, was Isleif. Isleif was born about the year 1005. As a young man he had studied in the well-known convent of Herford in Westphalia. He visited Pope Victor II in Rome before his consecration by Archbishop Adalbert of Bremen in 1056. In the following year, Isleif returned to Iceland, and settled down on his ancestral farm Skalholt. He instructed pupils at Skalholt, and this farm was destined to be the episcopal see, and the chief cultural centre of southern Iceland until late in the 18th century. Isleif was a son of Gizur the White, the friend of King Olaf, who had played an active part in the conversion of Iceland. He belonged to the family of the Mosfellingar, one of the foremost families of southern Iceland. With his European culture, Isleif thus combined the strongest traditions of his own country.

During the latter years of the 11th century the administration of the Icelandic Church fell more and more into the hands of native clergymen, who replaced their foreign teachers. By the end of that century, the Church had become a thoroughly native institution, and foreigners took little part in its organisation. Until 1104 Iceland formed a part of the Archdiocese of Bremen, but in that year it was placed under the Archbishop of Lund. Both Lund and Bremen were far removed from Iceland, and probably the Archbishops knew little about conditions there. They did not often interfere in Iceland's affairs.

Because of its independence, the Church of Iceland developed rather differently from that of neighbouring countries. The rivalry between Church and State was slow to develop in Iceland. The temporal rulers were the *goðar* or chiefs. The word *goði* (plural *goðar*) was originally applied to pagan priests. The *goðar* of medieval Iceland were, in fact, heirs to the pagan priests, whose temporal powers they still exercised as Christians.

The *goðorð*, or "office of *goði*," was largely hereditary, or was, at any rate, the saleable property of distinguished families. In many instances the *goðar* studied for the Christian priesthood, and they thus became spiritual as well as temporal rulers. Just as their pagan ancestors had built temples to Thor and Frey, so the Christian *goðar* built churches upon their lands, and maintained these churches as their private property. Until the question of patronage became acute, towards the end of the 12th century, and until the Icelandic Church, under foreign influence, began to press for separate jurisdiction for the clergy, there were scarcely grounds for a quarrel between Church and State. For the Church and the State were one. Isleif was not only a bishop, he was also a *goði*, and, it seems, his son Gizur (died 1118) succeeded him in both these offices.

The early Church of Iceland contrasted sharply with that of Norway. In Norway, at any rate until the middle of the 12th century, it was unusual for a nobleman to be trained as a priest. Consequently, most of the Norwegian nobles knew little of letters. Most of the priests who worked in Norway, during the first hundred and fifty years of its Christian period, were foreigners. For this reason, Norway never came to enjoy that blend of the best elements of European Christian and of native pagan cultures, which characterised medieval Icelandic civilisation. If native and foreign elements had not mingled at an early date, it is improbable that the Icelanders, alone among the Scandinavian nations, would have produced a great vernacular literature in the middle ages.

Literary and scholarly interests awakened early in Iceland. The first man who wrote in the Icelandic language was the priest, Ari, the son of Thorgils (1067-1148). Ari applied his clerical training to the study of native history. One of his works, "The Book of the Icelanders," is preserved, though in an abridged form. "The Book of the Icelanders" was used as a source by many who wrote about the history of Iceland later in the middle ages. Ari's use of the vernacular is surprising at so early a date, for most continental history in the 11th and early 12th centuries was written in Latin. Few historians wrote in their own language at this period, except those in England and Ireland. It seems likely, therefore, that Ari followed the example of scholars in the British Isles, when he wrote his history in Icelandic. Undoubtedly, English clerics taught in Iceland during the 11th century, and Ari himself mentions an Irishman who was there, though before his own time.

Even more remarkable than Ari was his cousin Sæmund (1056-1133), also a priest. Sæmund spent a part of his life in France, where he studied astrology and other subjects. He became so learned that later generations regarded him as a magician. Unlike Ari, Sæmund wrote in Latin, and was probably influenced by the French culture of his time. It is believed that he wrote a history of Norway, which was used as a source by the monk Odd (*circa* 1190), as well as by Snorri and by others who wrote about the history of Norway, both Icelanders and Norwegians. Sæmund took an active part in the administration of his country. His home was Oddi, in the extreme south of the island. Until the end of the 12th century, Sæmund's descendants, known as the Oddaverjar, were unquestionably the most learned and cultured men in Iceland (*vide infra*).

Until 1106, Skalholt was the only episcopal see in Iceland. In response to appeals made by the people of northern Iceland, Bishop Gizur agreed that a Bishop should be appointed for the north of Iceland as well. Gizur's choice and that of the northern people fell on Jon, the son of Ögmund. An episcopal palace was founded at Holar, in Skagafjörð, and Jon was Bishop there until his death in 1121. Jon was widely travelled and highly educated. He had been to school at Skalholt, as a pupil of Bishop Isleif, and, as a young man, he had studied in Denmark and Norway, and had visited Rome. Among the subjects which interested him were Latin, architecture and, especially, music. At first sight it might appear that Jon was less tolerant and more fanatical than most Icelanders of his day, but such a conclusion would not be fully just. He forbade the use of such names as Thor's Day, Frey's Day, for days of the week, for no doubt the pagan associations of such names were still strong. He condemned superstitious practices of all kinds, whether debased relics of Scandinavian paganism, or European innovations, like the astrology which Sæmund practised. Moreover, Jon took measures against several of the popular customs of his day, such as the recitation of lascivious love-lyrics at public gatherings. He was too serious-minded to tolerate such light-hearted practices, and strove to raise the standard, both intellectual and moral, of the laity and clergy of his diocese. With this object he established the first school of northern Iceland, at Holar. A detailed description of life in this school, in the days when Jon was Bishop, has been preserved. Most of those who were to be the leading clergymen of northern Iceland in the next generation studied at Holar. Many laymen also attended the school, and studied Latin, music and poetry. The sources also mention a woman who learned Latin so well at Holar, that she used to instruct the other

students, while she embroidered lives of the saints with her needle. Among the teachers at Holar were a Frenchman and a Swede. The influence of this school on the intellectual life of Iceland, particularly that of northern Iceland, can hardly be over-stressed.

Bishop Jon planned to found a monastery in his diocese. Because of shortage of money, this plan was not realised until twelve years after his death. In 1133, Jon's successor at Holar, Bishop Ketil, founded the first Icelandic monastery at Thingeyrar, beside the Hunafloi. The rule of this monastery was the Benedictine. Later in the 12th century its importance increased. It was at Thingeyrar that much of the early biographical literature of Iceland was written, both in Icelandic and Latin. One of the monks of Thingeyrar, Odd, the son of Snorri, first collected the records about King Olaf Tryggvason, and wrote a life of him about 1180. Gunnlaug, the son of Leif (died about 1218), another Thingeyrar monk, was at one time a friend and admirer of Gudmund the Good (see ch. 35). At Gudmund's instigation, Gunnlaug compiled a biography of Bishop Jon of Holar. Gunnlaug also revised Odd's life of King Olaf, and composed an Icelandic version of Geoffrey of Monmouth's "Prophecies of Merlin." Most remarkable of all the monks of Thingeyrar was Karl, the son of Jon, who was Abbot there most of the time between 1169 and 1207. Karl spent a number of years in Norway, where he became the friend of King Sverri. Karl was the author, in part at any rate, of the life of King Sverri, which he composed largely under the guidance of Sverri himself. In *Sverris Saga* the halting and uncertain style of the homilies and other early Icelandic prose has been overcome. Iceland had now developed the easy and fluent narrative, which was to characterise its classical age, the 13th century. There is reason to believe that the first of the Icelandic Family Sagas, the *Heiðarviga Saga*, was also written at Thingeyrar, about the year 1200.

Several other monasteries were established later in the 12th century. Among the most important were the Benedictine Munkathvera (founded 1155), in Eyjafjörd, and the Augustinian Thykkvibœ (founded 1168), both of which contributed their share to Iceland's medieval literature.

Until 1152 Iceland remained a part of the Archdiocese of Lund. It is clear that the great distance between Iceland and the archiepiscopal see made it easy for the Icelanders to maintain a large measure of independence of central authority. Together, the Icelandic laymen and clergymen had quietly developed a civilisation fully equal to that of Scandinavia and Western Europe. The Norwegian monk Theodricus, writing about 1180, pays a notable tribute to the cultural superiority of the Icelanders over

the Norwegians. So complete was the harmony between the diverse sections of the Icelandic population during the first six or seven decades of the 12th century, that the period has come to be called "the age of peace."

In 1152 a step was taken which eventually deprived Iceland of her independence of foreign authority and destroyed her internal harmony. In that year the English Cardinal, Nicholas Breakspere, visited Norway, where he reorganised the ecclesiastical administration, and established an archiepiscopal see at Trondheim. The new archdiocese included Iceland. Iceland had much more regular communications with Trondheim and the West of Norway than it had ever had with Lund. Moreover, some of the Kings of Norway wished to extend their political influence to Iceland, and they had much greater opportunity to do this when the Icelandic Church was directly subject to the Archbishop of Trondheim, than they had had when it took its orders from Lund.

At first the foundation of the Archdiocese of Trondheim had comparatively little effect on the internal affairs of Iceland, but the influence of the Archbishop and of the King of Norway was to grow stronger as time went on. The earlier Archbishops of Trondheim readily appointed bishops to Skalholt and Holar according to the suggestions of the laymen and clergymen of Iceland, just as the Archbishops of Lund had done. One of the first indications that the Icelandic Church was not to be allowed to enjoy the same measure of independence as it had enjoyed hitherto was given by Archbishop Eystein, the second Archbishop of Trondheim. About the year 1173 Eystein addressed a letter of admonition to the Bishops and people of Iceland. He complained especially of the lax morals of the laymen, and found fault with certain irregularities of conduct among clergymen and laymen alike. Finally Eystein complained of crimes committed by the Icelanders "against the King and his people," and spoke of summoning the Icelandic bishops into his presence and that of the King. It is obvious, from these references to the King, that the Archbishop had no more respect for the political independence of the Icelanders than he had for the independence of their Church.

An outstanding clergyman in Iceland during the latter decades of the 12th century was Thorlak, the son of Thorhall. Thorlak was ordained bishop of Skalholt by Eystein in 1178, and it was he who first tried earnestly to carry out Eystein's church policy in Iceland. Thorlak had visited Europe between 1157 and 1163. During those years he had studied in Paris and Lincoln, and it may be assumed that he made himself familiar with modern ecclesiastical thought. His later career suggests that he was

influenced by those theologians who asserted the superiority of the spiritual over the material, and consequently of Church over State. It was doctrines of this kind which, in England, led to the quarrel between Thomas of Canterbury and Henry II during the years 1162-1170. Shortly after his instalment as Bishop of Skalholt, Thorlak raised the question of patronage. Following the injunctions of Archbishop Eystein, he sought to abolish the laymen's rights of ownership of the churches on their estates. Some of the laymen resisted vigorously, and their resistance assumed a national character, which was remarkably advanced for such an early date. One of those whose property was threatened protested that he owned his church according to the established custom of the land, and that "foreigners and Norwegians" had no right to deprive him of his property. The most forceful exponent of the laymen's cause was Jon, the son of Loft, a grandson of Sæmund of Oddi. Jon was a deacon in orders and a renowned scholar, like many other members of his family. He controlled a number of churches, and saw to it that they were the best cared for in the diocese. When Thorlak reminded Jon of the Archbishop's orders about patronage, he replied that he was resolved to ignore them, and added that Eystein certainly knew no better than his grandfather, Sæmund the Wise, or the former Icelandic bishops who had countenanced private ownership of churches. The quarrel between Jon and Thorlak was the more bitter because the Bishop's sister Ragnheid was one of Jon's mistresses. When Thorlak realised how determined was the resistance of the lay chieftains, he desisted, and allowed the question of patronage to drop. Perhaps he took heed of the example of his superior, Archbishop Eystein, whose political activities had led to his flight from Norway to England in 1180. If Thorlak had been less wise and temperate than he was, the quarrel between himself and the lay chieftains would have gone further, for there was much to provoke it. In 1190 Eirik, the third Archbishop of Trondheim, formally forbade the ordination of Icelandic *goðar*. This prohibition had little immediate result, but in the end it could only deepen the rift between churchmen and laymen. The seeds of internal dissension had been sown, but Iceland was to enjoy comparative peace for several years to come. Thorlak was a many-sided character. He loved music and stories, and endeared himself to many by his material and spiritual generosity. Immediately after his death, in 1193, stories were told of miracles attributed to his intercession. To this day Thorlak is regarded as the patron saint of Iceland.

Thorlak was succeeded as Bishop of Skalholt by his nephew, Pal (born 1155, died 1211). Pal was the illegitimate son of

Ragnheid, Bishop Thorlak's sister, and of Jon, the son of Lopt, and he was, therefore, a great-grandson of Sæmund of Oddi. Although less forceful in character than his father, Pal developed the scholarly traditions of the Oddaverjar as fully as any member of the family. At an early age he was ordained sub-deacon, but it is evident that he did not originally intend to follow a clerical career. No doubt, he submitted to the clerical training for the educational benefits which it offered. After his marriage with Herdis, the daughter of Ketil, Pal went abroad to improve his education. First of all he visited the Orkney Islands, where he was made the liegeman of Earl Harald, the son of Maddad (1139-1206). Later Pal stayed a while in England, and attended a school there. Although he was only a short time in England, Pal pursued his studies so diligently that he returned to Iceland a finished scholar. It is said that there was no one in Iceland in those days who surpassed Pal in learning and poetry, and that he was the most accomplished singer of his time. It was Bishop Thorlak's wish that Pal should be chosen to succeed him, even though he was not yet ordained priest. After his election (1193), Pal went to Norway for ordination. Norway was in a strange political state at that time. It was ruled by the upstart King Sverri, who was condemned by the Pope as the enemy of God and his saints. Eirik, the Archbishop of Trondheim, had fled the country. But Pal evidently concerned himself little with the complicated church politics of his day. When he heard that the Archbishop was abroad, he visited King Sverri, with whom he could claim to be distantly related. The King received him "like a son or a brother" and arranged for his ordination to the priesthood. Pal tarried some while at Sverri's court before proceeding to Lund for his ordination as Bishop. It is not improbable that reports of Pal's friendship with Sverri reached Rome, and that this was one of the causes of the letter which Pope Innocent III addressed to the Icelandic Bishops and clergymen in 1198. In this letter the Pope rebuked the Icelandic clergy for neglect of their duties, and especially for their association with Sverri, *excommunicato et apostate, deo et sanctis ejus pro suis actibus inimico*. It must be remembered, however, that Pal was not the only Icelandic clergyman who associated with Sverri. No less renowned than he was Abbot Karl, who wrote Sverri's life (*vide supra*).

Pal was the contemporary of Bishop Gudmund the Good. It is hard to think of more widely divergent characters. Throughout his career, Pal showed himself moderate in his views and his tastes. He was deeply interested in architecture and church decoration; he was pious, patient and gentle, and had none of the

exaggerated asceticism of Gudmund. He enjoyed good food and wine, and liked to share them with his friends. Pal was reserved and cautious in his judgment. When the stories of miracles worked by Bishop Thorlak began to spread through Iceland, Pal treated them sceptically at first. His character is never more clearly revealed than it is in his dealings with Gudmund the Good. Kolbein and the northern chiefs had rejoiced in Gudmund's election as Bishop, because they believed that his will was weak, and that they would be able to govern his ecclesiastical policy. But Bishop Pal understood Gudmund's character better than they, and he received the news of the election with some reserve. He was in two minds whether he should confirm the election of Gudmund or declare it void, and sought the advice of his brother, Sæmund, before deciding (see ch. 47). Pal was a considerate and generous man, but in his generosity he had none of Gudmund's imprudence and financial recklessness. Considering their differences of temperament, it is scarcely to be wondered that there was little friendship between these two men. Pal was a peaceful man. The "Saga of Bishop Pal" relates that when Gudmund became involved in feuds against the chieftains, some of whom were Pal's dearest friends, Pal tried to mediate. Gudmund would have none of it. Since Pal was not in the forefront of his supporters, Gudmund regarded him as an enemy.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

THE life of Gudmund, *Guðmundar Saga*, is now translated into English for the first time. Gudmund the Good, Bishop of Holar, was born almost exactly a hundred years before the independent republic of Iceland came to an end in 1262, and he played a significant part in the history of this final century. The last great historical work of medieval Iceland, *Sturlunga Saga*, is the main source of our knowledge of this period, but no translation of *Sturlunga Saga* is yet available to the English reader.

In the time of its first bishops, the Icelandic state had flourished under their firm control. Of Gizur, the son of Isleif, Bishop of Skalholt 1082-1118, it was written that as long as he lived he was both king and bishop over the land. But by the second half of the twelfth century, the internal harmony of the state was beginning to be destroyed. Political power came to be in the hands of a few great chiefs, who strove to obtain individual supremacy. In northern Iceland, internal disorder was intensified by the hostile relations between the Bishop of Holar, Gudmund, the son of Ari, and the northern chiefs. Although intimate relations had been maintained with Norway from the time of the settlement, the Icelandic state was politically independent of Norway, and Norway's first intervention in Iceland's internal policy was in this struggle between the church and secular authority in the North. It was followed by King Hakon's determined and successful efforts to use the rivalries of the chiefs as a means of gaining control of Iceland.

Before we turn to the life of Gudmund himself, it seems advisable to mention the families who were most prominent in Iceland at this time. Foremost among them is the Sturlung family, whose fortunes were founded by the ambitious Sturla, of Hvamm in Western Iceland. His first wife, "the most beautiful woman in Iceland," was the sister of Gudmund's father, and Gudmund relied on his friendship until Sturla's death in 1183 (ch. 10). Before the troubled years of his bishopric began, he was a guest at the wedding of Sturla's youngest son, Snorri, in 1199 (ch. 30). By his second wife, Gudny, Sturla of Hvamm had three sons, Thord, Sighvat and Snorri. Gudny was a descendant of Egil Skallagrimsson, and to her inheritance is attributed the literary genius of her famous son, Snorri, and of her grandson, Sturla, the son of Thord. Sturla's history of his own times is preserved as part of the compilation known as *Sturlunga Saga*. (It may be noted here that Sturla the historian is only mentioned once in the Life of Gudmund (ch. 100). It is his cousin of the same name, Sturla, the son of Sighvat, who plays a large part in the events of the latter years of Gudmund's life).

The interests of Sighvat alone, of the three sons of Sturla of Hvamm, lay in northern Iceland. His wife, Halldora, belonged to the most influential family of the North, and he himself settled at Grund, and became the leading chief of Eyjafjörd. His relations with Gudmund arose inevitably from these facts, and are clear enough in our story. Thord, a man of devout and temperate character, was Gudmund's friend all his life, and showed him great kindness (*e.g.* chs. 95, 100). Snorri, too, though he no doubt felt less personal affection for Gudmund than his brother, treated him honourably. He was one of the chiefs who combined to remove Gudmund from his see in 1209 (ch. 61), but he thereupon invited Gudmund to stay with him at Reykjaholt, more probably moved by pity than by policy. Towards the end of Gudmund's life, it is twice recorded that Snorri, at this time the Law-Speaker of the Icelandic Assembly, entertained the Bishop and his followers during the session (chs. 95, 99).

The rivalries of the Sturlungs, both with other families and among themselves, and the relations of Snorri and his nephew Sturla, the son of Sighvat, with the Norwegian court, lie outside our theme. Gudmund's prophecy about Sighvat's fate (ch. 105) was fulfilled the year after his death, when Sighvat, involved in the ambitious schemes of his son Sturla, was slaughtered at the battle of Örylgsstaðir, together with Sturla and three other sons. Snorri's murder followed three years later.

In northern Iceland, by far the most powerful chief was Kolbein, the son of Tumi, of Skagafjörd. He was married to Gudmund's first cousin, and made Gudmund his chaplain at his farm Vidimyr. Kolbein was an ardent Christian, the author of a number of religious poems, and he was deeply impressed by the spiritual powers of his chaplain. When, however, Gudmund as Bishop began to assert his authority against him, he and the Bishop proved equally unyielding. Kolbein's death in a battle with the Bishop's men in 1208 ranged many chiefs more ruthless than himself against Gudmund, not only his brother Arnor, but also Sighvat, the son of Sturla, his brother-in-law, and Thorvald, the son of Gizur, the head of the powerful Haukdœlir family, to which his mother had belonged. Both Arnor (who died in 1221) and his son, Kolbein the Young, treated Gudmund's claims with scant respect.

The two great families of the South of Iceland, the Oddaverjar and the Haukdœlir, play a small part in the story of Gudmund. Of the Haukdœlir, among whose ancestors were the first two Icelandic bishops, Isleif and Gizur, Magnus was the rival candidate to Gudmund for the bishopric of Holar (ch. 42), and he later

succeeded Pal as Bishop of Skalholt. His brother Thorvald appears among Gudmund's enemies (ch. 57), and in chapter 59 we have a notice of the birth of Thorvald's son, Gizur, who was to destroy the power of the Sturlungs by the slaughter of Sighvat and Sturla at Örlygsstaðir in 1238, and the murder of Snorri in 1241, and who became the "Earl" Gizur of the last phase of the Icelandic Republic. The Oddaverjar, on the other hand, concerned themselves little with contemporary politics in the 13th century.

The Svinfellingar family was the most prominent in the East of Iceland. Sigurd, the son of Orm, who enlisted Gudmund's help in his career (ch. 37), came to the North to administer the finances of the see of Holar, and was later one of Gudmund's bitterest enemies. Of a younger generation, Orm of Svinafell and his illegitimate brother, Thorarin, gave their several welcomes to Gudmund's young supporter Aron, when he visited Svinafell as a fugitive after the Grimsey expedition (chs. 88-9).

Gudmund, the son of Ari, was born on October 2, 1161. (The date 1154 given in ch. 5 is based on a popular system of reckoning). He belonged to a well-established northern family, which, as we have seen, was connected by marriage with several of the most important Icelandic families. Thorgeir, his grandfather, is named in a list of the greatest chiefs in Iceland at the time of Bishop Gizur's death (1118), and the saga itself shows us the influence wielded by Thorgeir in his old age at the turbulent meeting of the General Assembly of 1163 (ch. 3). A zest for adventure and loyalty to obligations are dominant traits in the members of Gudmund's family, and appear no less strongly in his own character. Gudmund never lacked courage nor endurance. He joined his men in the churchyard at Helgastaðir, when the battle was at its height (ch. 72), and he did not shrink, though a man of sixty and in poor health, from accompanying his followers in their exile on the island of Grimsey. Gudmund's father, an extravagant and adventurous man, gave his life to save his lord in Norway. Of his father's brothers, Einar died in exploring the wastes of Greenland, while Thorvard, a poet, had an exciting career both in Iceland and Norway, before he settled down to farm his lands. Thorvard's son Ögmund, nicknamed Skewer, inherited his pugnacious spirit, and was a noted fighting man, even in extreme old age (ch. 104). The third brother, Ingimund, the noblest in character among them, gave his heart's devotion to his books (ch. 8), but he was a vigorous trader and traveller as well as a priest and scholar.

It was Ingimund who took charge of the child Gudmund's upbringing and clerical training, when his father was killed in Norway. Gudmund was deeply devoted to him, though he long cherished a grudge against the treatment he had received from his father's family as a whole, for he was debarred from inheriting his father's property, because he was illegitimate (see ch. 42). Gudmund was ordained in 1185, when he was twenty-three. Until this time he had been under the constant care of his guardian, Ingimund, who conscientiously prepared him for a high vocation (ch. 9). He shared with Ingimund the ordeal of a terrible shipwreck, during which his right foot was cruelly injured (ch. 8). It is told in *Laurentius Saga* that, when Gudmund's bones were exhumed in the 14th century, the signs of this fracture were clearly visible. Ingimund left Iceland to travel to Norway and England, and his ward never saw him again, for on his return voyage he was driven out of his course to Greenland, and there he perished (ch. 17).

As a priest, Gudmund began to be widely known, because of the austerities he practised, his charity and religious fervour. He soon won a name for miraculous powers (chs. 18, 19, 20, *etc.*), by hallowing springs and healing the sick, though he encountered detractors as well as believers (chs. 26, 30). His growing reputation can be seen by the part he played in the ceremonies attendant on the exhumation of the relics of S. Thorlak (ch. 29), and of S. Jon of Holar (ch. 32), and by the reception he received at the monastery of Thingeyrar (ch. 35). An outstanding event of these years is the journey on which he and his followers were benighted in a blizzard (chs. 22-3). Many of the party died of exposure, and Gudmund himself lay in a snow-drift throughout the night, clasping the dead body of a young disciple, and shielding his foster-daughter from the freezing cold of the ground.

He had become chaplain to Kolbein, the son of Tumi, at Vidimyr in Skagafjörd, and Kolbein revered him highly (ch. 30). When Bishop Brand of Holar died, Kolbein used his influence to make Gudmund his successor as Bishop, moved partly by his regard for Gudmund's spiritual qualities, and partly by the supposition, in which he proved to be mistaken, that Gudmund would be under his thumb, since he was indebted to Kolbein's patronage in the past, and Kolbein's wife was his first cousin. The preliminaries to Gudmund's election and consecration are described in detail in the saga (chs. 40-7). Gudmund was forty when he took up residence at Holar as Bishop-elect in October 1201 (ch. 43). His actual consecration in Norway took place on April 13, 1203.

After Gudmund's return to Iceland as Bishop of Holar, difficulties at once arose between him and his former patron, Kolbein, and other northern chiefs. The main matter of dispute was whether the Bishop or the civil courts should give judgment in lawsuits in which one of the parties was a cleric. The same courts had hitherto judged laymen and clergymen alike. The details of the disputes and various attempts at settlement can be followed in chapters 52-5. In 1208 Kolbein brought a large force to Holar to seize the men whom Gudmund was harbouring, after they had been outlawed by the courts. Kolbein's death in the ensuing battle reduced the likelihood of any compromise between the rival claims of Church and State in northern Iceland. Kolbein's sister was the wife of Sighvat, the son of Sturla, and when a confederacy of chiefs was formed to take action against Gudmund, it included Sighvat and his brother Snorri. Gudmund was expelled from his diocese, and Kolbein's brother Arnor took possession of the episcopal property (chs. 61-2).

When Archbishop Thori I of Trondheim was informed of the position in the see of Holar, he summoned six of the chiefs to Norway, together with Gudmund (1211). Though it is recorded that two of the chiefs mentioned did visit Norway, it is doubtful whether their journey was in response to this summons, and, indeed, the Archbishop had no authority to summon Icelandic laymen. Gudmund himself spent several years in Norway (1214-18). When he came back to Iceland, matters went no better than before, for he was again driven out of his see by Arnor. After the death of Kolbein, the Bishop's men had acted with violence and rapacity (ch. 58), and had alienated the farmers of Skagafjörd. They had little wish for him to be in residence at Holar, partly because his presence in the district entailed continual disturbances, and partly because they grudged maintenance for his large band of followers, for the lawless and the penurious took advantage of Gudmund's indiscriminate generosity all his life. Whenever, too, the Bishop travelled in his diocese, the farmers of the districts he visited had to be prepared, not only to provide food and lodging for an unruly throng of people, but to guard their possessions from robbery and destruction. But among his supporters Gudmund could number many men of courage and high spirit, and when, in 1219, Arnor was keeping him in custody in a harbour-booth in South-West Iceland, preparatory to banishing him to Norway, Gudmund was snatched from his hands by Eyjolf (chs. 68-9). Eyjolf, the son-in-law of Gudmund's friend, Hrafn, the son of Sveinbjörn, became the leader of the Bishop's men in the violent events of the following years (chs. 71-85), which include the battle in the churchyard at Helgastadir

(1220), the flight of Gudmund and his followers from Holar to the island of Malmey (1221), the raid on Holar carried out by Eyjolf and his young companion Aron, in which Sighvat's son Tumi was slaughtered, and the final withdrawal of Gudmund to the island of Grimsey, whither the Sturlungs pursued him and avenged Tumi's death (1222). The grave of Tumi's slayer, Einar, was brutally violated, and Eyjolf was killed. Before going to meet his own death, Eyjolf had contrived Aron's escape (ch. 84), and the adventures that befell Aron in his flight form the theme of chapters 87-93.

Gudmund was banished from Iceland after the battle on Grimsey, and he once more remained in Norway for several years. On his return in 1226, he could no longer match his might against the northern chiefs. Sighvat and Kolbein the Young, Arnor's son, only tolerated his presence at Holar when he was kept as a virtual prisoner, and deprived him of all authority (ch. 97). To put an end to this unsatisfactory position, the Cathedral Chapter of Trondheim summoned Gudmund to Norway in 1230, while at the same time the King of Norway summoned his opponents. Gudmund did not, or could not, obey, and in 1232, Magnus, the Bishop of Skalholt, brought to Iceland a letter from the newly-consecrated Archbishop Sigurd, which, though it censured Sighvat and his son Sturla for their violent treatment of Gudmund, and summoned them to Norway, removed Gudmund from his office (cf. *Sturlunga Saga*, ed. G. Vigfusson, i, 295). The northern chiefs, however, did not elect a successor to Gudmund, and, indeed, in the last years of his life appear to have held him in higher respect than they had before (ch. 104). Gudmund died on March 16, 1237, ending his life on a board strewn with ashes, for he held that every man ought to die on the bare earth.

Gudmund's unyielding struggle to uphold the rights of the Church against the national rights of the chiefs had made his life as Bishop one of continual suffering and humiliation for himself. The policy he pursued was disastrous to the well-being of his diocese (the fate of his short-lived school at Holar (ch. 68) may be taken as typical), and no less disastrous to Iceland as a whole, for it helped to facilitate the intervention of Norway in Iceland's internal affairs. After his death, however, the memory of Gudmund the Good was long held in veneration. In 1315 his relics were exhumed, and a fitting shrine was made for them. *Laurentius Saga* tells us of the pilgrimages made to his shrine after his translation. He was not canonised, although the issue was raised by the last Catholic Bishop of Holar, Jon Arason.

Gudmund was honoured in Norway as well as in Iceland, and it is recorded that as late as the beginning of the 18th century, a peasant of Telemarken had in his possession a large wooden figure of Gudmund, which was destroyed as an idol by a Protestant priest.

Gudmund asserted the claim that clerics were immune from the jurisdiction of the civil courts, and the principle for which he fought makes comparison with Thomas à Becket inevitable, since the question of the punishment of "criminous clerks" was one of the chief points at issue between Thomas and Henry II. King Henry invoked "ancient customs" to support his case, while the chiefs upheld the national law of Iceland, by which every man in the country was equally subject to the law. In character, Gudmund bore many resemblances to Thomas. They were alike in unshrinking courage, in impetuous violence, and above all in their ideal of devoted service. As Chancellor, Thomas gave his unquestioning loyalty to the King, but as soon as he became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1162, he dedicated himself to the service of the Church. Gudmund was a devoted parish priest, and he served Kolbein faithfully as his chaplain at Vidimyr, but as Bishop of Holar, loyalty to his office brought him into opposition with his former patron. In their lifetime, both Gudmund and Thomas were regarded as violent and quarrelsome ecclesiastics, and both alienated the sympathy of their fellow churchmen, including the Pope himself. The Archbishop of York was the bitter enemy of Thomas, just as Gudmund had little support from either Bishop Pal of Skalholt, or his successor, Magnus. When Thomas had been murdered in 1170 by the rash knights of Henry II, even his enemies venerated his memory as a martyr for the freedom of the Church. He was canonised within three years of his death, and in 1220 (the summer when Gudmund was attacked by his opponents in the churchyard at Helgastadir), his relics were ceremonially translated, and his shrine became one of the most famous places of pilgrimage in Europe.

There can be little doubt that Gudmund was inspired by the example of Thomas of Canterbury, though this is not explicitly stated. Among Gudmund's contemporaries, Kolbein was well aware of the affinity between the two men, as we can see by his poem, quoted in ch. 54. There is another reference to Thomas earlier in the saga. Chapter 28 recounts the remarkable vision of Rannveig, who was transported into the future life. To her the saints foretold that Gudmund would rank as high in Iceland as Thomas in England. It is significant that one of the two dreams which Thorvard dreamed about Gudmund's election as Bishop (ch. 42), the dream signifying that Gudmund's glory

would be so great that the whole of Christendom would be unable to comprehend it, is closely similar to the dream foretelling the future glory of Thomas, which his mother dreamed before his birth, as we may read in the Icelandic life of Thomas, printed in Unger's edition of *Thomas Saga Erkibyskups*, p. 298.

We have ample evidence of the popularity of the English martyr in Iceland. In addition to the complete *Thomas Saga* of the first half of the 14th century, fragments of a life composed a century earlier have been preserved. Two instances of his popularity in the Sturlung Age may be cited. Hrafn, the son of Sveinbjörn, who was Gudmund's friend and accompanied him on his hazardous voyage from Iceland for his consecration (chs. 48-9), held Thomas in great veneration. The story is told that a wounded walrus had proved difficult to bring to shore, and Hrafn vowed to present its tusks to the saint, if he would give his help in securing it. The walrus was successfully landed, and Hrafn fulfilled his vow. He went on pilgrimage to Canterbury, presented the tusks, and, giving a donation to the monks of Christ Church, asked to be remembered in their prayers (*Hrafns Saga*, ch. 4). *Sturlunga Saga* (ii, 245 ff.) tells us how, one evening about twenty years after Gudmund's death, the young Thorgils, who was the grandson of Thord, the son of Sturla, arrived at Hrafnagil in Eyjafjörd, and was asked which entertainment he would prefer, sagas or ballads. "Thorgils asked which sagas were available, and was told that they had the saga of Archbishop Thomas. His choice fell on this saga, for he loved Thomas above all the saints." That night, Thorgils was murdered, and he received the same injuries as the martyr whose fair death he had extolled the evening before.

There are three lives of Gudmund in Old Icelandic, all of them compilations from various sources. It is the earliest of these lives, preserved in the manuscript known as *Resensbók*, which is here translated. The second version for the most part follows the same original texts as *Resensbók*, and many passages are parallel, but the third is probably the translation of a (lost) Latin life of Gudmund. The *Resensbók* life, followed by supplementary chapters from the second life, is printed in the collection of the lives of the Icelandic bishops, *Biskupa Sögur*, Volume i, pp. 405-618, and the third in Volume ii, pp. 1-187.

Guðmundar Saga has a complicated textual history, and we can here only summarise the conclusions that have been reached on this problem. The story of Gudmund's life until he was ordained Bishop was written, possibly during his life-time, by a man who had evidently been his close friend. Lambkar, the son

of Thorgils, who is mentioned as Gudmund's ward and pupil, and who was his companion for many years (see chs. 33, 34), has been suggested very plausibly as its author. We know that towards the end of his life, about 1242, Lambkar was a member of the household of Sturla, the son of Thord, at Stadarhol. It is possible that Lambkar's biography of his former master was cut short by his own death. But in the version contained in *Resensbók* (a manuscript written about 1300), the story of Gudmund's life before his consecration also contains passages from another source, namely the *Íslendinga Saga* "History of the Icelanders," written by Sturla, the son of Thord (a work which forms part of *Sturlunga Saga*), while the detailed account of Gudmund's voyage to Norway for his consecration is partly from *Hrafns Saga*, the life of Hrafn, the son of Sveinbjörn. The story of Gudmund's life when he was Bishop of Holar (ch. 51ff.) has been pieced together from two sources, the *Íslendinga Saga*, and *Arons Saga*, the life of Aron, the son of Hjörleif. In this second part of Gudmund's biography, there is much to criticise in the work of the compiler. We are not given a complete account of Gudmund's life (for example, little is told of his two long visits to Norway), and he is overshadowed by other characters. Events are included which have little connection with Gudmund, nor is adequate explanation given of certain incidents in the history. In chapter 103, we read of Sighvat's preparations for combat, without any explanation of the alliance between Kolbein the Young and Orækja against him. We are told, in chapter 73, that the men of Skagafjörd had an untried leader in Thorarin, but the information that Arnor appointed him his deputy during his absence to guard the district from the aggression of the Bishop's men has been omitted, nor is it made clear that it is this same Thorarin (whose birth has been alluded to in ch. 44) who befriended Gudmund's young follower, Aron, at Svinafell (ch. 89), after his wife had shown him kindness earlier in his travels (ch. 88).

To summarise, the compiler of the life of Gudmund, in the form we now have in *Resensbók*, had a contemporary biography as an excellent main source for the first part of his work, but the second part is little more than a loosely-constructed collection of excerpts.

The problem as a whole is bound up with the textual history of *Sturlunga Saga*, and the reader is referred to the full discussion by Björn M. Ólsen, "Um Sturlungu" in *Safn til Sögu Íslands*, iii, 193-510, and the shorter treatment by Kr. Kaalund, "Om Haandskrifterne af Sturlunga Saga." in *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed*, 1901, pp. 259-300.

TRANSLATORS' NOTE

THE late Mr. Ernest Payne, Member of Council, who joined the Society in 1914 and died 20th September, 1936, most generously provided for a Fund to be given to the Viking Society to print "translations of Sagas, or other literary works, for the benefit of the Members of the Society."

The Life of Gudmund is a translation of the Old Icelandic *Saga Guðmundar Biskups Arasonar*, printed in *Biskupa Sögur, gefnar út af hinu Íslenska bókmentafélagi*, i, 407-558, from MS. AM. 399, 4to. The last two chapters are translated from MS. AM. 657 C, 4to (*ibid.*, i, 584-6), and variant readings from this MS., and from the texts of *Sturlunga Saga*, have been followed in a few instances. Certain annalistic and genealogical sections, and passages not essential to the main theme, have been omitted.

Thanks are due to R. Weiss for the presentation of the woodcut, reproduced as a frontispiece, to T. P. O'Sullivan for help with the map, and also to Bruce Dickins for useful suggestions.

**THE LIFE OF GUDMUND THE GOOD,
BISHOP OF HOLAR**

THE LIFE OF GUDMUND THE GOOD, BISHOP OF HOLAR

IN the days when King Ingi, the son of Harald, ruled in Norway and the bishops in Iceland were Klæng at Skalaholt and Björn at Holar, a man called Thorgeir, the son of Halli, lived at Hvassafell in Eyjafjörd. His wife was Hallbera, the daughter of Einar of Reykjanes, who was the son of Ari, son of Thorgils, son of Ari, son of Ma. Thorgeir and Hallbera had ten children who survived childhood, five sons and five daughters.

One of their sons was Einar who left no children. He died on the wastes of Greenland and there are two accounts of how he met his death. But the story of Styrkar, the son of Sigmund, who came from Greenland and was a great and reliable historian, was that their ship had been found undamaged in the desert regions; the crew had split into two and they fought together because one party exhausted its provisions before the other. Einar made off with two companions, trying to find a settlement. They climbed up onto the glaciers and died a day's journey from habitation; their bodies were found there a winter or two later. Einar's body was whole and uncorrupt, and he lies buried on Herjolsfnes.

Another son of Thorgeir was Thorvard. He went to Norway when he was eighteen, and as soon as he stepped ashore in Bergen he smote a courtier of King Ingi, named Jon, such a blow that he never recovered from it and died the following winter. Now the reason for this was that Jon had left Thorvard stranded as he sailed out of the Eyjafjörd, but Thorvard at once boarded another ship which reached Bergen three nights later than Jon's ship. After this Thorvard went to see Ketil, the son of Kalf, holding in

one hand the axe-head and in the other the haft, for his axe had broken apart as he struck Jon. The end of it was that Thorvard joined King Ingi's court and was dearly beloved by him.

Now we shall tell no more of the exploits of Thorvard in Norway, for they are of much greater scope than we are able to include in this story. When his travels were ended he married and his wife was Herdis, the daughter of Sighvat. He had ten daughters who survived childhood. Thorvard had a son, Ögmund, by a woman called Helga; Ögmund married Sigrid, the daughter of Eldjarn of Espihol.

Another son of Thorgeir, the son of Halli, was Thori. He was a monk at Thvera, and died there. He left no children.

The fourth son of Thorgeir was Ingimund, who left no children; he was married to Sigrid, the daughter of Tumi. Ingimund was a priest and a most eminent man.

Ari was the fifth son of Thorgeir. He was a great man and gifted, and he was unmarried.

2. There was a man called Gunnar, known as Sledgehammer Gunnar. He was the son of Helgi, son of Thord, son of Thori, son of Arngeir, son of Bödvar the Wise. He was married to Rannveig, the daughter of Ulfhedin, son of Kolli, son of Thormod, son of Kolli, son of Thorlak, the brother of Steinthor of Eyr, from whom the men of Eyr are descended. Thormod, the son of Kolli, married Thorarna, the daughter of Ari of Reykjanes.

Gunnar and Rannveig had a daughter called Ulfheid. She was married off against her will, but afterwards Ari, the son of Thorgeir, made love to her. Ulfheid bore him four children. One of their sons was Kløeng, who died young. They had a second son who was called Gudmund. He was born on the farm called Grjota in Hörgardal. At that time Steinunn, the daughter of Thorstein and Sigrid, daughter of Ulfhedin, had the farm. On her mother's side Steinunn was a cousin of Ulfheid and great affection accompanied their kinship. It was three nights after Michaelmas when this child was born. A wise man, called Gudmund Curly-head, was at Grjota then; he was learned in many things and there is a story told concerning what words he said—and they proved to be prophetic—when the new-born baby cried out. He declared that he had never heard such a voice in a child and said he was convinced that, if he lived, he would surpass all men; he had felt aghast when he heard the cry.

Ari and Ulfheid had a third child, a daughter called Gudrun, and a fourth, a son called Gunnar who died young.

When they first began to live together Ulfheid handed over to Ari fifteen silver marks for his management and disposal, but kept back her gold ring, as well as other costly and treasured possessions. But since Ari was a man of big ideas he soon squandered this wealth, for hitherto he had owned little property.

3. Now we shall take up the story where Thorvard, the son of Thorgeir, returns to Iceland after the fall of King Ingi. He proclaimed that he would serve no other earthly king after Ingi, for he believed that none could be his equal. He bade his brother Ari dissociate himself from those who had slain King Ingi, if ever he should come to Norway. It was to be expected, he said, that a rebellion would break out east in the Vik to seek vengeance for Ingi, and Ari must join that faction and replace him in avenging the King, if this were granted him. At their parting Thorvard made a verse :

Ari the steadfast, send my greetings
to the monarch of men, Magnus the King,
whose biting blade in battle is driven,
piercing men's armour; and Erling greet too.
All peace of God be granted them both,
and fearless to live long in their country,
highest of all ever in that land.

Then Ari went to Norway, leaving Ulfheid in Iceland with their son Gudmund. When he reached Norway he made his way to Earl Erling, meeting him east in the Vik in the following spring. Straightway Hakon Broad-shoulders and Erling joined battle at Tunsberg and Hakon was put to flight. A little later they fought again off Hrafnanes, and Hakon was routed a second time. A third battle was fought between them in that same summer below Sekk in Raumsdal, and there Hakon and many of his nobles lost their lives. For his allegiance, Earl Erling conferred high honours on Ari, and Ari remained with him that winter.

After Christmas in that year, King Magnus and Earl Erling went to Upplönd, Ari and all their court with them, and they fought a battle against Earl Sigurd at Re, near Hamarkaupang. In this battle fell Earl Sigurd with a host of men. It is told that when tidings reached Iceland of what honour and renown Ari had won with the King and the Earl for his courage and loyalty, this verse sprang to the lips of his brother Thorvard :

My warlike brother, bold in combat,
with his shield he stood in the summer by Erling.
The youthful hero enhanced his honour
and dauntless played my part with his,
when asunder crashed the coats of mail.

In the following spring Ari was anxious to go back to Iceland, and the Earl gave him a ship with gear and tackle. No man in so short a time of service could have won higher esteem than Ari did. He set sail for Iceland and had a good voyage, bringing his ship to Gasar in the Eyjafjörd. Amundi, the son of Kodran, held a half-share in the ship with Ari.

The summer after got the name of the Stone-throwing Summer, for there was a fight in the law-court at the General Assembly, and in this fight many were injured and the priest Halldor, the son of Snorri, son of Kalf, was killed. Thorvard, the son of Thorgeir, was among the wounded. Now after this had happened some of the chieftains considered that it would be expedient to prolong the sitting, so that lawsuits arising from it might be brought to court straightway, whether they pertained to slaughter, wounds or other injuries suffered in the shower of stones and weapons. So disgraceful, indeed, was this stone-throwing and so astonishing, that reliable witnesses said that after the fight men could scarcely even raise from the ground the boulders which had been hurled during it.

When the proposal to prolong the sitting had been much pressed, Thorgeir, the son of Halli, replied to it in these words: "In very truth, I do not agree to this measure to prolong the Assembly, which would entail loss and inconvenience for all men, for I fear that this course would increase rather than diminish our difficulties and dissensions. It has surely been the teaching of the noblest men that quarrels should be quenched rather than re-kindled. My son has suffered injury and he is a man of high standing, deserving, as I believe, full compensation, but I do not wish, on my account or on his, that such trouble and discomfort should be inflicted on everyone. Rather will I wait and take counsel, and go home for the time being." When he had made this declaration all the chieftains accepted his proposal and the Assembly broke up, for all men understood that this was the wiser and more beneficial course.

In the autumn Ari went to stay with his father at Hvassafell. Ulfheid accompanied him and they were there two winters, their son Gudmund having already come to Hvassafell the winter before they had. But when Ari had been two winters in Iceland he was anxious to go to Norway again. With him went his brother Ingimund and many of his friends, though Ulfheid and their children stayed in Iceland. They had a good voyage and came across the ocean, and Ari went off to take his place at Earl Erling's court and was with him that winter.

4. In that winter Olaf, the son of Gudbrand, raised a rebellion. He was the grandson of Harald Gillie, and his party gathered their followers in Upplönd. In the spring Ari and his companions fitted out their ship for Iceland, but when they were ready for sea, those courtiers who were most envious of Ari reproached him, saying that he was throwing off his allegiance to Earl Erling and deserting him when he stood in greatest need of followers and there was prospect of war. And when this kind of talk came to Ari's ear, he had his goods unloaded from the ship for he would not lie down under such taunting words. He straightway rejoined the King and the Earl at court, but Ingimund and the rest of Ari's friends set sail for Iceland and had a good voyage. Ari was in his place at court during the summer and accompanied the Earl and his great host of supporters east to the Vik, and there they defended the territory against the assaults of Olaf, the son of Gudbrand, and his troop.

On the night following All Saints' Day, the Earl had made his quarters with his men at a village called Rydjökul. He rose from his bed in the night for matins, as he always did, and went to the church with only his closest followers. When matins were over the Earl remained singing psalms according to his custom. Just then his men heard the sound of trumpets and felt sure that an assault would follow, and they told the Earl what was happening. The Earl finished his psalm and then went from the church; they saw that an army had come to the village, for it was full of men. The Earl wished to go back to his lodging, to find his warriors and also to arm himself. Then Björn Buck spoke, saying that there was only one course for the Earl and that was flight, since they were without their weapons and could not defend themselves and the Earl as they would. But Ari answered: "Yet we ourselves are here and let us help him the more, since weapons are lacking." Then they made their escape, but their enemies were at their heels. Among those with the Earl were Björn Buck, Ivar Blemish the landholder, Björn the marshal, and Ari, the son of Thorgeir.

The Earl and his men came to a wooden fence, and Björn and Ivar vaulted it, but the Earl could not get over it because he was too heavily-built. While Björn and Ivar were helping him over, Ari leapt between the army and the Earl, putting his body as a shield for his lord, and faced the enemy. By doing this he saved the Earl's life at the cost of his own, since he had not been wounded before this, but now he was pierced through the gullet and pinned to the fence. Thus he lost his life, but the Earl escaped though he had been struck in the thigh before he got over the fence. Twelve men fell in this encounter besides Ari. Among

them were Einar Open-purse, Björn the Strong, Joan, Gunnar Tar-skin and Thord the Jerusalem Pilgrim.

When the Earl had made his way over the fence to some place of shelter, he asked where Ari the Icelander was and they told him that he was staying behind on the other side of the fence, lifeless. Then the Earl said: "In truth, the man died there who was my best follower; I have none who proved as brave as he. He alone of you all was ready to lay down his life for mine, of his own free will. It is beyond my power to give his kinsmen recompense for the loss they have suffered for my sake." Then the Earl rejoined his men and gathered his forces together, and had those buried who had fallen at Rydjökul.

When tidings reached Iceland the following summer telling of Ari's fate and of all the fame he had won in his travels abroad and in the manner of his death, his brother Thorvard set to work on an elegy for him. The best consolation for Ari's death, he thought, was to put his fame into verses, to be carried far and wide.

5. Now we shall take up the story again where Gudmund was born at Grjota, as we related before, and this was in the same year as the fall of King Ingi and the burning of Sturla's farm at Hvamm. At this time Björn was Bishop of Holar and Klæng Bishop of Skalaholt. Archbishop Eystein had been consecrated in the preceding year. This was the year 1154 after the birth of Christ, according to the reckoning of Bede the priest.

In the next summer Bishop Björn went north to Thvera to consecrate his brother Björn as Abbot there, and on this journey he confirmed Gudmund at Mödruvellir. This was in the spring, after Easter. In the summer, Bishop Björn set off for the General Assembly, but he was taken ill on the way, so that he did not manage to get there. Then he summoned his kinsmen and friends, and provided for such matters as he thought most needful, showing by this that he knew—and his premonition was fulfilled—that he must prepare for death. He bequeathed a hundred hundreds from his see to the monastery of Munka-Thvera, and this was an indication of two things, both that he felt he had been too grudging of the episcopal property and that he considered that the surest means of strengthening the Christian faith was by supporting monasteries. He charged the priest Brand, the son of Sæmund, with the duty of claiming this payment from whomsoever might be his successor as Bishop. There was great foresight in this, for he had bound the very man who was to become Bishop after him and had to pay out the money himself. Afterwards Bishop Björn went home to Holar, where he lay sick all the

summer and died in the autumn on the vigil of the Feast of the Virgins of Cologne.

In the spring Thorgeir, the son of Halli, offered to have his grandson Gudmund at his home to foster him. Gudmund was in his second year when Bishop Björn died. In the summer of his third year Brand, the son of Sæmund, was elected Bishop of Holar and went to Norway for consecration.

6. In Gudmund's seventh year, the news of Ari's death was brought to Iceland, and since he was not heir to his father's property, his kinsmen thought that the best way of making provision for his future needs was to set him to book. His uncle Ingimund took charge of Gudmund's education and upbringing, and the first compensations he got for the loss of his father were floggings to make him learn. He was extremely obstinate, and it was already clearly apparent that he would take after his ancestors in behaviour and overbearing ways, since he wanted to have things his own way, if he could, whomsoever he was dealing with. For this reason his guardian Ingimund was strict and kept a firm hand on him.

That winter was called the Wonder Winter, because there were many strange happenings. Two suns were seen at the same time. In Skagafjörd elves or other strange beings were seen riding together in a great host—An, the son of Björn, saw them. It happened on Hegranes that a sow escaped from her sty and, breaking open the door, rushed at the bed where a woman lay with her child. The sow fastened on to the child, bit it to death, and then ran out. The child was left there dead, while the sow ran back into her sty.

In the next year Thorgeir of Hvassafell decided to enter the monastery of Thvera, and his son Thorvard took over the farm with his brother Ingimund. In the same year the church at Laufas was burnt down. Gudmund was then eight years old. Ingimund and his ward Gudmund went north to Hals to visit Brand, the son of Tjörvi, and they stayed with him that year, but Thorvard went to Ljosavatn. Gudmund was now nine years old. At this time Ingimund shared the farm with Brand who was his brother-in-law.

When Gudmund was ten years old, his guardian Ingimund went to live at Vaglar, and Thorvard at Hals. When the brothers, Ingimund and Thorvard, were close neighbours, Thorvard's son Ögmund and Gudmund were playmates, and many other children shared their games. But it always came to the same thing in their games that, whatever game they began to play, in the end they gave Gudmund a mitre, crozier, vestments, church and altar, and he always had to play at being their bishop, while

Ögmund was given axe, shield and weapons, to play at being a warrior. This game seemed most prophetic when later on these proved to be the careers destined for the two of them.

In this year nearly eighty people perished in avalanches, and because of this the winter was called the Terror Winter.

7. In that year S. Thomas the Archbishop was slain in England, and Thorgeir, the son of Halli, died. In the next spring Ingimund and his household removed to Mödruvellir where he rented the land at ten hundreds. Ingimund married in this year, and his wife was Sigrid, the daughter of Tumi.

When Gudmund was twelve years old, Ingimund gave up his farm and went to stay with his father-in-law Tumi at As in Skagafjörd, taking with him his wife Sigrid, for their married life had hardly been happy, and Gudmund went to stay with his uncle Thorvard at Hals. In the autumn Ingimund left As, because he and Sigrid could not get on together; many prominent men invited him to stay with them and he went to visit Hall, the son of Hrafn, at Grenjadarstadir, where his nephew Gudmund joined him in Lent that spring. This winter was called the Good Winter.

Counting from this winter, Ingimund and his ward Gudmund were at Grenjadarstadir for four years, in the course of which Gudmund was ordained by Bishop Brand, receiving the tonsure when he was twelve and so becoming an acolyte, and being ordained sub-deacon when he was thirteen and deacon at fourteen.

8. When Gudmund was seventeen years old, Thorlak the Saint was consecrated Bishop and came out to Iceland.

In this year Ingimund the priest left Grenjadarstadir and went to live with Thorarin Skin-mane at Stad on Kaldakinn, where he stayed two years, but Gudmund went to stay with Olaf, the son of Thorstein, at Saurbø in Eyjafjörd and was there for the two years that his guardian Ingimund spent at Stad. In the first of these years Gudmund Curly-head had a vision of God and S. Agnes the Virgin, and in the following summer the Feasts of S. Ambrose, S. Cecilia and S. Agnes were adopted by law, in consequence of this vision, and two days of Pentecost were abrogated. In that year Hallbera, the daughter of Einar, died, and Gudny, the daughter of Thorvard, was married to Thorgeir, the son of Bishop Brand. Their wedding-feast was held at Hals and five hundred guests came to it.

In the spring, when Gudmund was nineteen, Ingimund gave up his farm and, having converted his property into wadmal, made ready for a voyage abroad with his foster-son Gudmund. They

took passage at Gasar with Halistein Hump-back, and put out to sea on Michaelmas Eve, which was a Sunday. The wind took them north of Gnupar off Melrakkasletta, but then came a head-wind; they let the ship drift and thus they were tossed about by it for a long time and driven westward to Hornstrandir.

On Saturday evening, as they were sitting at supper, a man called Asmund, a Norwegian, threw open a corner of the tent and cried: "Hi! hi! Off with the awnings! Get up, men, and be quick about it! Breakers ahead! Shove aside the tables and never mind your suppers!" They all sprang up and threw off the awnings.

Then Havard the skipper called out, asking where the ship's priest was. "You needn't look far for him," said Ingimund, "what do you want him for?" "We want to make our confessions." Ingimund replied: "It is no better time to confess your sins now than it was in the autumn, when I begged you every Sunday to do so for the love of God, and you would not listen; there is no point in confessing your sins to God now, for the sea is just as near to me as it is to you. Now be brave and fear nothing." They answered: "Then, priest, you must pledge yourself to go with us on a pilgrimage to Rome, or make some other great vow, for nothing less can avail us now." Ingimund said: "By no means; I will make a vow if I am the one to decide what vow it shall be. Otherwise I must stipulate on behalf of all the Icelanders on board that not one of them shall join in your vows [with my consent]. For I will not submit to your guidance now, any more than you would submit to mine in the autumn." They asked: "What vows would you have us take, priest?" Ingimund answered: "I will have you vow by Almighty God and the Holy Cross, by the blessed Virgin Mary and all the Saints, to give a tithe of everything that comes safely ashore to the churches or to the poor, as the Bishop shall dispose." "Then we leave it in your hands, priest, for we cannot do without your guidance." Then men joined hands throughout the ship in solemn confirmation of this vow.

But now they were almost on the breakers and they wrangled greatly about what to do, and everybody wanted his own way. Some wanted to hoist sail and rushed to do so. Then the skipper Havard spoke with Ingimund the priest and asked him if he knew the highest name for God. Ingimund answered: "I know something about God's name, and I believe what Paul the Apostle says that there is no higher name for God and none more sacred than the name Jesus, but I do not know which name you call highest." Havard answered: "I don't call that the highest name, nor do I call such people priests who are ignorant of the

highest name of God." Then he called to the other skipper Hallstein and asked: "Do you know the name?" "God knows, I can't recall it at the moment, gladly as I would, but Thord Crow is sure to know." Then Havard asked Thord if he knew the name. "Unluckily, comrade," answered Thord, "it has slipped my memory, but luckily I can tell you the man who will know it. It is Thorbjörn Hops." "All right. Very well then, you give us the name, Thorbjörn Hops, if you know it." "God knows, I wish myself I knew, but I don't think I have ever heard the name; I can show you the man, though, who I think will know it, and that is Einar Beak." Then they referred to him and he said the name.

Just as they had lifted the sail less than six feet from the freight, a heavy sea dashed against it, fore and aft, and broke over it. There was some one clinging to every rope. Ingimund seized a boat-hook and tried to pull down the sail, while his nephew Gudmund had his place in the ship's boat, and had to try to disentangle it as he stood between the boat and the sail. But just at that moment there came another heavy sea, so great that it went over the whole ship. It swept away the vane of the mast and both the shelter-boards, and overboard went the sail and every part of the cargo that was not fastened down, except the men. The ship was much damaged and so was the boat. They had got clear of the breakers when a third sea struck them, and this was not as heavy as the others. Now the men rushed to bail out the ship, both fore and aft, and the sail was hoisted. Then they saw land and began discussing where they were. Some thought they had reached Malmey, but Thorarin the Proud, an Icelander, said they hadn't drifted very fast if so. Then Ma, the son of Eyjolf, said that he could tell they had come west to Skjalda-Bjarnarvik, on Hornstrandir, since he had been there earlier in the summer. So they told him to pilot them to harbour and they set their course northwards to Tharalatsfjörd, for there was a safe harbour there.

Then they looked over the ship to see what damage had been done, and Ingimund went up to his ward Gudmund; the heavy sea had knocked him into the boat, and his right leg was dangling over the side of it, caught fast in the sail. Ingimund asked him why he did not stand up, but he said there was such a weight on him that he could not do so. Then they lifted the sail off him, but even so he still stayed there, and when Ingimund asked him why, he replied that his foot felt so heavy that he could not move. "Perhaps it's broken?" said Ingimund. He answered: "I don't know—I can feel nothing." They examined his foot; it was crushed as small as broken shell against the side of the boat, and

the foes had been twisted round to where the heel should be. They laid him down flat in the boat and wrapped him up.

Then Ingimund found that his book-chest was missing, for it had been washed overboard. This was a hard blow for him, for with his books he had lost his heart's delight and the man was maimed whom he loved best. Yet he thanked God for all his tribulation and thought that the dream he had dreamed the night before had not been slow to come true. He had dreamed that he came to Archbishop Eystein and the Archbishop welcomed him warmly: "and yet I think your voyage will not be speedy," said he, "and my mind feels uneasy about it." Ingimund's ward Gudmund had interpreted the dream, saying that an Arch-calamity would befall them. And that very day, before they had reached the breakers, Magnus, the son of Amundi, began to ask where were the breakers known as the Thufu-breakers, and the crew told him that they were off Strandir. "I had a dream," said Magnus, "that we should sail near them." And when this talk was over, they caught sight of these breakers.

Now the ship was driven north of Reykjarfell, but then no further, and they reefed sail and cast anchor. After a time the anchors held and they lay there for that night. The next morning men got ashore on planks of ship's timber; they hacked through the mast and the anchor-cable on the gunwale, and the ship drifted towards land. Then they discussed what was to be done with Gudmund, and a man called Bersi began to speak. He was nicknamed Birth-mark, because one of his cheeks was coal-black. He said: "Why must we take a man with a broken leg with us, when we can't even save our own lives? Why don't we throw him overboard?" Thorarin the Proud retorted: "A curse on you and your words! The right thing to do would be to throw you overboard yourself. But we can think of another plan for Gudmund." Thereupon he leapt overboard with Einar Beak, and by this time the ship had drifted so far that the landward side was aground. The crew lowered Gudmund over the side of the ship in a sling of wadmál down to Thorarin and Einar. Each of them gripped him by one thigh, and he had his arms round both their necks. Some of the crew went behind them to shield them from the breakers, and they came safely to land, being driven back as the surf receded, but going forward a little when the surf rushed in. Thus they managed to get him ashore. Then the ship heeled over away from the shore, and everything on it was carried out to sea; the ship itself broke up and only a small part of the cargo drifted ashore.

There was living at this place a man called Snorri, the son of Arngeir, who was a good physician. He took charge of Gudmund,

brought him back to his house and, though he was very poor, gave him the best treatment he knew, for he was a kind man. Many came there from the districts round-about, wanting to help them and to salvage their goods. Then Ingimund the priest made a solemn supplication that his book-chest and books should come ashore, and five nights later the news came that his chest had been washed ashore at Drangar, undamaged and with none of its contents missing; it was held together by a single clasp, for the other two had snapped. Any other chests that came ashore were smashed to pieces and their contents gone. Ingimund went to Drangar to dry his books, and stayed there till the Feast of S. Martin; afterwards he went back again to see his ward and to find out how his foot was getting on, and by now it was set.

After this Ingimund went south to Breidabolstad in Steingrimsfjörd, in those days the home of Jon, the son of Brand; he was married to Steinunn, whose father was Sturla and whose mother was Ingimund's sister Ingibjörg, the daughter of Thorgeir. Jon and Steinunn received him with open arms and he stayed there for that winter. Two weeks before Easter Gudmund set out from the north while he had bits of the broken bone sticking out of his foot, and in this state he walked south and reached Breidabolstad at Passion Tide. His guardian Ingimund was very glad to see him. He stayed there till the end of Easter Week, but his foot could no longer be left as it was, for the bone that was sticking out could not be removed, nor would the flesh heal over it. So he travelled to Reykjaholar on Reykjanes to see the priest Helgi, the son of Skeljung, who was an excellent physician and of great eminence. He was married to Thorgerd, whose father was Halldor Dell, the son of Thorodd, and whose mother was Gudrun, the daughter of Thorgils, son of Oddi. Helgi took Gudmund into his house and he stayed there for treatment until the Removal Days were over. Soon after his arrival Helgi kneaded his foot hard and two men had to pull at the piece of bone with tongs before they got it away, but after that the foot healed, and Gudmund had fully recovered just before the Removal Days, and when they were over he returned to Breidarbolstad.

The winter Gudmund spent on Strandir was called the Winter of Sickness, for during it many men died whose death was a great loss.

Gudmund was now twenty years old.

9. In the following summer, Jon, the son of Brand, journeyed to attend a feast at Thingeyrar in the north, and Gudmund went with him, for his guardian Ingimund wished him to go to stay with Thorvard at Hals, where he spent the winter. But when

spring came Gudmund was anxious to get back to his guardian in the west, and so he left Hals to accompany Thorvard to the General Assembly. This summer was called the Grassless Summer. Gudmund was twenty-one when he went to the General Assembly, and when it was over he went back with Jon, the son of Brand, west to Breidabolstad in Steingrimsfjörd.

In the same summer Bishop Thorlak the Saint made his first visitation to the Western Fjords, and when he came to Steingrimsfjörd he took lodging at Kalfanes, for the church there was newly built and had not yet been consecrated. Many men of high standing came for this occasion, among them Abbot Ögmund and Örm the priest, son of Eyjolf, who was in attendance on the Bishop; Thorstein, the son of Tumi, who was later Abbot, and Thorfinn, the son of Thorgeir, were there, and also Brand, the son of Bergthor, with his son Jon, and Ingimund the priest, with his ward Gudmund. Gudmund found it more entertaining to talk to the Bishop's clerks than to attend the services or the consecration of the church. Then Ingimund went to fetch his ward and said to him: "Go to the services and the consecration ceremony, and pay close attention to them, for no one can say who will have to undertake the episcopal office, but in my opinion he who has need to learn could not learn from a better nor a wiser man than the one whose duty it is now to perform the office here." This was a two-fold prophecy, for both the things implied in his words were afterwards fulfilled, as Bishop Thorlak was verily a saint and Gudmund himself was afterwards to discharge the same office.

Next autumn Ingimund went to a ship lying in the Hvita to buy wares for sale at a profit, for he was always getting ready for a voyage to Norway, which he undertook when he thought there was a good opportunity for it. He and his ward parted in Dalir, and Sturla had Gudmund conducted north to Hals, for Ingimund wished him to go there. But Gudmund could not bear to stay there longer than a fortnight, and then went straightway back to the west until he reached Breidabolstad, where he spent the winter.

10. In that winter Gudmund, the son of Knött, was slain at Kleifar in Gilsfjörd. He had been a devoted friend of Jon, the son of Brand, and Jon engaged Gudmund, the son of Ari, to take up the case. Gudmund charged a man named Odd, known as Toll-Odd, demanding full outlawry, but when he had been declared outlaw, Jon, the son of Hunröd, gave him shelter. From the Assembly Gudmund went west to Saurbœ, to hold the court of

execution on Odd's property at Stadarhol, and from there he went to Breidabolstad to see his guardian Ingimund, with whom he stayed. Immediately after this he decided to set off north to Skagafjörd to visit his friends and kinsmen. Gudmund went his way as far as Hvamm, for there he wanted to see his uncle Sturla and find out whether Sturla would lend him aid in seeking out the man he had made outlaw. But at Hvamm the news met him that Sturla was on his death-bed; he lived for only two nights after his arrival. Gudmund stayed at Hvamm till after Sturla's death and burial, but now he had lost the support he had expected to find there, though his determination was not lost. Then he considered carefully where he should look for support in order to accomplish his purpose in such a way that he would not suffer disgrace for having indicted this man with no result, nor, on the other hand, incur such responsibility as to forfeit his holy orders and priesthood. But it now came into his mind to call on Almighty God to his aid. He vowed to give to God whatever wealth he might gain from Odd's conviction and to put no part of it in his own coffers, and prayed that the case would be settled without danger to his soul.

The case of Bœ-Högni took place this year, for Högni had given his daughter Snælaug in marriage to Thord, the son of Bödvar, in spite of two-fold impediment. The marriage was banned by Bishop Thorlák the Saint, and so filled was he with the ardour of God that he went with his clerks up to the Rock of the Law and had it sworn on oath that the marriage was against God's Law. He named his witnesses and pronounced the marriage void, placing under interdict all who had been party to it.

In that summer five hundred men on ocean-faring ships were lost, and so it was called the Disastrous Summer.

Gudmund was now twenty-two years old.

11. After Sturla's death, Gudmund journeyed as far as Thingeyrar, where Thorgrim Stay-at-home, his friend and foster-brother, lived. He invited Gudmund to go west with him to a horse-fight at Vatnsendi in Vestrhop, and Gudmund replied: "I cannot say how well this will turn out, for those men are sure to be there for whom I have little love—Odd, the man I have outlawed, and those who are sheltering him. It will be a sore trial for me to see them, but nevertheless I will go with you, if you wish, and God will take care of me." Then they set off and came to the gathering. Thither had come Jon, the son of Hunröd, with a great band of jeering vagabonds, and also Toll-Odd the outlaw. Thord, the son of Ivar, of Thorkelshval, was there too, with his

followers, and Bjarni, the son of Hall, with many men from Midfjörd.

Hunröd, who was the son of Jon's sister, and Toll-Odd had a dispute and fell upon each other; Hunröd struck at Odd and wounded him in the arm. Jon was enraged at this and tried to attack his own nephew Hunröd. There was a huge crowd by now, and when Hunröd struck at Odd a second time, Jon's son Eyjolf caught the blow, and he died straightway. Jon injured Thorodd, who was a serving-man of Thord, the son of Ivar, and many others were wounded there. Now the upshot of this encounter was that when Gudmund left the gathering, God had taken such bitter vengeance on his enemies that Jon had lost his son on account of Odd, and Odd himself was gravely wounded. Odd was responsible for the whole disastrous business, but so did God keep watch over Gudmund that he had contributed to the disorder neither by word nor deed. After this Gudmund went to Stad to stay with Thorgeir, the son of Bishop Brand, and remained with him that winter in such high favour that he said afterwards that no man outside his own family had treated him so kindly as Thorgeir.

In the following spring, Thord, the son of Ivar, prepared his case against Jon, the son of Hunröd, concerning the injury he had inflicted, and Jon was made outlaw that same spring. In his suit Thord had the support of Bishop Brand and his son Thorgeir, and of their kinsmen and friends, and in the summer they set out from the north in a great body to hold the court of execution; judgment in the case was assigned to Bishop Brand and his son. But Thorgeir said to the Bishop that he considered it would be an obstacle to peace if Gudmund's case concerning Odd's outlawry and the shelter afforded him were not taken up there. Thorgeir supported Gudmund so devotedly in his suit that there was no other chance of settlement, and the case was settled thus according to the judgment of Bishop Brand and Thorgeir.

Gudmund was now twenty-three years old.

12. In the summer Gudmund attended the General Assembly, and from there he went south to Nes to see Magnus, the son of Amundi, and Thorfinn, who was afterwards Abbot. He attended feasts there, accompanied by the priest Gelli, the son of Höskuld, and for this reason he was not present at the peace-meeting at Asgeirsa. But when his visits in the south were over, he went north to stay with Thorgeir at Stad, and remained there that year, as did his guardian Ingimund also.

In the following spring Thorgeir gave up his farm as he was about to sail to Norway. He joined a ship in the Eyjafjörd belonging to Ögmund Amber-head, who was the father of Helgi, who was later Bishop of Greenland. Thorgeir was accompanied by Thoralf the priest, son of Snorri, Thorstein, Thorkel, the son of Eirik, and many other Icelanders. In the same summer Abbot Karl, Ingimund the priest, and his nephew Ögmund, the son of Thorvard, with many other Icelanders, sailed to Norway on another ship. Thorgeir's farm at Stad was then taken over by a man called Hesthöfði, the son of Gunnar and of Gudrun, who was Sæmund's daughter and Bishop Brand's sister.

Gudmund was now twenty-four years old.

13. In the spring of this year during Lent, four nights after the Feast of S. Gregory, Gudmund had been ordained priest by Bishop Brand. His guardian Ingimund gave him at their parting all the best and most learned books he had and a set of vestments. Only now did he leave his ward when he was a priest and consummate in learning and virtuous life. Then the two men went away whom he loved most dearly, Ingimund and Thorgeir, yet little did they expect their parting to be so long as it proved to be.

Then the two ships sailed out of the Eyjafjörd and made Norway in the north, and both Ingimund and Thorgeir remained in Thrandheim that winter. Thorgeir, Bishop Brand's son, was the guest of Archbishop Eystein for the winter. Ingimund took lodging in the town, and the chapel of S. John in Christchurch was put at his disposal for services, but he spent all feast days at Christmas and Easter with the Archbishop, who held no one in higher esteem.

In the spring, after Easter, Thorgeir and all his companions sailed back to Iceland, but Ingimund remained in Norway and performed the services in the Church of the Virgin at Stad, where he stayed two winters. It was a proof of the Archbishop's estimate of his learning that, when Bishop Jon the first, who was known as Knut, died in Greenland, Archbishop Eystein wished to consecrate Ingimund to that see. It was to Ingimund's credit that he declined this honour.

The first winter Ingimund spent in Norway, Gudmund was at Hof as parish-priest, staying with his uncle Grim. He was now twenty-five years old.

14. In the summer Thorgeir, the Bishop's son, fell ill at sea, and he lay in his bunk until the ship came to harbour at Eyrar. When he came ashore, he had a relapse and died two nights after the Former Feast of the Virgin Mary. His friends and kinsmen decided to take his body north to Holar, and Bishop Brand heard no news of his son's death until they reached Holar with the body. Thorgeir was beloved of many, and his death affected his kinsmen and friends severely, but his father most of all. Gudmund testified later that he had lost no one whose loss was so great to him; he felt it so deeply that it might almost be said that afterwards he was a changed man in many ways.

Gudmund stayed at Hof that year. He became so zealous in prayer and divine service, in discipline and in acts of charity, that some thought his zeal little short of excessive, believing that he would not be able to bear the rigours of his life, together with his sorrow for Thorgeir's death. He also received young clerks for instruction, and each day it was his habit to teach and to write between the services. In addition to this, he spent a great part of the night in church, both at the beginning and end of the night. He was assiduous in making his confession when he could get into touch with priests, but if this were less frequently than he wished, he followed the plan of writing down each misdeed he committed, and sent the record to Bishop Brand in secret. Whatever men he visited, he examined their books and studied them closely, extracting from the books of each any information that was new to him. Everyone was impressed by his faith, especially all those who were wisest. He adopted many religious practices not known by anyone to have been observed hitherto in Iceland.

But it was at another time that men thought the greatest change could be perceived in Gudmund's disposition. This was the winter when he lay with a broken leg on Strandir, for then his mind was uneasy both day and night until he got back to his guardian. From that time each year saw some further improvement in his way of life and his understanding, so that in conduct he seemed almost a different man from what he promised to be in his youth. Moreover, many signs were already manifest when he blessed springs and performed exorcisms, and men attached deep significance to these. They strengthened his own faith and that of his friends and kinsmen, and were an indication that God was well pleased with his conduct. The common people showed their opinion of him by the nickname they gave him of "Gudmund the Good".

But it happened here, as it does everywhere, that all were not

equally satisfied though benefits were bestowed. Some gave thanks to God, for in their need they received from Gudmund both spiritual and bodily comfort, but others were envious because they did less good than he did, although they were of higher rank. There was even greater difference between these men and Gudmund in the deprivations they were willing to suffer for the sake of their faith, in penance, or for the love of God. They constantly saw how different was their conduct from his, for each spring it happened that all the stipend he had received was used up; he had spent it on food and clothing for the poor and for his kinsmen, and there were seven paupers whom he supported with it. Those who bore him a grudge now sought both to put difficulties in his way and to make him less able to attend to the needs of others. His parishes were changed, and he was appointed to those which were the poorest. Then Bishop Brand laid claim to his books and vestments, saying that the see of Holar was rightful heir to Ingimund the priest. But they did not succeed in thwarting his acts of charity nor the austerities of his life, and it could be seen that God was giving him support, for, with the help of worthy and God-fearing men, something always arose which enabled him to continue in what he had begun.

In this year many notable events took place. Jerusalem was conquered by the Saracens, and as, in consequence, all the Christians who had been living there either had to take to flight or were killed, Christianity was completely destroyed there. Blackness eclipsed the sun during the daytime, so that many simple-minded men thought the end of the world must have come. That winter was called the Winter of Dearth, and it was followed by a severe shortage of grass and famine in the summer, and no ship came to Iceland from Norway.

Gudmund was now twenty-six years old.

15. In the following spring Gudmund went to Miklabœ, where he stayed two winters as the guest of Audbjörn, continuing in all the practices which he had adopted, as we described above. In his first year at Miklabœ, Archbishop Eystein died, after he had consecrated Jon, the foster-son of Sverri, as Bishop of Greenland. In this year Jon Cowl-man fell. Gudmund was now twenty-seven years old. In his second year at Miklabœ, King Henry of England died; Jon, Bishop of Greenland, was in the Eastern Fjords of Iceland in that winter; in the spring Abbot Ögmund was drowned, and Abbot Karl breathed his last.

16. During this time Ingimund the priest was in Norway with a woman called Brynhild. Wherever he went all the wisest men and those of the highest standing found that they appreciated his conduct the more, the better they knew him, and he was held in great regard by Jon Cowl-man and the members of his court. It was fortunate, too, that Ögmund, the son of Thorvard, was then at court and was much respected. He welcomed his uncle Ingimund with open arms, and offered him all the assistance in his power.

In the previous spring Ingimund had sailed on a trading expedition to England, and when he returned in the autumn he had gone to Bergen. But when he and his companions brought back their valuable cargo of wine, honey, wheat and many other things from England, the King's officers wanted to lay hands on it and rob them. At this, Ingimund's nephew Ögmund went before the King and spoke thus to him: "It would surely be, were King Ingi alive, that he would have a brother of my father Thorvard defended by force if he threw himself on his mercy, and King Magnus would have done the same for Ari's sake. It is our hope, Lord, that, for their sake and ours, you will see that Ingimund's property is protected." The King answered "Well spoken, Ögmund, and so shall it be that every penny of his property shall be respected. Set about it yourself with your kinsman, and he will be made welcome here."

Upon this, Ögmund went to the ship among the officers of the court and announced what the King had said. Then the officers went up to some large wine-casks belonging to the merchants and asked who their owners were; Ingimund claimed four or five of them, and so with the other things they inquired about, until they began to suspect that he could hardly be the owner of as much as he said. They said to him: "We see your fraud, that you are claiming goods which are the property of others, but we are not disposed to give up everything." Then they took possession of one cask, and it happened to be Ingimund's, and they also took sixteen ells of brown cloth which was Ingimund's property. But he was unwilling to say anything, for he preferred to forfeit his cloth rather than provoke a dispute, even though it was extremely valuable.

After that Ingimund looked for lodgings and remained in Bergen that winter. In the course of the winter he happened to recognise in the tunics of the courtiers the very cloth of which he had been robbed in the autumn. The tunics they were wearing were of two colours, half red and half brown. Ingimund, however, told

men to let the matter stand, "for," he said, "I do not want to bring about any dissension"; he assured them his wealth would last his life-time.

17. There was a man called Björn, nicknamed Plank-nose. He was marshal of the King's Guest-men, and had been the ring-leader in the plundering of Ingimund the priest when the courtiers were willing to relinquish it. It happened one day that Ögmund caught sight of the men who were wearing the tunics made of Ingimund's cloth. He reported this to his friends Bard Sluggard, Petr Glutton and Eindridi, saying to them: "Things have come to a pretty pass. I have just seen Björn Plank-nose and his band going about in tunics of two colours, half brown and half red, made of fine-woven cloth, and I recognise their material as that stolen from my uncle Ingimund in the autumn." Eindridi said: "Why are you doing nothing about it, instead of laying claim to it?" Ögmund replied: "Ingimund himself will not have it claimed, for he does not wish the matter to cause trouble." Eindridi said to him: "It will never do for such criminals to have the upper hand of us, goading us and our friends in this way. Of course we must take the matter up, even though Ingimund does not care to."

They leapt up at once and went out, taking their axes in their hands; and Ögmund accompanied them. They went up to the hall where Björn Plank-nose sat drinking with his troop, nearly forty men in all, and they were only four. Eindridi wanted to attack them then and there, but Petr said that would not do, as there were forty against the four of them; it would be better to wait until they came out. And it happened by chance that when four men left the drinking-hall, they were the very ones they would have chosen, for they were wearers of the tunics, and Björn himself was among them. Eindridi struck Björn his death blow, while Bard, Petr and Ögmund slew the other three, who made no resistance. Then the trumpets of the King's Guest-men rang out, and nearly four hundred men gathered together. The news was brought to the King, whereupon the courtiers sounded their trumpets. Each party told their own story to the King, but Bard and Petr were close relatives of Archbishop Eystein, and the King felt they were so much in the right in the case that he dismissed from his service all who had taken part in the plundering with Björn. Ögmund's party were given possession of the clothes, and the case was dropped and remained undisputed.

In the following spring, Ingimund joined a ship called the

Stangarfóli and got ready to sail from Bergen to Iceland. Bergthor, the son of Thord, son of Ivar, was on board, with many other Icelanders and Norwegians, all gallant men. But the ship was driven onto the deserted shore of Greenland, and the end of their voyage was that all perished. Their fate was known because their ship was found there eighteen years later, and the remains of seven men were discovered in a cave. One of these men was Ingimund the priest, and his body was whole and undecayed, as was his clothing also. Beside him lay the skeletons of six men, together with wax and runes relating the story of their fate. Everyone thought it a clear sign of how pleasing his conduct had been to God that Ingimund's body should have lain whole and uncorrupt so long unburied.

Gudmund was now twenty-eight years old.

18. While Gudmund was staying at Miklabœ, he used also to perform divine service at a farm called Marbœli, and it was here he was saying Mass on a certain feast day. A wise and intelligent woman called Hallfrid, the daughter of Ofeig, who lived there, was present at Gudmund's Mass, and was following it attentively, as she always did. When the Gospel was over and the priest turned round and said *Dominus vobiscum*, she saw flame coming from his mouth up into the air, much brighter than any flame she had seen before. She felt convinced, as did all whom she told of it, that it was the fire of the Holy Spirit which she alone had seen.

After this Gudmund left Miklabœ and went to Vidvik, where he stayed the winter with Ma, the son of Finn. It was one day during his winter as Ma's guest that he was at prayer in the church as the farmer came walking to it. And when Ma went inside he saw a little bird fly up into the air from Gudmund's shoulder, and then it vanished from his sight. He could not tell what kind of bird this was, for he was little accustomed to seeing the Holy Spirit. So rejoiced was Ma by this wondrous happening that after this he thought Gudmund's conduct was of a higher order than other men's, and so treated him with much greater respect than before.

Gudmund was now twenty-nine years old.

19. In the following spring, a woman called Arnthrud, of Vellir in Svarfadardal, sent a message to Gudmund asking him to come to stay with her and help her in managing her affairs. Arnthrud was the daughter of Forni and was related to Gudmund; she was a widow and her sons were not grown-up. So Gudmund

removed to Vellir, and when he got there he took over a farm nearby where he lived with his followers.

In the next year it happened that a woman on the island of Flatey went raving mad and had to be bound. Many vows were offered on her behalf, but they did not make her recover. Priests consecrated water for her and many remedies were tried, but they were of no avail. One night a woman who was watching over her dreamed that Our Lady, Blessed Mary, came to her and said: "Why are you so little resourceful in the remedies you try on the raving woman who lies here?" In her dream she answered: "We think we are trying many ways, but who are you that you seem to know what ought to be done?" She replied: "Here is Mary, the Mother of God, on whom you have called. Now I will show you a plan which will avail. Send for some water blessed by my friend, Gudmund the Good, for I believe his benediction to be the best, and this will cure her." After that she awoke and told what she had seen. They went to fetch the water, and when it was poured and sprinkled over her, she was cured straightway.

Another wondrous happening, which occurred at Vellir, is also told. There was an old woman living there, who was most devout in her faith. It was her custom during services to sit very close to the altar on the women's side of the church. Gudmund the priest was exacting about people's conduct, especially when they were in church, and it distressed him that this old woman sat so near the altar, but he was kindly to children and the old, and to all who needed his help, and this made him beloved of God and good men. He was unwilling to rebuke her and cause her distress, for she loved him much, as he did her. One day after Mass the old woman tottered to the door of the choir, for she wished to see Gudmund as he took off his vestments. Gudmund went towards her, greeting her warmly, and asked her what she wanted, but she asked him who he was. He answered: "This is Gudmund the priest, your friend." "Then I am indeed fortunate," she said, "for I think I understand properly now what happened, but I do not know what caused it. I grew rather drowsy during Mass when you began the Preface, and then I thought a man came up to me and said: 'Lift up your hearts.' Then I sprang up and I heard that you were singing the *Sursum Corda*, and I do not know how it came about." "You have no need to wonder at that, sister," said Gudmund, "God awakened you for he would not have you sleeping during Mass so near to the altar."

In this year many died of disease in Iceland. Gudmund was now thirty-one years old.

20. On another occasion Gudmund had ridden down to a ship to meet some friends on their return to Iceland. He was delayed, for wherever he went, the people, both foreigners and Icelanders, used now to ask his advice and besought him to perform exorcisms. It was late at night on the eve of the Feast of S. Matthew when he got back home. As he had not returned when they expected him, men sang evensong, locked up the church and went to bed. And when Gudmund got to the churchyard, he wondered whether to disturb the household and ask for the key, or whether to forbear from going into the church, and he was reluctant to do either. He went to the door of the church and there was no need to look for the key, for the church was standing open, and no one could say who had unlocked the door for no member of the household had done so.

But though incidents such as these have been written down, there were also many others which showed how well God was pleased with Gudmund's conduct and religious practices. Wherever he went, he now began to collect such sacred relics as he could manage to get. He carried them with him on all his journeys and used to hold them over the sick, and this was an indication that he had greater faith in their sanctity than in his own merits. Yet all thought it was evident, from these and many other things, that God was better pleased with Gudmund's conduct than with that of others. The stories we have just told, and many others like them, were carried throughout Iceland, and the people began to show deep devotion to Gudmund in their faith. Many invited him to their homes so that he might bless the water on their land and hear their confessions. Bishop Brand and many other good men chose Gudmund as their confessor.

21. This episode is related about Gudmund when he was thirty-two years old that one day in his own church at Vellir, he was singing Mass and the clerks should have been preparing the oblation, but the wafers were locked up in a chest and the key could not be found. Then it was suggested that the chest should be broken open, but Gudmund forbade this. He sang Mass at his leisure and as if he were not aware that the wafers were locked up. But when the Gospel was over and the Canon begun, he made the sign of the cross over the chest containing the wafers, and the lock sprang away from the chest, though no one touched it, and fell onto the floor, and thus the wafers were procured.

At another time when Gudmund was singing Mass away from home, at Hofsa, there was no *sacrarium* set beside the altar, so that the priest had to perform the *lavabo* over the floor. Four palms

tied together were lying here, which had been used the year before and put down beside the altar, and after the Communion Gudmund washed his fingers over them. But then they were picked up, for Gudmund said they should be kept safe elsewhere, and now both flowers and leaves had sprouted on the palms. Gudmund and other men attached great significance to this incident.

In that winter Bishop Thorlak the Saint died at Skalaholt two nights before Christmas.

22. In the next winter, after Christmas, on the Feast of S. Brettifa, Gudmund made ready to leave home and travel west across the moor to Holar to visit Bishop Brand and other friends; as usual, many people accompanied him on his journey, and there were sixteen in the party altogether. In the evening they went up to Skeid and spent the night there. The next morning they prepared to cross the moor by way of Heljardal Moor, and they called to Gudmund to make haste with the service, but he did not do so, and the service took longer than they wished, though it was shorter than he would have it; he said that hurrying over the service would not make their journey any the easier. Then they got ready for their journey but made a very late start.

In the party were Helgi, the farmer at Skeid, Erlend the priest, son of Brand, who later became a monk, Bjarni, the son of Jon, who was nicknamed Song-Bjarni, a man called Sigmund, and Kløeng, the son of Thorstein. Gudmund's foster-sons and pupils were there too. One was a boy called Gest, the son of Snorri the Slayer of Assi, who had been ordained sub-deacon, and the other was called Vermund, the son of Thorgrim of Brattavöll. Gudmund loved them both as dearly as if they had been his own sons. He also had his foster-daughter Jodis, the daughter of Bersi, with him. A woman called Helga lived at Gröf, close to Vellir, and she was there with her son Ingjald. Others in the party were a girl called Dyrhild, another called Una, the daughter of Herleif, and a man called Hrafinkel, the son of Skeggi, with his wife Hallbera.

When they got on their way the weather became misty, with falling sleet though little wind; the outlook seemed threatening to all and especially to Gudmund. As they climbed up on the moor it grew worse; it got colder, and finally a snow-storm blew up. The wind was from the west, and so it was against them; their limbs grew cold, and they were held up because many of the party, the women and children, were poorly clad and walked slowly. Then the wind grew biting and so strong that even the men could hardly

walk against it. The drifting snow was so dense that they could not see beyond their toes. Then night began to fall.

When Gudmund himself got up on the moor he sat down to wait for the slower members of the party, and when they were all gathered together, he told them he wished them to turn back and go downhill with the wind at their backs, for nobody knew where they were, and he said he thought there was a better chance that some of them, at any rate, would reach shelter, if they did not go on further. So this plan was adopted, but Hrafinkel and his wife Hallbera had gone on ahead of the others and went blindly westward across the moor. Hrafinkel reached habitation at Heljardalsa, but Hallbera lay out in the open right beside the farm, yet survived nevertheless.

23. Now we must tell how Gudmund the priest and his companions turned back, but before they went on their way, Gudmund stripped off his tunic and threw it over the girl Una, for she was already very cold. He took his foster-daughter Jodis by the hand and guided her, while Erlend the priest guided Vermund, but Gest accompanied them on his own. Then their party began to split up, and the boy Ingjald could not find his mother Helga. She and Sigmund had separated from the party and they had fallen into a gully. Helga felt she could walk no further, so Sigmund dug her into a snowdrift and left her there, but an avalanche descended, and in this she perished, and her body was not found until the summer on the Feast of S. Columba. Sigmund, however, went on and came to shelter at Skeid. Then little Ingjald disappeared too, when he was trying to find his mother, and his body was found on the Feast of S. Anthony; the church-bell at Vellir rang of itself to greet him when his body was carried to the church. The farmer Helgi and Björn took Una with them until her strength gave out; then they laid her down and dug her into a drift, wrapped in Gudmund's tunic, and so they left her, and at last reached home that night.

Those who accompanied Gudmund began to grow very tired as they stumbled down from the moor. The boy Vermund could walk no further, but Gudmund refused to leave him behind. Erlend the priest started to dig them into a snowdrift, and as he was doing this the boy died in his foster-father's arms, under his cloak. Gudmund lay down in the snowdrift, with his foster-daughter Jodis beside him, and the body of Vermund lying on the top of him. Then Erlend left them, and with him went Gest and Helgi, but

Gest fell headlong into the river, and after this he could walk no further, so Erlend dug him into a snowdrift, and he died before they left him. They went on until at last they reached habitation that night and were able to tell how the party had broken up, and that they had left some of them dead and others little better. Men were straightway sent down to Vellir to report that Gudmund and many of his companions were missing, and Arnthrud's son Brand at once got together a party of nearly forty men to search for Gudmund.

While Gudmund was lying in the snowdrift with his foster-daughter Jodis, she told him that her neck was cold where it lay bare on the snow. He did the only thing he could, and stretched out his arm underneath her neck, and she rested on it the whole night through. He lay on his back, with the body of the boy on the top of him, and he grew so stiff with the weight of them both that he could scarcely move. But when day began to break he and Jodis tried to get out of the snowdrift, and by then the snow-storm was nearly over. Gudmund could scarcely walk, and so they made little headway, yet tried to struggle on.

The first to find them was Helgi, the farmer of Skeid. He had a horse and sledge and drove them back to the farm nearest the moor, where they stayed overnight and the following day to rest. At once Gudmund had men sent out to get the bodies of the two boys, Gest and Vermund, and they were brought down to Skeid. This was on the Friday, the Feast of S. Hilary, and on the Saturday another expedition was made up on the moor to search for the bodies, but Dyrhild's body was the only one found, for the weather was so bad that they could not carry out the search. That evening they returned to Skeid with Gudmund and the body of Dyrhild. On the Sunday the bodies were carried down to Vellir on a sledge; Gudmund and his foster-daughter Jodis were taken on another sledge. Then Gudmund sent Helgi the farmer with others up on the moor once again to see if any more bodies could be found. And they came on the place where the girl Una had been laid down, and she was entirely unharmed by frost-bite, except on one toe; this was the only part left uncovered by Gudmund's tunic, and it was the only part to be frost-bitten. After this the search was abandoned.

On the next day the bodies were buried, and men came in great numbers to Vellir that day, and the men of Svarfadardal showed by this how much they loved Gudmund whom they felt they had rescued from the clutches of death. Gudmund sang the service over the bodies, and others sewed their winding-sheets. Weep-

ing, Gudmund stroked the boys' heads and kissed them, and then said: "May God bring you both to life in his own kingdom."

When the burial was over, some dogs which had followed men to Vellir sprang on each other and bit each other so ferociously that no one could get them apart. Water was thrown over them, they were pulled away from each other and they were beaten, but still they would not let go. Then Gudmund went up to them and made the sign of the cross over them, bidding them let go and be silent, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. At once the dogs let go and were silent, and each of them went his way.

That night Jodis, Gudmund's foster-daughter, dreamed that she came to a place where many boys were wrestling; among them she recognised Vermund and said to him: "How is it that you are wrestling, you who were dead?" He answered: "I was dead, but now I live, for my foster-father threw his cloak over me the minute I died, and yesterday when he caressed my head, God granted his prayer that I should live in his kingdom. Now in truth I live, and you must tell my foster-father that my powers are now much greater than before I died. If he wishes, he may send me on missions to one person or another, and I shall act as his spokesman in any matter he thinks necessary. But Gest can do even more than I can, for he is now Gudmund's chief spokesman." After this she woke up and told her dream to her foster-father, who rejoiced greatly at it.

And before this miraculous happening Gudmund had dreamed that he was at Mass and singing the service to the beginning of the *Te igitur*; the housewife Arnthrud was sitting by his bedside, and she heard it all clearly, for he was saying it aloud in his sleep. There was a farmer called Kalf, who was a good friend of Gudmund the priest. He became afflicted with such a severe throat-disease that he was unable to speak or to swallow food. Gudmund went to visit him, and prayed over him and dropped water from holy relics onto his lips. He had such difficulty in swallowing it that it made him sweat heavily, and he straightway afterwards told of this in a low voice and then stood up cured. Thereupon he went out to his cowhouse to look after the cattle, with his health completely restored.

Gudmund was now thirty-three years old.

24. It was in the following year that a remarkable event happened at Holar in Hjaltadal. On the night before the Feast of S. Leonard a building there caught fire, and people woke up to find that the whole place was blazing. They rushed to put out the

flames, but already the fire had got such a hold that it only flared up the more when water was thrown on it. The news was brought to Bishop Brand, and he got up with all his attendants and went into the church to vest himself. Then, clasping his crozier and a vessel of holy water, he went to the fire fortified with holy relics and faith in God, and proceeded to the place where it was at its height—though nowhere was it abating. People then began to ask whether any water blessed by Gudmund the priest were at hand, and the priest Brand, the son of Dalk, told them that some could be procured if they wished. The Bishop ordered them to get some, and to try sprinkling it over the flames, and straightway the whole blaze was extinguished, to everyone's great joy.

Bishop Brand accepted this trial in such a spirit that he thanked God for his loss; he thought it had befallen him because he had been too niggardly with the poor, and because God thought that too many things at Holar had fallen into decay. From this time he felt a higher regard for Gudmund and for the water he blessed, his exorcisms and all his undertakings, though he had esteemed him well enough before.

Another remarkable happening was this: there were two Norwegians at Grund in Svarfadardal, one called Guthorm, the other Hermund, and they were deeply devoted to Gudmund. They came to see him one day to make their confessions, and they called him out to the church. His head was wet, as it had just been washed, and there was a keen frost. The cold pierced his head, and as a result he was struck with the disease which had afflicted his mother. She had often had attacks of it until Gudmund had prayed by her bedside, and henceforward she was entirely free from it, but it was this same disease which now afflicted him. Gudmund was brought into the house, and he could not speak, nor could he lie still. Both men and women stood beside him and prayed for him, taking his plight so much to heart that many were in tears as they besought God to make him recover. But when nearly three hours had passed, he was fully restored through the intercession of those who stood weeping by him, and he himself officiated at Mass that day.

While Gudmund was lying ill, his pupils had gone down to the beach to play games, and a huge dog seemed to them to be making for them with gaping jaws, ready to bite them. They were overcome with fear and panic, and in their terror invoked the saints for help. The dog vanished straightway, and the boys went home and related what had befallen them; their guardian felt assured, as others may realise also, that they had been tempted by the evil one.

25. In this year Pal was consecrated Bishop of Skalaholt and returned to Iceland. Gudmund was now thirty-four years old.

26. That summer Gudmund attended the General Assembly, and during the session Halldora, the daughter of Eyjolf, who was the abbess of Kirkjubœ in the east, besought him to come and help her to manage her convent. Gudmund consented to her request, and arrangements were made for his journey to Kirkjubœ; she was to send men to the north of Iceland to meet him, for he had first to return to his home there.

Gudmund then rode home from the Assembly to Vellir, where he stayed until the Feast of S. Olaf, for that day was the anniversary of the dedication of the church at Vellir and Gudmund wished to wait for it. After the anniversary Gudmund went south into Eyjafjörd to see his friends and relatives before he removed from the neighbourhood. The ship from Norway with Bishop Pal on board had just come to port at Gasar, and Gudmund and the Bishop met at Grund, the home of Thorlak, the son of Ketil. Gudmund arranged for the church-bell to be chimed as the Bishop approached, and for a reception of fitting honour. The Bishop was much gratified by this.

Now the emissaries of the Abbess, among them her brother Sokki, arrived from the east to meet Gudmund. They asked the permission of Bishop Pal for Gudmund to take up residence in the convent of Kirkjubœ. Bishop Brand had now come to Eyjafjörd to see Pal, and the two bishops granted him leave to go. Then Gudmund returned home to Vellir and announced his departure to his parishioners, and until now no one had believed that he would really go.

It was after Gudmund had left Svafadardal that his parishioners first realised their loss, so they held a meeting at which they decided to send men after him, and first of all to entreat Bishop Brand to forbid his departure. The Bishop did as they asked, for he felt he had been mistaken in granting him leave to go away. When the messengers came to Gudmund and told him of the Bishop's injunction and of the entreaties of all his parishioners, he abandoned his project and went to see the Bishop, who told him that it was his will to forbid his departure from the district. Gudmund then returned to Vellir and remained there for the winter.

The Bishop attached so much significance to this incident that he said that matters seemed to him to have gone in the same way as with Pope Gregory, *who was recalled on his journey to England because of the prayers of his flock.*

In the following winter discord arose between Thorstein, the son of Thrasláug, and Gudmund, and the cause of it was that the people of Svarfadardal used to hand over to Gudmund the gifts they had promised as offerings to God and the Saints, and Thorstein said that Gudmund kept these offerings for himself. Also, on holidays and festivals it was Gudmund's custom to let people kiss the holy relics, but Thorstein asserted that he did not know whether these were the bones of holy men or of horses. For these reasons there was a bitter quarrel between them, and Thorstein demanded of Bishop Brand that he have Gudmund removed from the district.

Gudmund was now thirty-five years old.

27. In the following spring, Bishop Brand went north to Vellir, and he saw for himself that the common people of the district did not wish Gudmund to go. The Bishop invited him to accept the living of Vellir, but Gudmund was unwilling to do so, for he was reluctant to undertake the toil and worry of bearing the responsibility of this benefice, poor as he was. Then the Bishop replied that he would appoint another priest to the office, as he afterwards did. In this spring Gudmund issued two summonses against Thorstein, one on the grounds that Thorstein had accused him of appropriating the offerings to the Church, and the other on the charge of blasphemy, since Thorstein had said that the bones of holy men were bones of horses. Gudmund left Vellir at the Removal Days and went to Upsar.

In the summer there was a large attendance at the General Assembly; Gudmund rode to it and was awarded full rights of judgment in his suits. During the session Sigurd, the son of Orm, from Svinafell in the east, invited him to his home, so from the Assembly Gudmund rode to Haukadal, from there south by Eyjafjöll, and then east to Ver and Svinafell. From Svinafell he rode to the Eastern Fjords, to Fljotsdal, Reydarfjörd, and Vapnafjörd, then northwards across Reykjadal and Hnjorskadal, and then seaward to Eyjafjörd and Svarfadardal, arriving home at Upsar towards the beginning of winter. On his journey more edifying and noteworthy happenings took place than we can relate, as a result of his exorcisms, his consecration of water and his blessing of both wells and other things. And because of such things and many others, the people's sincere affection for Gudmund grew greater, so that all the men of greatest understanding looked forward eagerly to his return home when they would see him again.

In that autumn Jon, the son of Lopt, died at Oddi in the east.

Gudmund remained at Upsar for the following winter, and during it he travelled west across the moor to visit the Bishop and to hear confessions, as was then his custom almost every winter. It was then that a farmer called Ofeig, a kind and upright man, came to see him; he was afflicted with such a severe eye-disease that he could not see for the pain. He found Gudmund engaged in hearing confessions in the bathing-room. Some water was brought to Gudmund for washing his hands, and it became dirty from them. It was now the custom of many people to wash themselves in the bowl Gudmund had used for washing his hands, and those who did so were often cured of their eye-diseases and of other afflictions also. Ofeig took the bowl and washed himself in this water, unable then to see even how discoloured it was, but after that his eyesight became as keen as if he had never suffered from his eye-disease, and it never afflicted him again.

During this winter the sanctity of Bishop Thorlak was revealed in a vision which appeared to the priest Thorvald Puffin and many others in the north of Iceland. The news of this revelation was told to the priest Orm, the son of Eyjolf, who had been Bishop Thorlak's chaplain and was now at Holar with Bishop Brand. Orm at once sent a written account of it to Gudmund the priest, for he and Gudmund had already spoken together about the sanctity of Bishop Thorlak, and Gudmund had affirmed that Thorlak was the most saintly of men. As a result of this revelation many people in northern Iceland invoked the blessed Bishop Thorlak during this year.

Gudmund was now thirty-six years old.

28. During this winter there was moreover a remarkable happening in the Eastern Fjords. A woman called Rannveig fell into a trance; she was the mistress of a priest called Audun and had lived with another priest before that. Though she had few scruples about this, she was in many ways a very pious woman. What happened was, that early one morning she fell down in the porch as she was coming out of the bathing-room. She was alone and no one found her until she had lain there for many hours. But when they found her, they carried her back into her room, and people sat by her throughout the day and saw that she was not dead, for she would jerk her limbs violently from time to time, as if she were in great agony. This was on the Saturday before the first Sunday in Lent.

When she recovered consciousness in the evening, she sat up and crossed herself and invoked God's help for them all. She

said she had seen a vision of many wondrous events which she must describe to the highest dignitaries of the Church, and as these she chose Gudmund, the son of Ari, as soon as she could get into touch with him, and Broddi the priest, who was then in the Fljotsdal district. She said she would relate to everyone those things which concerned them in her vision, unpleasant though the task might be.

We heard the following account from those who were present, and from her own words when she was recounting her vision to Gudmund the priest. She said that terrifying demons had assailed her, and had gripped her by the hands and taken her cruelly and mercilessly across lava-fields overgrown with briars. On their way she saw many torments and people undergoing them, but they led her on until they came to a place where she saw in front of her something in the nature of a huge cauldron or a deep, wide pit; it was filled with boiling pitch and round it were blazing fires. Inside she saw many men, both those who were living at that time and those who were deceased, and she recognised some of them. There she saw nearly all the lay chieftains who had misused their authority. Then the demons addressed her, saying: "Down into this pit you shall be cast, for such are your deserts. You have shared in the same sin as those who are down there, namely loathsome lechery, which you committed when you lay with two priests and so defiled their office. To this you have added vanity and avarice. Now here you shall remain, since you would never abandon our service, and in many ways will we torment you." After this they dragged her to the edge of the pit, and it was boiling so fiercely that her legs were splashed, and every part of her body that was not covered by her clothes was burnt when she recovered consciousness.

Then she was more terrified than can be described and she called on the Saints to intercede for God's mercy for her; she named first of all Mary the Queen of Heaven and Peter the Apostle, and then S. Olaf the King, S. Magnus the Earl and Hallvard, for many people in Iceland used to invoke them in those days. And at that moment a great radiance shone down on her and she saw figures within it, of noble countenance yet awe-inspiring. This vision rejoiced her heart, and straightway she was so encouraged that she dared to ask who they were, and they told her they were King Olaf and Earl Magnus and Hallvard the Saint. They took hold of her and rescued her from the clutches of the demons and led her away. The demons lashed at her with a whip, striking her on the shoulders, back and loins, saying to the Saints: "Although we have to yield to you now, as is often the

case in our dealings against you, yet something shall she get for her depravity." The whip was red-hot and burnt wherever it touched her.

When the demons had gone, her deliverers began to speak : " Now you have been shown what you and many others merit, for the present way of life of many men is not as it should be. It is your duty now to tell each one what you have seen of his fate. The reason why your legs were burnt was that you have worn hose of costly material and black shoes, decking yourself out to please men. Your hands were burnt because you stitched up sleeves for yourself and others on Feast Days, and your back and shoulders because you arrayed yourself in fine cloth and linen, adorning yourself for men in your vanity and moral weakness. Since God is merciful and mild, and you called on Mary the Queen of Heaven and Peter the Apostle and on us to intercede for you, they sent us on their behalf, for otherwise you would have perished here. They have obtained from God that you shall return to life to make amends for your sins. And now you will be permitted to see the rewards of the righteous men of your country, both the living and the deceased, for in no other country is there a greater proportion of holy men than in Iceland; it is their prayers and ours which uphold the land, for otherwise it would perish."

Once more a brilliant light shone down on her, and in it she beheld a man, tall and resplendent; he and his raiment were as bright as snow, and this they told her was Peter the Apostle. When they had conducted her a little further, another great light shone down upon her, brighter than she had ever seen; with it there came a sweet fragrance, and within that radiance was Mary the Queen, the Mother of God. She was as bright as the sun, so that Rannveig's eyes could not look on her. Before them lay beautiful smooth valleys of delight, with flowers of all kinds and sweet scents. There she saw many fair palaces and many dwellings, so lofty and fair that she felt unable to comprehend such magnificence, yet they were not all equally magnificent.

Then they addressed her, saying : " Here you see the dwellings assigned to righteous men, both the living and the deceased, but these are not all equally fair. Here do your bishops dwell, for they have all been saintly men, yet the most saintly are Bishop Jon and Bishop Thorlak the Younger, and next to them Bishop Björn, Bishop Isleif and Bishop Thorlak the Elder. Likewise those bishops now living are holy men, on account of the trials they undergo and their patience with the disobedience of their flock, for the holier is each man, the greater his endurance in God's name. The house you see over there, which is fair and

lofty and from which no sound comes, for there silence reigns, that is the abode of Björn, the hermit of Thingeyrar. Beside it stands another dwelling, lofty and magnificent, from which you can hear fair song and loud and glorious music, and that is the abode of Gudmund, the son of Ari, for his prayers keep this land from destruction even as ours uphold Norway and the Orkney Islands, and he will become the greatest upholder of this land and take a place no lower than that of Archbishop Thomas in England."

Rannveig saw and heard many remarkable things there, but when she regained consciousness she was so much afraid that she could hardly speak of them, and likewise ever afterwards she used to tremble if she had to make any mention of them. Many men to whom she told hidden matters in their way of life benefited greatly by her vision, but others were resentful because they were despised for their faults and yet were unwilling to renounce them by making atonement for their sins.

29. In the spring after Easter *when Gudmund was thirty-seven years old*, he travelled westward over the moor to visit his friends and relatives. Then Kolbein, the son of Arnor, invited him to stay with him at Stad, and he and his mother went there at the Removal Days. It was a hard spring and neither Bishop Brand nor Gudmund rode to the General Assembly that summer. But after the Assembly Bishop Pal sent messengers to the north, bidding Bishop Brand and Gudmund come south to Skalaholt immediately as quickly as they could, because Bishop Brand had sent a letter to the Assembly concerning Bishop Thorlak's miracles and the visions men had had of him; and it had been decided at the session to exhume his relics and to include him in the list of saints.

Bishop Brand and Gudmund journeyed south and came to Skalaholt on the Latter Feast of S. Margaret. During the service held in honour of God and the blessed Bishop Thorlak, Bishop Pal put Gudmund next to the two bishops in the performance of every office; when Thorlak's coffin was carried into the church, the Bishops asked him to wipe it with them, and it was Gudmund who decided for the most part what was to be chanted as the holy body was taken up from the earth. Bishop Thorlak's sanctity in the eyes of God brought about many wondrous miracles on this occasion.

At Skalaholt Bishop Pal requested Gudmund to consecrate a large cask full of water for curing the sick, for wherever Gudmund had blessed water throughout the land miracles had taken place affecting both men and beasts, as necessity arose.

Then Gudmund went north to Stad in Skagafjörd and remained there that year with Kolbein, the son of Arnor.

This strange happening took place at Stad, that a heifer belonging to Kolbein became so ill that he thought she was at the point of death, and he went to Gudmund and told him that the heifer was lying out in the meadow with her legs and neck stretched out stiffly and that she was nearly dead. Gudmund went up to her, carrying his holy relics, and walked round her seven times with them, and sang prayers over her. Then the heifer leapt up, completely cured at once, and bounded over the meadow.

Another happening occurred at Hrafnagil. A plague had attacked the sheep, and the people there asked Gudmund if he would come. He did so and had all the sheep driven into a fold, and then he consecrated water and passed holy relics over them. After this he advised the people to take down the outside bell and engrave a cross on its four sides and then to ring this bell over the sheep, but when Gudmund had gone they forgot to take it down. Only a little later the bell fell down of itself, but though the ground below was stony it was not damaged, and Gudmund's advice was then followed and the plague immediately ceased.

Gudmund was then thirty-eight years old. In the spring he removed with his band of followers to visit Kolbein, the son of Tumi, at Vidimyr. He made a home for his followers at Brekka, but he himself stayed at Vidimyr.

30. In the summer Gudmund went to the Assembly, and from it he journeyed to Borgarfjörd. People in all parts of that district invited him to their homes. He consecrated wells far and wide, and everywhere men were cured of their afflictions by his holy water and his prayers, though little be written of it here. The poverty of our story is due to our own foolishness and ignorance, rather than to any lack of material.

From Borgarfjörd Gudmund went to Hvamm, where he attended the wedding of Snorri, the son of Sturla, and from there he went to Saurbœ and into Fagradal, and from there to Reykjaholar on Reykjanes. At Reykjaholar he consecrated a well into which people afterwards made water in derision of him, but the well retained its powers of healing none the less. From there Gudmund went to visit Thorgils, the son of Gunnstein, at Stad on Reykjanes, and then he started on his return journey and went north to Steingrimsfjörd, and from there he and his followers went on to Midfjörd, and so home to Vidimyr in the autumn. He remained at Vidimyr for the winter and was in high favour there. Kolbein esteemed Gudmund so highly in those days that he said

that he was indeed a saint, and that he himself had had many proofs of his sanctity.

31. After the death of Jon, the son of Lopt, a dispute arose between his son Sæmund and Sigurd, the son of Orm; they quarrelled about the inheritance of a man called Gelli, for Jon had held Gelli's estate in trust, but the heirs lived in Sigurd's district in the east, and Sigurd took possession of the property and put a man called Kari in charge of it. *Finally* the agreement was made that Bishop Pal should give his judgment in the dispute at the Assembly. Both parties then went to the Assembly, and, after consulting the men of highest standing, Bishop Pal delivered his judgment. He assigned the property to Sæmund, but adjusted the terms so that both parties might be well satisfied. Sæmund gained both honour and respect from this case. Kolbein, the son of Tumi, was much dissatisfied with the settlement, and Sighvat, the son of Sturla, even more.

32. The winter Gudmund spent at Vidimyr was very severe, and the outlook was grave for many. At this time the sanctity of Bishop Jon was made known to men in dreams, and it was indicated by revelation that the weather would improve if his relics were exhumed. Bishop Brand decided to send to Vidimyr for Gudmund, requesting him to come to conduct the ceremony of exhumation, as he himself was confined to his bed. The Bishop summoned clerics, but the weather was so bad that Gudmund himself arrived a day later than the day he was expected—which was the day appointed for the ceremony. Nevertheless they waited for him, and when he came the relics of Bishop Jon were taken from the ground, amid wonderful signs of his sanctity. This was in Lent on the octave of the Feast of S. Matthias.

In the spring after Easter Gudmund went to Eyjafjörd and as far as Saurbœ, where there was a crippled boy who was so tormented with pain that he could hardly bear it. He spoke to Einar saying that Gudmund the priest would surely be ready to come to him and pray over him. Gudmund went to see the boy and prayed over him for a long time and rubbed his holy water on him until the boy's whole body was wet. And after that the boy's limbs began to straighten out at once, and before long he had completely recovered from his affliction. This boy will be mentioned later in the story.

While Gudmund was away from home, his mother Ulfheid had died, and her body was taken to Holar. Extreme unction had been administered to her before she died, and Bishop Brand received her body with deep affection.

33. Gudmund now returned to Vidimyr, and it was arranged that, he should live there in future, for Kolbein had proclaimed to everybody that he found that considerably less food was consumed by the household when Gudmund and his clerks were there than when they were away, and he said that he was therefore more anxious for Gudmund to make his home there than he would otherwise have been.

Gudmund went to the Assembly again that summer, and at this session the Feast of Bishop Jon was made legal because of the entreaties of Bishop Brand and the exhortation concerning it that Gudmund made before the Legislature. During the session the men of the Western Fjords invited Gudmund to visit their district, and so he went from the Assembly into the western districts, first to Borgarfjörd and then on to Breidafjörd. When he came out to Reykjanes to visit Thorgils, the son of Gunnstein, they agreed that Gudmund should take charge of the upbringing and education of Thorgils's son Lambkar. Lambkar was afterwards present at many meetings and events of which this story tells.

Then Gudmund wished to leave Reykjanes and go out to Flatey in the Breidafjörd, a distance of three sea-miles, and it was arranged that Thorgils's young boys and a serving-man should take him the whole way across. Thorgils said to Gudmund: "Give my boys a favourable breeze and your blessing, when they make their return, for they have little strength and I commend them to your care." Gudmund replied: "I shall pray that God grant them a favourable breeze." Then they set out and came to Hvallatr, for there are many islands on the way, and on the next evening they reached Flatey. There had been no wind that day. Then the boys prepared at once for their return, and told Gudmund that he should fulfil his promise and give them a breeze, but he said he would pray to God and went off to the church. The boys went to their boat, made ready for sea and hoisted their sail. Straightway the sail caught a breeze, and they sailed out of the anchorage and did not take in sail until they were home at the landing-stage the following morning. The further they sailed, the more favourable had grown the breeze.

From Flatey Gudmund went on to the Western Fjords, and there many remarkable happenings took place due to great miracles, though little is told of them here. While he was in Saudlausdal he blessed some water, and a woman there took it home in her cap, for she had no vessel to put it in, and the outside of the cap kept dry and the water remained inside. A certain man was crossing a steep mountain carrying the water in a bucket; he put the bucket down beside him while he was fastening

his shoe, and it rolled down the mountain, bumping from stone to stone until it reached the level. The man grieved for the loss of the water and went down the mountain to the place where his bucket had come to rest. He found it undamaged, and not a drop of the water was spilt.

Then Gudmund went northwards in the district as far as Keldudal to stay with Thord, the son of Ari. Thord was suffering from such a severe affliction that his hand was withered and caused him agonising pain, so that he could not even cut up his own food. He received Gudmund warmly, as did all the others there. During the night, feeling that he could not bear to lie still, Thord went out, and when he came into the hall he saw a great light on Gudmund's bed, like a sun-beam. He walked over to look at it, and it so happened that he stretched out his diseased hand under the light, and the light shone on his hand as brightly as it had seemed to shine before. Thereupon his hand was restored and became strong and free from pain, and then the light faded away.

From Keldudal Gudmund went to stay with Arni Red-beard in Haukadál. In the evening a woman was employed to rub his foot when he had gone to bed, and she was afflicted by having two or three of her fingers bent up together. And because Gudmund thought she was rubbing too gently, he kicked hard with his foot, and his heel struck the bend of her crippled fingers and he pressed it there, causing her pain. But a few nights later she came to visit him and showed him her hand fully restored, and all who saw it gave thanks to God.

34. From Haukadál Gudmund went on his way as far as Møg's home at Myrar, where he blessed a spring which came to give healing to almost every creature that tasted it. Two women, to our certain knowledge, obtained relief after wading in the brook or stream which flowed from this spring. From Myrar Gudmund went out to Ingjaldssand, and then to Önundarfjörd, and from there north to Isafjörd. He reached Sudavik on the Feast of S. Matthew, and when he was there he gave his kinsman Bard thirty hundreds of wadmal as a morning-gift for his betrothal to the daughter of the priest Steinthor, son of Björn.

A woman called Thurid fled to Gudmund at Sudavik. She was the mistress of Arni Red-beard and had been put under the interdict of Bishop Pal, but he had not been able to part them. But when she heard the teaching of Gudmund and witnessed his miracles, she longed for nothing so much as to join his following. She had then to seek some means of getting away from Arni, for he loved her dearly and they had many children.

Thurid was very beautiful. She escaped by flight and came to Gudmund on the Feast of S. Matthew, and fell at his feet imploring his mercy with tears of repentance. She asked him to take her into his care, if she could forsake her evil ways, and she received so much benefit from his presence that she never again returned to that same sin, and she accompanied Gudmund ever afterwards, except when they were parted by men's hostile acts. This incident, happening in the way it did, was of great spiritual help to many people.

From Sudavik Gudmund went to Vatnsfjörd, and from there to Steingrimsfjörd to visit Jon, the son of Brand. At that time he had a large band of followers with him, and it was suggested that men should be sent on ahead to tell Jon, so that they should not arrive unexpectedly. But Gudmund said that there was no need for this: "for God will send them a whale before our visit is ended." His words were fulfilled in this way, that on the same day a finner-whale was washed up on that part of the shore where Jon held sole rights of drift, and he was informed of it the following morning. The people rejoiced at this happening, and Jon gave Gudmund a very valuable book which Bishop Pal had given him. From here Gudmund went to Broddanes and then across Floi to Midfjörd.

During his journeys in the Western Fjords, God had granted Gudmund the grace to perform more numerous and greater miracles, both spiritual and bodily, than we are able to estimate. The people of the Western Fjords came to regard Gudmund and his teaching so highly that those of them who could do most for him were the best pleased, whether it was by gifts of money or other benefits. Their devotion to Gudmund, which they ever afterwards maintained, was perceived by God and at once earned them greater mercy from him.

During the summer some boys who were preparing to be priests left their relatives and friends and joined Gudmund, for they were eager to follow him. Among them were Gudmund's kinsman Snorri, the son of the priest Bard, son of Snorri, who stayed with him for a long time after this, and Pal, the son of Ingjald the priest. Lambkar, the son of the priest Thorgils, son of Gunnstein, was one of them also, and he too was with Gudmund for many years.

35. This strange happening took place when Gudmund was staying at Hof in Vatnsdal that autumn: Gudmund was praying over a sick man who lay bedridden and holding his holy relics over him. He lay on a bench beside the sick man, and it appeared to those who were standing by that he fell asleep as he prayed.

His deacon was lying on the beach by his side, and Gudmund sank down on to him as he fell asleep. But after he had slept a little while, the deacon could no longer feel the weight of his body, though both he and the others saw Gudmund lying there. This lasted a very long time. And when Gudmund awoke, the deacon asked him how it was that he had not felt his weight, though he was resting on his breast, but Gudmund would not tell him this.

Then the story came from the Western Fjords that a man called Snorri, of Skalavik in the west, had been tormented by a troll-woman, who used to attack him so ferociously that he felt unable to withstand her. Before daybreak on that very night we have just mentioned, as it was a Saturday night, Snorri betook himself to divine service; he was alone and had a long way to go. Then the troll-woman came upon him and assailed him unceasingly, driving him up to a mountain. He called on Gudmund to come to his aid and deliver him from this monster, if he were so dear to God as he thought him to be. And at that moment a great light seemed to shine down on him, and in its radiance was a man wearing a cope, who held an aspergillum with which he sprinkled water on the troll-woman, and she vanished straightway as if she had sunk down into the earth. The light accompanied Snorri all the way to the farm, and he thought he knew for sure that it was Gudmund the priest who had appeared with it.

Now these two happenings coincided, for it was at exactly the same time as Snorri had seen the vision that the deacon had been unable to feel Gudmund's weight. On many other occasions this deacon was aware that he could not feel Gudmund in the bed—for he used to sleep beside him—though he never dared to put out his hand towards him. At these times miracles always occurred in other parts of the country, when men had invoked Gudmund in his absence.

After this Gudmund and his followers travelled to Thingeyrar, where they arrived on the eve of All Saints. The monks received him that day with a procession, though he was as yet only a priest, and to greet him they chanted the responses: *Vir iste in populo suo mitissimus apparuit, dei gratia plenus; iste est qui assidue, etc.* This showed clearly the sincere esteem of the discerning men at Thingeyrar at that time, of the Abbot Karl, Gunnlaug the monk and many others, before envy and pride were enkindled in their hearts by Gudmund's enemies whom he rebuked for their sins. His whole reception bore witness indeed to the respect such men had for Gudmund's counsel until they were blinded by arrogance.

Gudmund delivered a memorable sermon on the Feast of All Saints at Thingeyrar, and from there he went to Blöndubakki

where he stayed a long time. From Blöndubakki Gudmund was conveyed up through Langadal, and a man was sent ahead to fetch the fattest and strongest horse in the valley; the owners refused to lend him, and then the horse walked into a brook on his owners' property and there he died. Gudmund went on his way until he reached home at Vidimyr on the Feast of S. Nicholas, and Kolbein was delighted to see him. He remained at Vidimyr that winter, and many remarkable miracles took place.

Kolbein had a ram of great value, which he prized very highly. This ram became ill with the disease known as the staggers, and seemed past all hope, but then Gudmund sang prayers over him and placed an image of S. John the Baptist between his horns, and he was cured.

Gudmund was now thirty-nine years old.

36. Gudmund spent this second winter at Vidimyr in high regard. In the spring he and his followers went on visits in the northern districts, out to Flatey and then up into Eyjafjörd. From there they went south to the General Assembly, which Gudmund attended that summer. At the Assembly both southerners and easterners invited him to their homes, and from it he rode south to Skalaholt. On the night of his arrival there the anchoress Ketilbjörg died, and Bishop Pal asked Gudmund to lead the funeral chant over her body in the presence of himself and Gizur, the son of Hall. This service was such a remarkable one that Gizur testified in his oration by the grave that they had never before heard such a funeral chant, and that they felt it to be a token of Ketilbjörg's sanctity that this should have been accorded to her.

From Skalaholt Gudmund went eastward across the rivers, and Arni invited him to stay with him at Skumstadir, where there was such a severe and virulent plague that seven men had died of it, besides cattle and horses. Gudmund stayed the night at Skumstadir; he blessed some water and, carrying his holy relics, sprinkled it himself over all Arni's cornfields, hayfields and meadows, and immediately the plague ceased. From there Gudmund went east to Eyjafjöll, then on to Sida and across the Eastern Fjords, blessing the wells at every farm he visited.

On his way he came to a farm called Lomagnup, where the river, known as Lomagnup's river, had burst its banks with such force that Örn the farmer had only just escaped with his life, and the man riding with him had been drowned; people's lands had been devastated by it. There were men waiting beside the eastern bank of the river, unable to get across, for it was clearly impass-

able, and when Gudmund and his party came to the river they saw that they could not ride through it, so they dismounted and waited also. Then they saw that the water was subsiding. And when the people on the eastern bank had waited a long time, not daring to ford the river, they too saw that it was subsiding and made up their minds to ride through it. Then Gudmund and his followers set off, and they met those who had started from the eastern bank about mid-stream, and both parties got across without mishap. But as soon as both were across, the river began to rise again, and it remained impassable for several days after this.

37. From Lomagnup, Gudmund went to stay with Sigurd, the son of Orm, at Svinafell. Sigurd's step-son Kolbein, the son of Tumi, had come there for a feast, and they were all there together for three nights. After this Kolbein left, and Sigurd and Gudmund accompanied him part of his way. When they had parted company, Gudmund and Sigurd rode to a place where a man had committed suicide; it would have taken great fortitude to live there, for the suicide haunted the place, and Sigurd was anxious to have it exorcised by Gudmund.

Sigurd also wished to talk privately to Gudmund about his own troubles which had arisen from his law-suit against Sæmund. He said he could scarcely bear all the humiliation and disparagement, and the molestation that had resulted from this case, and asked Gudmund what he should do. He said there was nothing he wanted more than to have his revenge on Sæmund. But Gudmund advised him to take the greatest care not to damage his cause, since it was so good: "because," he said, "you may well be satisfied with having a good case; you are disparaged because you act well, whereas he is praised because he does wrong and supports his wrong-doing with tyranny. Now I shall pray to God as best I can to give you strength and watch over you." "But I would rather ask this of you," said Sigurd, "that you pray God that he grant you power to obtain an estate for me in the north, such as would bring me prestige. You seem to me a man of such gifts that I feel a presentiment that you are to wield greater power in the future than you do now. In that case, I would hand over my property at Svinafell to my nephew Jon, the son of Sigmund. Now there are two alternatives: if you will grant me what I ask, I shall desist, but otherwise I shall follow up my case against Sæmund, be the outcome what it may." And Gudmund answered that he preferred to promise that he would assay whether God would give him power to grant Sigurd's wish or not.

It so happened that on the very day that they held this discussion Bishop Brand died at Holar, and so the words of both of them were fulfilled: the noble destiny that Sigurd said he could foresee for Gudmund, and the promise of good will that Gudmund gave Sigurd that he would obtain an estate for him in the north, if he might thus put an end to the dispute between Sigurd and Sæmund. It was on this day that the episcopal authority fell to Gudmund's lot, though they knew nothing of it then.

38. It happened at Svinafell that Sigurd asked Gudmund to give him some holy relics, and Gudmund did so. But when he handed him a piece of Bishop Jon's bone, a priest called Stein said that Bishop Jon's bone seemed a bad colour to him, and he did not think it looked very holy. Gudmund replied to him gently, and asked him whether he thought Bishop Martin less holy than other men because his bones were black, and whether he thought Bishop Thorlak was a saint or not. Stein answered that he did not consider Bishop Jon the equal of Bishop Thorlak. Then Gudmund said to those who were standing by: "Now let us all pray to God and to blessed Mary the Queen of Heaven, and to S. Jon the Bishop that he show some token of his sanctity to soften Stein's unbelief."

They all fell on their knees and sang the Pater Noster with Gudmund, after which he made each of them kiss the bones. Then all of them smelt the sweetest smell of incense except for Stein alone; he smelt nothing. Thereupon he grew ashamed of his unbelief and of the words he had spoken, for the wrath of God and S. Jon the Bishop was now visible upon him, when he was thus deprived of this joy. Stein prayed to Bishop Jon for forgiveness with tears of repentance, and then Gudmund offered to give him a piece of the Bishop's bone if he would promise to honour him with his whole heart. He said he would gladly do this, but he was afraid lest Bishop Jon should be unwilling to accept his devotion. Then Gudmund went on to say that all should pray that the blessed Bishop Jon would give some sign that he forgave Stein for his words. And when Stein received the bones, he then smelt the same fragrance as the others. Now all gave thanks to God and to the blessed Bishop Jon; all the bells were rung and the Te Deum was sung, and in this way the miracle which had just occurred was made known.

There was another notable happening at Svinafell. The river which flowed by the farm suddenly flooded, and destroyed corn-

fields and hayfields, doing great damage, and Sigurd asked Gudmund to go to the river and sing prayers over it. The next morning the river had vanished. But Gudmund had gone down to the river the day before with his clerks, taking his holy relics and an image of Bishop Nicholas with him, and had sung prayers over the river. And then it had left its bed and had cut a new course for itself further east on the sands.

There was an aged woman at Svinafell; she was bedridden and had drawn so near to death that she had been speechless for seven nights, and all that time had swallowed no food nor moved any part of herself except the tips of her fingers and toes. But though extreme unction and all the offices for the dying had been administered to her, the soul had not yet left her body. She was deeply devoted to Gudmund. And when Gudmund was about to mount his horse on leaving Svinafell, he spoke and said: "Truly indeed, I have neglected to kiss the poor old woman in there. That will never do." Then he went into the house, and all the people followed him. He walked into the living-room and up to the bed where the old woman was lying, and she seemed to be almost dead. Gudmund spoke to her and kissed her, saying: "All my blessings be upon you, my aged friend! Soon you will go to God; now take my greetings to Blessed Mary, the Mother of God, to Michael the Archangel, to John the Baptist, to Peter and Paul, to King Olaf, and especially to my friend, Bishop Ambrose, and to all the saints." Then the old woman answered so that those who were standing outside the room heard quite clearly: "Yes, I will," she said. These were the last words she uttered. This took place about mid-day, and she died about three o'clock on the same day, which was a Saturday.

Sigurd attached great significance to all these happenings, and he and his household gave thanks to God and to all the saints.

39. It was a year after the dispute between Sæmund and Sigurd that Bishop Brand died at Holar. On his death Kolbein, the son of Tumi, assumed sole control of all affairs in the north. He summoned many of the northern leaders and convened a large meeting at Vellir on the Feast of S. Giles. He sought the advice of everybody on the choice of a bishop for the see of Holar, but most of them referred the decision to him. Then, with the advice of his friends and kinsmen, he chose the priest Gudmund the Good, son of Ari, to be Bishop. Gudmund was at that time Kolbein's chaplain at Vidimyr; he was a first cousin of Kolbein's wife Gyrid, the daughter of Thorvard. Gudmund was a

popular man, with an amiable and gentle disposition, and many people said that the reason why Kolbein was anxious to elect him as Bishop was that he thought that he himself would have greater power if he controlled the clergy as well as the laity in the north.

Gudmund was now forty years old.

40. We must now go on with the story at the point where we digressed, when Gudmund and his followers were leaving Svinafell on their way to the Eastern Fjords. They reached Stafafell on the Feast of S. Bartholomew, and it was there during Matins that Gudmund first heard the news of Bishop Brand's death; he was as dumbfounded at this news as if he had been struck by a stone. Straightway he had a Requiem Mass sung for Brand with an oration, and on the following day he conducted all prayers for the dead and the funeral services with every loving care.

After this they went on their way, and on the Feast of S. Giles they reached Valthjofsstadir, in the Fljotsdal district, the home of Jon, the son of Sigmund. This day was the anniversary of the dedication of the church at Valthjofsstadir, and Gudmund and his companions were warmly received. As Jon was taking Gudmund into the church that evening, Gudmund asked him for news, and Jon answered: "There is both much news and good. The people of Skagafjörd are holding a meeting to-morrow to choose a Bishop, and you will be their choice, for this is God's will." And from this moment Gudmund's heart was so full of fear that he could neither sleep nor eat his meals in any comfort, on account of his anxiety and dismay at these words.

Rannveig, the woman who had lain in a trance, was in the Fljotsdal district at this time, and she came to Gudmund and described her vision to him in great fear and trepidation.

On the eve of Holy Cross Day Gudmund came to a farm called Hlid, in the Fljotsdal district. During the night he dreamed that he went into the church at Vellir in Svarfadardal and that the altar, which was adorned with the most costly coverings, fell into his arms. The dream was fulfilled in this way: in the evening he and his company went north across the moor to Vapnafjörd, reaching Krossavik before nightfall, and when they were sitting down at supper messengers arrived from Kolbein, the son of Tunir; among them was Einar Pole. They went up to Gudmund and warmly greeted him. He acknowledged their greeting kindly, and then asked them what news they brought. Einar replied: "We bring good news: You have been elected Bishop by Kolbein and

all the men of the district and the Abbots. I have with me a letter from them, together with a message asking you to come home to the north as soon as you can." Gudmund was so overcome by this news that for a long time he could not speak. When at last he did, he prayed to God to take the matter into his care and see that its outcome was the best for all.

On the following day Gudmund went to Hof, the home of Teit, the son of Odd, with whom the priest Halldor was staying at that time. Gudmund discussed with Halldor whether there was any prospect that he would relieve him of this responsibility by undertaking it himself. But Halldor said he was not willing to do so, for he was an old man and, moreover, not fitted to the task; he felt convinced that it would be of no avail for Gudmund to decline it, as it was the will both of God and men that he should be Bishop. "But I will help you," said Halldor, "by my prayers, and by every assistance I can give."

41. From Vapnafjörd, Gudmund and his company rode north to Öxarfjörd by way of Mödrudal Moor. On their way they encountered bad weather and a blinding snow-storm, and the party was scattered. Finally Gudmund realised that they must be going astray. He and his three deacons, Sturla, the son of Bard, Lambkar, the son of Thorgils, and Thorlak, the son of Thorstein, were the first to reach habitation; many hours later came Snorri, the son of Bard, Grim, the son of Hjalti, and Grim the Joker, and last of all came Jon, the son of Ali, with their steward. Then they rode on as far as Grenjadarstadir, which at that time was the home of the priest Eyjolf, the son of Hall. Gudmund broached the matter with Eyjolf, whether he would undertake the episcopal office, but Eyjolf replied that he was convinced that it was of no use to try to devise any other plan than the one that had been adopted.

From Grenjadarstadir they went on further, and at Michaelmas they arrived at Hals, the home of Gudmund's cousin Ögmund, the son of Thorvard. Ögmund asked whether it was true that Gudmund was refusing to be made Bishop, and Gudmund replied that it was indeed true. "For what reason?" asked Ögmund, and Gudmund answered: "It seems to me a very difficult task to have to deal with many powerful chiefs who are headstrong and filled with jealousy. Would you yourself obey me if I were to find fault with your way of life?" "For whose evil ways ought you to feel a greater responsibility than for mine?" replied Ögmund. "And even though I should be disobedient to you, I should be more disobedient to everyone else. It will be no use for you to refuse

the office, for your fate will be the same as that of your patron, S. Ambrose the Bishop. Your childhood games foretold that you would become a Bishop and so did his; and it was of no avail for him to refuse, nor will it be for you. We want no one to be Bishop but you."

42. Gudmund continued his journey and reached home at Vidimyr at the beginning of the winter season; everyone there was very pleased to see him, Kolbein and his wife Gyrid and father-in-law Thorvard, and all the others. On the following Saturday Thorvard, who was Gudmund's uncle, went to speak with him in private. He asked Gudmund if it were true that he was determined to refuse to be Bishop, and thus ignore the direction of himself and other wise men, his friends, kinsmen, and connexions by marriage. Gudmund said this was so. Thorvard replied: "I feel that it is my duty to look after your affairs and be your guardian. I will decide this matter."

Gudmund said: "Is there any reason why I should not manage my own affairs?"

Thorvard answered: "Let me tell you, nephew, that I have been the head of our family, as my father was before me. Your father submitted to my authority as did all my kinsmen, and now I advise you to do the same, for you are surely destined to be the head of the family after me."

"You did not invite me to inherit my father's property," retorted Gudmund, "and up to now you have taken small pains over my advancement, except to flog me to make me learn. It seems to be the same thing now, that you wish to put me in a difficult position, and not in one of honour. I shall not consent to this."

Thorvard said: "I have never heard of such a thing, as to flip your fingers at your own advancement and that of your family as well. But it is no good, you are going to be Bishop, for I have had dreams about it."

"What were your dreams?" asked Gudmund.

"I dreamed," said Thorvard, "that I was going into a house so large and lofty that I had never seen one so big, and its doorway was correspondingly huge. But when my head had passed through the doorway, my shoulders stuck and I got no further. I interpret the dream to mean that your glory will be so great that the whole of Christendom will be unable to comprehend it; the lofty house signifies Christendom, and I suppose that in dreams

no distinction would be made between you and me. Then I had another dream, and dreamed that I came north to Thrandheim and went into King Olaf's hall; the King was sitting on his throne, and the hall was thronged with men. He stood up to receive me, stretched out his arms and greeted me, saying: 'Welcome, Thorvard, welcome! You will be blessed throughout the North.' I know well that these dreams refer to you. You will go to Norway and be made Bishop, and your consecration will take place in the Church of S. Olaf in Thrandheim. It is no good for you to gainsay it, for this will come to pass, whether you wish it or not." Then they ended their conversation, and Thorvard told Kolbein all that had passed between them.

After this Kolbein went to Gudmund and told him that they had held a meeting at Vellir on the Feast of S. Giles: "and the Abbots of Thingeyrar and Thvera were there, as well as Gizur, the son of Hall, Gudmund the Noble, and many other people of the district. You and Magnus, the son of Gizur, were proposed for election, and Gizur pressed the cause of his son Magnus, saying that he had stronger backing behind him, and that he was more experienced in managing property than you. I said I should be well satisfied whichever of you were elected, but then Hjalm, the son of Asbjörn, Hafr, and many others replied that they did not care for strangers and did not think that a man from another part of the country should be elected. All agreed so fully with this view that no one came forward to raise any objection, and so it was carried unanimously. You have now been inviolably elected, both by God and men, and we expect it of you that you comply with God's will and ours." Gudmund answered: "I wish to learn first whether the other people of the district feel about it as you do, for I think much is at stake, and heavy responsibility is involved. It is for this reason that I am reluctant to undertake the office."

43. On the Sunday a meeting was convened at Vidimyr, and the men of the district came to it and debated the question once more, but the end of it was the same as before, and they agreed unanimously. Then Gudmund was fetched from the church, and when he came in, Kolbein told him that they asked him to give his agreement and consent to undertaking the responsibility they requested of him, namely, that of being Bishop. Gudmund realised that Kolbein intended to be satisfied with nothing other than this, as he thought this would best suit his own purpose. He answered: "With the mercy of God, I will rather take the risk of accepting this heavy charge than be the cause that no Bishop be

elected." Kolbein said: "Bless you for those words," and then they all thanked him once more. The election was firmly concluded for the second time, and those who had attended the meeting returned to their homes in the evening.

A seat of honour was prepared for Gudmund that evening, and Kolbein himself waited on him at supper and spread a cloth on the table before him. But since the cloth had to be got in a hurry, it was a torn one, and Kolbein said of this: "Our lack of ceremony seems to be more in evidence than your deserts, since such a worn-out cloth is under your plate." But Gudmund smilingly answered: "It doesn't matter about the cloth, but such will be the fate of my episcopal office: like this cloth it will be torn to shreds." Kolbein remained silent and made no reply.

On the following morning Kolbein, Thorvard and Gudmund's clerks got ready to ride to Holar with the Bishop-elect. Kolbein presented Gudmund with a full-grown ox in the morning before they set off, and said that this was only the first of the presents he would receive. They started on their journey late in the day, and on the eve of the Feast of the Virgins of Cologne they arrived at Holar, where the Bishop-elect was met by a procession.

As soon as they got to Holar, Kolbein assumed full control both of household affairs and of finances without the permission of the Bishop-elect. Kygri-Björn was at Holar at this time. Before they came there, Gudmund's deacon Lambkar had looked after all Kolbein's correspondence whenever he was at home, but as soon as they moved to Holar all the correspondence was taken out of Lambkar's hands, and Kygri-Björn attended to it in his place. Kolbein now made Björn his dearest friend, and Björn took a dislike to Gudmund, bearing him a grudge because he felt that Gudmund slighted him. This was an augury of Björn's conduct later, for the greater and more manifold grew the diabolical and unremittent hatred which the enemy of all mankind had planted in his heart; it only became the worse the longer it dwelt in him.

Gudmund took up his residence at Holar as Bishop-elect in the autumn, as was related above. He was in charge of the clergy there that winter, and he arranged all the affairs of the northern diocese during that time.

44. In the winter Kolbein sent his servants east to Svinafell to deliver messages to Sigurd, the son of Orm, and Sigurd's wife Thurid, his own mother. He invited them to remove to Holar and to undertake the management of the finances of the see with the Bishop-elect. He added that they would be held in much greater

respect in the northern districts than they were in the south. Sigurd and Thurid received this invitation favourably, and they handed over the lands and the authority belonging to Svinafell to Jon, the son of Sigmund, who was Sigurd's nephew. Jon was married to Thora the Elder, and their children were called Orm and Solveig. Jon and his wife were living at Valthjofsstadir. He sold his land there to Teit, the son of Odd, who was married to Helga, the daughter of Thorvard, who was Gudmund's first cousin.

Now Jon removed from Valthjofsstadir, and as he came up onto Öx Moor he looked back and said: "Now I am forsaking the district of Fljotsdal and there is nothing of mine left behind." But to this his wife Thora replied: "I am the one who is leaving nothing behind, whereas you are leaving something." A few years later the truth of these prophetic words was made plain, for Jon was cited as the father of a boy called Thorarin in this district. He was a great man when he grew up.

In the same summer as these transactions were carried out, Sigurd and Thurid went to Holar, where they remained for two years. They undertook the fostering of Tumi, the son of Sighvat, and loved him dearly.

Now it is to be told that during the winter Kolbein alone had controlled everything at Holar. The Bishop-elect was so over-ruled that he was not even able to have his nephews to live there, and so he set up a home for them at Kalfsstadir with the money he had been given during the summer, whereas Kolbein gave himself the right to take up his abode at the Bishop's palace with six followers. Not only this, but the Bishop-elect wished to distribute enough food to the poor for three meals a day, and Kolbein herded them off into the guest-room and ordered them to be given one single meal.

When Christmas had passed, Thorarin the steward came to interview Gudmund on the Feast of S. Hilary in the evening, and said to him: "You do not show any curiosity about the state of the housekeeping which is in my charge." Gudmund answered: "I hardly think it is a good thing to meddle with things over which one has no control." "All the same," said the steward, "I should like to tell you what has happened. I arranged for the same amount of food for the Christmas feast this year as has been customary for many years past, and every winter the food cooked has lasted us through Christmas. But this year it has lasted a week longer, though never before has there been such a large gathering here for Christmas as this year." Then the Bishop-elect replied: "The reason is, my son, that the Virgin Mary is better

pleased with hospitality than Kolbein." Kolbein was sitting close by and kept silent; he made no answer.

The steward then went away, but at this very moment the cow-herd came in and told just the same story about the cattle-fodder of which he was in charge, saying that it had never lasted so well as it had this year. Gudmund gave him the same answer: "Who knows, but that the Virgin Mary is better pleased with hospitality than Kolbein."

45. After Christmas the Bishop-elect sent Thord, the son of Vermund, west to Eyr, to ask Hrafn, the son of Sveinbjörn, to meet him in Midfjörd on Sexagesima Sunday, as he wanted to ask Hrafn to accompany him on his voyage to Norway *for his consecration*.

And when it got near to the time arranged for their meeting, Gudmund made his preparations for leaving Holar. As he was about to mount his horse, Kolbein came up to him and said: "It is now my desire that we should put aside the ill-feeling there has been between us this winter; there were no grounds for it, so let neither of us hold it against the other." The Bishop-elect replied: "I do not think that I have been to blame, and it is good if your conduct has been as mine, but you must answer for it if you have acted otherwise." "We are both responsible for it to some extent, as is generally the case," said Kolbein, "but probably it was more my doing, and so I should like to ask your forgiveness; I am ready to forgive you if you have encroached on my rights in any way." To this the Bishop-elect answered: "Fair words are fair, and we both seem to be ignorant of our own actions in this matter, for I am unaware that I have encroached much on your rights this winter—I have not had the chance."

Then Gudmund rode to the western districts and stayed at Thingeyrar on his way. A pious nun was living there; she was an anchoress and was very wise. Her name was Ulfrun, and she was the mother of the priest Simon the Great. She maintained her solitary life so rigorously that she did not even allow her son to come into her sight when he visited her. Ulfrun related to Gudmund how the Virgin Mary had made it known to her in a vision that it was both God's will and her own that he should be Bishop. "You must not decline this office," she said, "if you wish to do God's will, as I have no doubt you do, for this has been appointed." This disclosure seemed of great import to Gudmund, and he put his trust in it.

Then the Bishop-elect journeyed from there to reach Stadarbakki in Midfjörd on the appointed day. Hrafn, the son of Sveinbjörn, arrived there from the Western Fjords on the same evening, as they had arranged. On this Sunday Gudmund delivered a long and memorable address; he publicly put the question whether there was anyone present at the meeting who knew of a man prepared to undertake the difficult charge intended for himself, saying that he would gladly give it up, if it could be done with the people's consent. But nobody present ventured to raise any opposition to the choice that had been made, and at this meeting it was settled that Hrafn should go to Norway with the Bishop-elect. From the meeting Hrafn rode home west to Eyr, and Gudmund north to Holar with his retinue.

46. In the course of the winter the Bishop-elect had sent messengers east to Svinafell with a letter for Sigurd, the son of Orm, and Thurid. This was the letter :—

Gudmund, now known as Bishop-elect, sends God's greetings and his own to Sigurd and Thurid.

God has shown us by many signs that we should fulfil our promise of procuring an estate for you, as we gave our pledge to do. Now I have need of your assistance, for I have taken on my shoulders a heavier burden than I can bear, and I invite you to manage the affairs of the see and its finances with me. Come as quickly as you can, for this is a matter of urgency to the see, to myself, and to all of us. *Valete.*

When he received Gudmund's message, Sigurd made his preparations for the journey, and set off from the east after Christmas. He met the Bishop-elect as the latter was on his way back to the north from Midfjörd, but went on ahead of him to Holar. And when Gudmund reached home, they discussed what conditions should be arranged with Sigurd. He said that he was unwilling to embark on this, unless both the administration of the see and its property were made over to him, but Gudmund was reluctant to make over the administration of the see. But many clear-sighted men, Kolbein, the son of Tumi, and Hafr, the son of Brand, among them, urged Gudmund to make over the see, rather than forgo the services of such a man as Sigurd. All of them were convinced that there was no better way of providing for the administration of the see than by putting it in the hands of Sigurd and Thurid. So in the end Gudmund made over the whole administration of the see to Sigurd jointly with himself.

When this had been done, Sigurd returned home and delivered this letter from the Bishop-elect to Bishop Pal at Skalaholt :—

Gudmund, now known as Bishop-elect, sends God's greetings and his own.

We have accepted a greater responsibility than we are capable of supporting, and we have not obtained your permission, as we should have done. Now we beseech you to consider this matter on behalf of God, as is your duty, and to state your opinion. If you would rather appoint another man to the position of authority and responsibility, which we, unworthy as we are, have undertaken, then I will gladly resign it and take my departure, for I am aware that some people feel that they have gone too far in this matter. I have appointed Sigurd, the son of Orm, to administer the see with me, since people were apprehensive about the way in which I should manage the finances.

Now decide promptly, one way or the other, as God shall direct you, and send me a letter as soon as possible, whether you elect me or reject me.

47. When Sigurd reached Skalaholt and delivered Gudmund's letter to Bishop Pal, Pal dispatched the following letter to his brother Sæmund at Oddi :—

Bishop Pal sends God's greetings and his own to his brother Sæmund.

I have received a letter from Gudmund, the Bishop-elect, bidding me choose another man as Bishop, if I wish to do so, and saying that he is prepared to resign from his election. Furthermore, he has appointed Sigurd, the son of Orm, to assist him in the administration, for people had feared chiefly that his management of the finances would not be prudent.

I gather from his letter that he intends to go to Norway this summer if he is elected, for he asked me to make my decision of choosing him or rejecting him without delay. I wish to have your opinion which I should decide.

Sæmund sent this letter to Bishop Pal in reply :—

To Bishop Pal Sæmund his brother sends God's greetings and his own.

As you know, brother, Gudmund was no friend to me in my dispute with Sigurd. Nevertheless, many people speak very highly of him, and it seems likely that he has been chosen because it is God's will. I have heard also that he is in many respects well-fitted for the position, by reason of his charity, his rectitude, and his chastity, which is most important of all. And if there is another side to the question, do not relieve the northerners of the responsibility of answering for their own choice.

This is my advice, that you choose him rather than reject him, for one cannot tell who would be preferable to Gudmund in the eyes of God, and it is surely best to take this risk. It is by no means certain that anyone could be found who had no faults. The northerners dispensed with the help of others in making their choice, so let them now accept the responsibility for its results.

When this letter arrived at Skalaholt, Bishop Pal sent word to Thorvard, the son of Gizur, and his brother Magnus, and to Sigurd, and they held a meeting at which the Bishop made known

to them that the election had been referred to him, and that he had come to the decision to accept Gudmund as Bishop, as had already been decided. They all formally agreed to this, and Bishop Pal, Sigurd, and the others sent Ingimund, the son of Grim, with the following letter to the Bishop-elect :—

Bishop Pal sends God's greetings and his own to Gudmund, the Bishop-elect.

God has chosen you as Bishop according to the law of God and men, as incontrovertibly as can be done in our land. Now since God and good men have placed this responsibility upon you, it is necessary for us to meet you at the earliest opportunity, as we understand from your letter that you intend to go to Norway this summer, if matters go according to your plan.

I am willing to come and meet you wherever you wish, but I should be deeply grateful if you would visit me here, although I do not oblige you to do so. I have many pressing missions for the Archbishop, on account of which I am desirous for you to see me before you go to Norway.

Now winter departed, and after Whitsun week the Bishop-elect went south to Skalaholt to see Bishop Pal. He took charge of the letters which Pal was sending to the Archbishop, and returned home to Holar afterwards. It was at this time that Sigurd and Thurid left the eastern districts for good and came to Holar. They made this stipulation with the Bishop-elect that their revenue should not be decreased, and they estimated it at ten hundred hundreds, in cattle and in property of other kinds. Gudmund had no alternative but to agree. After this Gudmund set off to embark on his voyage, taking with him what he had received as tithes.

Gudmund was forty-one years old when he went to Norway for his consecration as Bishop.

48. When the Bishop-elect had come to his ship, Hrafn, the son of Sveinbjörn, arrived from the west by sea, ready to undertake the journey with him, according to their plan. Besides Gudmund, there were fifteen Icelanders sailing with this ship; these were Hrafn, the son of Sveinbjörn, Tomas, the son of Thorarin, Ivar, the son of Jon, Grim the monk, son of Hjalti, Erlend the priest, Berg, the son of Gunnstein, Eyjolf, the son of Snorri, Thorstein, the son of Kambi, Gudmund the priest, son of Thor-mod, Brand, the son of Dalk, Petr, the son of Bard, and his brother Snorri, Thord, the son of Vermund, Höskuld, the son of Ari, and Kollsvein, the son of Björn.

They put out to sea on the Sunday before the *Divisio Apostolorum*. The Bishop-elect had sent Kollsvein off from the ship north across the fjord to fetch water-casks, and he was just returning to the fjord as the ship put out of harbour, and so he

was left stranded. But just at that moment some men came along in a rowing-boat, wearing nothing but their shirts. Among them was Narfi of Brekka, and they had come from Flatey with a boat-load of fish. Kollsvein told them what straits he was in and begged them to help him. "You are in a sad plight," said Narfi, "and it is not only you that are in need, but the Bishop-elect as well, so of course we shall help you." They unloaded their cargo immediately, and took Kollsvein and his load on board, and rowed under sail down the fjord.

Then the wind began to grow stronger, and Gudmund's ship sped away from them. When the boat's crew saw that the two vessels were getting farther apart, Narfi asked: "How far do we have to chase after that merchant-ship before you will think our pursuit hasn't put us to shame?" Kollsvein answered: "To the mouth of the fjord, where it meets the open sea." "Fair enough," said Narfi, "and so shall it be."

When the merchant-ship reached the island of Hrisey, the Bishop-elect said: "Now the sail must be reefed, because I do not want to sail away from my man who is on shore; besides, I wish to celebrate Mass on the island to-day." The Norwegian crew protested against this, and everybody was averse to wasting so favourable a breeze. But Gudmund said they would have to suffer for this: "for God will bring about a still greater delay in our journey." When they saw how displeased he was, they reefed sail and cast anchor, and the Bishop-elect went ashore to sing Mass. Narfi and his men had now no need to row any further, for Kollsvein came on board at Hrisey.

On the following morning there was a fair wind, but when they tried to pull up the anchor, it was fast. One man after another lent a hand, and they tried every means they could think of, but still it would not move. At last they told Gudmund about it; he went up to the anchor and said: "Release this anchor, O Lord!" and grasped the rope. Straightway the anchor became free, and they hoisted sail and sailed as far as Grimsey, where they lay for a week. Then they got a favourable wind and sailed north of Gnupar, but now they met a contrary wind and were driven far west past Skagafjörd. After this they stopped drifting and managed to struggle north once again and past Langanes. Then again they met an east wind and drifted before it once more, and their ship was driven west out to sea.

One night a woman on board dreamed that a tall and magnificent man, robed as a bishop, came on board the ship and walked along the deck until he came to the place where the Bishop-elect

lay asleep, and he made the sign of the cross over him; she took him to be S. Jon the Bishop. After this she awoke.

49. On the following morning the Bishop-elect said: "I advise you to hoist sail and to sail round the west coast, for north-east winds are blowing, and it will be impossible to go round the north coast." They carried out his advice to hoist sail, and sailed round the west coast, and thus went past the Western Fjords, then south of Snæfellsnes and then east of Eyjafjöll. At this point they encountered north-east winds, and were driven south right out into the open sea, until they sighted the Hebrides and recognised that they had reached the islands called Hirtir.

They were driven further south out to sea as far as Ireland, and then sailed south of it. They met tempestuous storms and heard the roaring of breakers on all sides. Then the Bishop-elect said that everyone on board ought to make his confession, that all the clergy there should shave their tonsures, and that all should make vows. They did as he told them. They promised to give an ell of wadmal from every sack on board, to send a man on pilgrimage to Rome, and each of them was to give half a mark of wax to the churches. At once the storm subsided.

At last they were driven to Scotland and lay for a few days north of the Point of Stoer. Off Scotland they got into a southerly gale, which was so violent that the men who experienced it used to say that never had they met such big seas as when they were sailing off Cape Wrath in Scotland. It was now that Grim, the son of Hjalti, composed this verse:

The foaming sea is surging past;
off Cape Wrath now rages the south wind;
the towering seas are stronger ever.
Our task is keen. The keel gives way;
by the strength of the storm in straits are men.
Now the waves of the sea swell into mountains,
but still our proud craft her course pursues.

Then they drifted once more at the mercy of the gale, and during the night the men who were awake keeping watch heard loud and terrible crashes, and saw a huge roller which they thought would be their destruction if it struck the ship broadside on. The steersmen wanted to hoist sail, saying that they could only save their lives if they managed to turn the prow of the ship into the wave by this means. Hrafn, the son of Sveinbjörn, said that the roller was already too near for them to be able to do this; he urged them to go to the Bishop-elect and tell him what straits they were in. Gudmund got up at once, took his holy relics and went to the side of the ship with them, and pronounced his blessing. At that moment the ship turned

round towards the roller, and when they were abreast of it, the roller subsided, as far as they could see, except in front of the prow, and thereupon the water broke in on both sides and swept away the shelter-boards, and the hammocks were washed away into the bailing wells. The merchants all said the same thing: "That passed off better than we expected," but the Bishop-elect gave thanks to God and said that it had turned out just as he thought.

Then they hoisted sail, and the gale was so strong that they sailed on one reef. One evening they sighted land and drew so near to it that they had the breakers on both sides. They realised that they had been driven back to the Hebrides, but there was nobody able to steer the course in those waters, and most of them expected that the ship would be dashed to pieces and those on board perish.

While they were in such great peril the merchants could think of no way out, and then the Bishop-elect spoke to Hrafn, and asked him to act as pilot. Hrafn wished to be excused from this, saying that he had never been in these waters before, but Gudmund told him to try, and said that such luck as his could accomplish much. Hrafn answered: "The master's word is law," and asked Gudmund to give him his blessing. Then he took over the navigation of the ship with the approval of the whole crew, and he ordered them to sail up to the islands under his direction. The priest Tomas, the son of Thorarin, said that three times, as they sailed that night, there was nothing else to be seen but rocks immediately ahead, as far as he could tell.

It was just when they had got through the islands that they saw that day was breaking, and after this they managed to bring their ship into a good harbour on the island of Sanday. The ruler of the Hebrides at this time was King Olaf. The Bishop-elect went on shore and to the church, for he wished to hold a service. The King was present; he invited Gudmund to dine with him, and his invitation was accepted. Afterwards Gudmund returned to the ship, and they sailed from Sanday with a favourable wind and had a good voyage, making Norway south of Thrandheim, at a place called Eidi. It was here they heard of King Sverri's death. They lay there for the night, and then sailed north to Thrandheim and brought their ship to Nidaros.

50. The Bishop-elect stayed in Norway that winter, and many conferences were held about his case. He asked repeatedly to be excused the office, saying that he was little fitted for it. Many stories are told about things that happened before Gudmund received his consecration. But in the end he was consecrated

Bishop by Archbishop Eirik on the Feast of S. Euphemia the Virgin. Hakon, the son of Sverri, was the King of Norway at that time.

In the following summer Bishop Gudmund sailed to Iceland, and his ship came to harbour in Mjovafjörd, in the Eastern Fjords. From there he went to his see at Holar. He was then forty-two years old.

51. The priest Bersi the Rich died in the same year as Bishop Brand, and Snorri, the son of Sturla, inherited all his property. Snorri then made his home at Borg and lived there for some years. After his agreement with Magnúss the priest, he removed to Réykjaholt. He now became a great chief, for he had no lack of property and was an excellent man of business. He was fickle and had children by more women than his wife Herdis.

Sæmund, the son of Jon, was held to be the most eminent man in Iceland at this time. He had a magnificent estate at Oddi and many other estates as well. He was not lawfully married.

Sighvat, the son of Sturla, lived at Hjardarholt for some years and then bought Saudafell, and went there in the Great Cattle-Plague Spring. He made his home at Saudafell, and became a very great chief and was well liked by his men. He was brother-in-law to Kolbein, the son of Tumi, and there was great friendship between them. Kolbein was at this time the most influential man in the north of Iceland.

52. When Bishop Gudmund came back to Iceland and took over the direction of the clergy and the management of church affairs in the north, there arose many matters over which he and Kolbein, the son of Tumi, disagreed, and there was much discord between them. The Bishop was less easily led than Kolbein had anticipated.

In the following spring, when Sigurd and Thurid had been at Holar for two winters, Gudmund asked Sigurd to pay a visit to the monastery of Munka-Thvera to restore the buildings there, which were in a very bad state of repair. Sigurd's father Orm was the nephew of Bishop Björn, who had founded the monastery at Thvera, and Orm himself had ended his days as a monk there, and so Sigurd was deeply attached to it. At the request of Gudmund and of the Abbot Orm, who was his kinsman, Sigurd went to Thvera and improved its financial position and renovated the buildings.

Sigurd had only been at Thvera for a short time when Gudmund appointed him to the living of Möðruvellir. He and

Gudmund were on good terms at first, but things soon went badly between them. Tumi, the son of Sighvat, was constantly with Sigurd, and so were Herdis and Sigrid, the daughters of Arnor, son of Tumi.

This was the beginning of the dispute between Gudmund and Kolbein and his kinsmen : There was a priest called Asbjörn whom Kolbein summoned on account of an old claim for money, and some said that Kolbein's claim was not just. The priest sought the Bishop's help in his case, and Gudmund thought that the right of judgment over the priest belonged to him, and declared him released from Kolbein's claim. At this, Kolbein prosecuted the priest in accordance with civil law and demanded his outlawry and death. And while they were busy with the case at the Assembly, Gudmund came to the court with his crozier and stole, and forbade them to pass sentence on the priest, but they sentenced him none the less. On the following day Kolbein and all those who had been members of the court, and had sworn oaths and borne witness there, were forbidden all divine services by Gudmund. He took the priest into his own household, but the priest's wife paid Kolbein money, so that their property should not be seized.

In the autumn Kolbein made an expedition against the Bishop's household and summoned his attendants on charges warranting outlawry, on the grounds of Gudmund's association with the priest. Gudmund was so incensed at this that he excommunicated Kolbein. Then their friends intervened and tried to reconcile them, and an agreement was reached on these terms that Kolbein accepted the Bishop's sole right to impose penance and fines, but the farmers gave their pledge to Kolbein to discharge for him whatever fines Gudmund imposed. At the General Assembly in the following summer, Gudmund, with the advice of Bishop Pal and Sæmund of Oddi, gave the verdict that Kolbein should pay a fine of twelve hundreds of wadmal. Half of this sum was paid down, but half was not, because Kolbein wished Gudmund to take it from the farmers who had pledged themselves to pay it, but Gudmund wished to take it from Kolbein himself, as it was he who had given Gudmund the pledge to pay.

Gudmund had then been Bishop for two years.

53. During the same summer Bishop Gudmund excommunicated two chiefs, Sigurd, the son of Orm, and Hall, the son of Kleppjarn, because they had snatched a priest from a monastery, and maimed and mutilated him. They had also extorted much money from a farmer, calling it his head-ransom, and had kept it all themselves. Hall made a settlement with the priest and

refused to accept the Bishop's jurisdiction in this case, and after this they were excommunicated.

Kolbein avoided relations with Sigurd and Hall at first, but eventually everybody associated with them. The next development was that they forbade all trade with the Bishop's household. But the case was concluded in this way, that in the autumn, on the Feast of S. Mauritius, Sigurd and Hall came to terms with the Bishop and gave the whole matter into his jurisdiction. Kolbein took no part in this agreement as he was unwilling to pay a fine, and the Bishop wished the terms to be the same for him as for the two others. At this, the Bishop pronounced excommunication on Kolbein on the grounds that he had associated with Sigurd and Hall, but neither Kolbein nor anyone else took any notice.

54. It was in the winter before Christmas that the Bishop excommunicated Kolbein on the two counts that he had associated with excommunicated men, and that he had kept back half the money which Gudmund had claimed from him. In the spring after Easter Kolbein made a second expedition against the Bishop's establishment with eighty men, and summoned members of his household, priests, deacons and laymen, to the Hegranes Assembly on charges warranting outlawry, most of them false. The Bishop and his men were on the housetops; he was in his episcopal robes and pronounced the sentence of excommunication, speaking in the vernacular so that all should understand. There would have been a battle if Kolbein had been less restrained in temper on this occasion, but he went away and composed this verse :

The lordly prelate in power at Holar
 under interdict each one proclaims
 who gives me aid in any way.
 This noble man moderation ignores
 in imposing his ban, though he better contrives
 in other things. This will also
 evil effects on others entail.

To this he added :

The Bishop his veto on visits to church
 has laid by his ban forbidding it long,
 causing men woe wide through the land.
 Resolute Gudmund will grow enraged.
 Only the future the finish can show.

And further :

Gudmund the heir of Ari's valour
 keeps firm his wish to wield such power
 as Thomas à Becket. This bodes danger.
 Of radiant mind and mighty heart,
 on men he lays the law of the Church.
 Alone it is God that Gudmund fears.

In the spring Kolbein collected a host of men from all districts to go to the Spring Assembly. Thorvald, the son of Gizur, came from the south to attend it, and there they brought their actions against the Bishop's men. It was rumoured that they intended to make an assault on the Bishop with all these forces and to seize the men they had prosecuted. Then their friends intervened and tried to arrange a settlement, and Kolbein and Gudmund reached an agreement, according to which all their quarrels were to be referred to the Archbishop. Kolbein and his party withdrew all their charges, and Gudmund removed his interdict from everyone.

Again and again Gudmund prosecuted Kolbein's men on various charges, for failing to pay their tithes, or withholding church dues, or neglecting to maintain poor relations. The farmers were extremely discontented and held the opinion that the Bishop would leave nobody in peace.

55. The next incident concerned a clerk called Skæring, who was an acolyte. He was very negligent in the way he bore his weapons and wore his clothes. He had only one arm because some Norwegians had struck off his other arm at Gasar. This man had a child by a woman whose brother sought Kolbein's help on their side of the case, while the clerk sought Gudmund's help on his. Kolbein proceeded with the prosecution and refused to accept the Bishop's jurisdiction. Gudmund offered to pay six hundreds in compensation, and said that this was more than twice the lawful due, but Kolbein rejected this. He asserted that it was of no use to make terms with the Bishop, since he broke every agreement. Kolbein had the clerk sentenced to outlawry, but the Bishop put Kolbein under an interdict, together with all those who had been at the court. A fortnight later Kolbein and Sigurd held a court of execution on the clerk's property and confiscated it. When the Bishop learnt this he excommunicated them both, because the clerk's property had been made over to himself.

Bishop Gudmund stayed at home during the Assembly, but Sigurd and Kolbein attended it, and people associated with them and they with other people. They charged six of the Bishop's men with giving assistance to the clerk, and when the Assembly was over Kolbein collected a force from all districts, intending to hold a court of execution at Holar on those who had been declared outlaws and to seize their property. The Bishop was in his residence with only a few followers, and people entreated him to make his escape, saying that it was unlikely that his men would be given quarter. Gudmund was reluctant to do this, but followed his

friends' advice and went to the northern part of his diocese. He disregarded sentences passed on men whom Kolbein had prosecuted and allowed them to go to church like free men. Kolbein and his followers did the same thing, for all whom the Bishop had excommunicated went to church, and the priests consorted with the men whom Bishop Gudmund had excommunicated for acts of disobedience, thus beginning a practice which they maintained for a long time afterwards.

When the summer had advanced and the Bishop was on his way back to Holar, many flocked to him. The foremost of the valiant men who joined him was his cousin Ögmund Skewer, the son of Thorvard. Vigfus the Cleric, the son of Önund, Konal, the son of Sokki, and many other brave men were among his supporters. Gudmund came to have a large band of followers, for his enemies had announced that if he returned to his residence with the men who had been outlawed, they would kill them, and these men did not dare leave him since they had no other hope of refuge.

When Gudmund was on his way from the north through Eyjafjörð, some of his unruly followers left the troop and robbed some foreigners whom the Bishop had put under interdict because of their association with Kolbein and Sigurd. When Gudmund and Ögmund got to know of this, they restored the greater part of the stolen goods. After this Gudmund went to Möðruvellir with his troop and carried away the shrine, the holy relics, and certain books, for he thought it was unfitting for sacred relics to be in the possession of excommunicated men. Kolbein's brother Arnor, the son of Tumi, was at Möðruvellir with many others.

So the Bishop rode away from Möðruvellir, and Sigurd reported this to Kolbein, the son of Tumi, and they now asserted that Gudmund had begun to plunder and rob. The leaders of the two parties, Sigurd, Arnor and Hall, the son of Kleppjárn, on the one hand, and Kolbein on the other, collected their forces with the intention of making a joint attack against the Bishop, and put their plan into execution. Gudmund got back to his residence early in the day, and they went to the church, and the Bishop had Mass celebrated. The following day was the Latter Feast of the Virgin Mary, and the Bishop wished to officiate on this day as the cathedral was dedicated to the Virgin Mary. It was on this very day that Kolbein came there with more than three hundred men and besieged the residence.

Intermediaries tried to arrange a settlement, but Kolbein was so adamant that he would not be satisfied unless the men who had been outlawed were surrendered to him, but Gudmund was

unwilling to hand over his followers to the axe with no guarantee of their safety. Ögmund tried his hardest to arrange some settlement, for he was related both to Kolbein and the Bishop. But since Kolbein was not to be moved, it was proposed that the Bishop should be allowed to ride unmolested away from his palace with his men. Kolbein did not agree to this, but Gudmund and his followers adopted this plan as it seemed the best way of avoiding evil deeds and misfortune.

On the evening of this Feast Day all the bells of the cathedral were rung for the evening service, but men tell that the sound of the bells was not heard by Kolbein.

56. Then Bishop Gudmund rode out from his palace, accompanied by three hundred followers, among them three abbots, two monks, nearly forty priests, and many clerks. Many of those with him were valiant men, but some were poor vagrant men and women. When Kolbein and his troop saw Gudmund riding away, Brusi the priest uttered these words to Kolbein: "There goes the Bishop, carrying off your honour as well as his own." Kolbein ordered his men to take their horses, and said he would not suffer Gudmund to ride away with his followers just then. He rode to cut off the Bishop's party with four hundred men and drew them up across their path. Gudmund turned off the road to go another way, but Kolbein and his men turned to meet them, and when the two forces met, the fight began.

Gudmund was sitting on his horse, and the abbots and some of the priests were with him. He called out, saying that there must be no fighting, but no one paid any heed. Bersi of Moberg, the son of Vermund, went boldly forward and called for Ögmund Skewer, the son of Thorvard. Ögmund had a follower called Nadd, and he attacked Bersi, and the end of their encounter was that Bersi killed him. Then Ögmund said: "You are stepping forward bravely now, Bersi." "You will find," retorted Bersi, "that I shall get even nearer to you," whereupon Ögmund turned upon him and struck him his death-blow.

Gudmund's men fought well and boldly, Konal, the son of Sokki, Svein, the son of Jon, Vigfus the Cleric, and many others. In the battle Kolbein was struck by a stone in the forehead, and at this he fell to the ground; his injury was mortal, but he was conscious and asked for a priest, and Gudmund wished his desire to be granted. Kolbein swore a peace-oath, then he received extreme unction, and after this he died. And no one ever knew who had thrown the stone.

57. These men fell with Kolbein, the son of Tumi, in the battle at Vidines : Brusi the priest, Thord the priest, the son of Einar, Bersi, the son of Vermund, Bödvar, the son of Tann, Eyjolf, the son of Hall, Glum, Styrbjörn, Björn, the son of Steindor, and Starri, the son of Svein. Of the Bishop's men, Nadd, the son of Thorarin, and Einar, the son of Olaf, were killed. The rest of Kolbein's men took to flight, except those who were too badly wounded to do so. Some of them laid down their arms and surrendered to Gudmund, and swore oaths, pledging themselves to accept such penances and fines as he should impose.

Then Gudmund's men saw Sigurd and Arnor riding with their forces; they turned towards them, being now equipped with weapons taken from Kolbein's troop. Sigurd and his followers turned back and retreated, but the Bishop's men gave chase, though rather half-heartedly at first, for some of them spoke against the pursuit and others urged it. But on the following night Sigurd and Arnor saw that the Bishop's men had come close behind them, and they stole away from their followers with two companions, and rode into the southern districts, where they spent that winter with their relatives by blood or marriage. But Hall, the son of Kleppjarn, and the others made peace with Bishop Gudmund, and each one of them agreed with oaths to accept his jurisdiction in his own case.

Kolbein had summoned Thorvald, the son of Gizur, whom the Bishop considered the source of all these disputes, to join him in his attack on Gudmund. At Kjöl Thorvald heard of Kolbein's death, whereupon he turned back. He happened to meet Snorri, the son of Grim, a kinsman of Gudmund and Ögmund. Snorri was a wise and popular man, and had been ordained sub-deacon. Thorvald had him seized and ordered a certain man to do him injury, but the man hung back. At this, Thorvald's son Klæng, a deacon, leapt up to Snorri and struck him his death-blow.

58. The Bishop spent the winter in residence at Holar, and offered to submit all these cases to the Archbishop's jurisdiction, but the chiefs would not agree. Ögmund then proposed, as he had often done before, to contribute property of his own in order to effect a settlement, and so did many others. But Gudmund imposed fines on those who had attacked him at Holar, and the fines were of three hundreds of wadmál per head, or even five hundreds or ten hundreds, according to his estimate of a man's guilt. On one man he imposed a fine of twenty hundreds. The Bishop sent his men to collect the money, but they did not venture to go in small parties, and those on whom the payment fell did not

dare do anything but pay the sum demanded, though they declared it robbery.

The farmers grumbled angrily. They felt they had been deprived of their leader and disgraced, and had lost many of their kinsmen and friends; some had lost their limbs, and now they had to pay fines on the top of it all. The money they gave up they declared to be the spoils of plunder and robbery. But those in charge of the troop which was overrunning the district to collect the fines became enraged, and charged the farmers with other offences in addition. They plundered the estates of Sigurd and Arnor, and did many things which the Bishop had not ordered them to do, but had indeed expressly forbidden. They burnt down one farm, and assaulted some men against whom they thought they had grievances, and whom they suspected of conspiring against their lives. One of these men they killed, and they also killed a priest. And whatever disturbances the Bishop's men made, the farmers laid the blame on Gudmund. The Bishop put the same interdict on the farmers as before they had come to terms, for he perceived that they were not willing to fulfil their oaths and pledges, but wished to do everything in their power against him, as was proved by subsequent events. Many men fled south to Sighvat, the son of Sturla, in Dalir, and complained to him of their plight. His wife Halldora, Kolbein's sister, continually goaded his anger.

59. Now it must be told that in the winter after the battle at Vidines, a son was born to the wife of Thorvald, the son of Gizur; she was called Thora, the daughter of Gudmund. People suggested to Thorvald that he ought to name his son after Kolbein, the son of Tumi. But Thorvald replied: "My son will not be as gifted as Kolbein, and moreover the wise have said that men should not name their sons after those whom sudden death has summoned from this earth. I shall have my son named Gizur, since those who have hitherto borne this name among the men of Haukadal have scarcely been the black sheep of the family."

As the winter advanced, messengers were exchanged between the chiefs to arrange their plan to raise forces against Bishop Gudmund. The ringleader was Thorvald, the son of Gizur, and the others were Arnor, the son of Tumi, Jon, the son of Sigmund, Sighvat, the son of Sturla, and his brother Snorri, Magnus, the son of Gudmund, and Thorvald of Vatnsfjörd.

Sighvat sent word to his brother Thord, and they met in Hitardal. Sighvat asked Thord to go on the expedition with him, and Thord asked him what authority he would have if he came. "Why shouldn't you have such authority as you wish?" said

Sighvat. "With how big a following will you come?" "With four others," replied Thord, and Sighvat rejoined: "Then what greater use will you be to me than anyone else, if you have so small a following?" "You will see," said Thord. Sighvat leapt on his horse in anger, and the brothers parted company without another word. Thord related that he and his brother were never such good friends after that.

60. It is told that in the winter after the battle at Vidines many dreams were dreamed. A man in Skagafjörd dreamed that he came into a large house. There were two women sitting inside; they were drenched in blood, and they were rocking backwards and forwards. Blood rained in through the windows. One of the women chanted:

Valkyrie goddesses,	Gunn and Göndul,
we rock and we rock.	It rains with blood,
ere the fall of men.	We shall make our way
where battle will rise	at Raptahlid.
Men will be slaughtered	in sacrifice to us,
and men's curses	will come on us both.

A man in the Eastern Fjords dreamed that he came into a little room, and two men were sitting inside, clad in black, and with grey, close-fitting hoods on their heads. They were holding each other's hands as each sat on his own bench. They were rocking to and fro, and pushed their shoulders so hard against the walls that they nearly collapsed. Then they chanted this verse, and each supplied alternate lines:

Skulls shall be battered
and buildings shattered,
and grieved are we
when the grey hoods we see.
Evil deeds shall they do,
these dealers of woe.
Rejected be they
on the Judgment Day.

Gudmund had now been Bishop for six years.

61. Now it must be told that in the following spring those chiefs we named before collected their forces and made an attack on the Bishop. Thorvald of Vatnsfjörd came from the west with thirty men, all of them on foot. Thorvald carried his axe in his hand, and he let the haft rest on the ground neither while he was travelling to the north nor while he was returning from it. And when the forces were mustered, they had seven hundred men ready to attack Gudmund in his palace. He himself had a very small following beyond his own household, because nearly everyone had deserted him, and men had little desire to give him help.

Ögmund Skewer wished to stand by him, but did not manage to get to him, for a troop was dispatched against him; Ögmund escaped, but they took his shields from the church and his horses, so that he was obliged to stay where he was.

Sigurd and Hall were the leaders of the attacking party. When the troops rode into the palace-buildings, the Bishop's men were on the housetops and had prepared to defend themselves. Many brave men were among them. The chiefs went round the buildings to find the spot where it would be easiest to attack. Thord, the son of Bödvar, who was the maternal uncle of the sons of Sturla, advised them to shout their war-cry that evening, but not to attack before the morning; he thought there would then be fewer defenders in the buildings than in the evening. And it turned out as Thord expected, for during the night many stole away from Bishop Gudmund, some to join his enemies, others elsewhere, so that few men were left in the buildings. Moreover, in the morning the men who did not expect to be given quarter took refuge inside the church. And when few of the Bishop's men remained, the attack was launched against them.

Thorkel the priest, the son of Bergthor, who was nicknamed the Stocky, defended himself well and gallantly, and he gave up his life in the buildings. Several others fell there, but they killed one man in the churchyard itself, so that his blood spurted onto the church. Six of the Bishop's men were killed, and Arnor's party also lost six.

Next they leapt inside the buildings and broke locks and bolts in their search for men. They now offered the Bishop two alternatives. One was that he should release them from interdict, in which case they would give quarter to some of the men who were inside the church, and the Bishop must leave the palace and never return to it. Otherwise they would kill everyone in the church, and spare nothing, and would drive the Bishop with contumely away from the palace. Gudmund chose neither alternative, saying that he felt unable to absolve them. However, it came about that to save the lives of his men for whom death was intended, Bishop Gudmund was induced by their entreaties to sing a *miserere* over his enemies, yet he told them that they were no more absolved from their ban than before.

62. After this Snorri, the son of Sturla, invited Bishop Gudmund to his home, and Gudmund set off with him on that day. And when he had gone, Arnor and his men went to the church with their weapons, and tried to induce the men against whom they thought they had the gravest charges to come out of the church; otherwise they would either attack them or starve them to death inside the church.

Then Svein, the son of Jon, began to speak: "I must make a condition, if I am to come out of the church." They asked him what this was, and he answered: "That you will cut off my arms and legs before you behead me." They promised him this. Then he came out, and all the others too, because they did not wish the church to be defiled by them or their blood. They all came out unarmed. Then Svein's limbs were cut off, and he sang *Ave Maria* while this was being done, and afterwards he stretched out his neck under the axe. His courage was highly praised. Skæring the clerk was also beheaded, and a third convicted man.

These of Gudmund's men had already been killed: Thorkel the priest, Leif, the son of Thorberg, Brand, Steingrim, Leif of the Hand, Einar, the son of Hallvard, and Thorarin, and in this list is included the man who was killed in the churchyard. Of the attacking party these men were killed: Bergthor, Gizur, Sigmund, Sval, Einar Birch-leg and Simon the priest.

Those who had been declared convicts were thrown into a scree, and lay there for two months. But in the church they buried their own men who had died without repentance and absolution, declaring that this was only taking a leaf out of Bishop Gudmund's book, since he had permitted convicted men to go into churches. But the Bishop had not sanctioned church-burial for one of Kolbein's men, who had died without repentance. They plundered many things that were the property of the palace or of those who lived there, both horses and household belongings, taking practically everything that was not in the church itself.

When the slaughter was at an end, the chiefs took Gudmund's men into their power, giving quarter to whom they pleased and doing some injury to others. Sighvat gave quarter to Konal, the son of Sokki, while Snorri had given quarter to Vigfus the Cleric. Most of the men in high positions took some one or other into their charge. And when Gudmund had left the district, they sent out messages far and wide, bidding the priests release everyone from interdict and sing the services and perform all offices, both at Holar and at all the other churches; they said this was by permission of the Bishop. They forced all Gudmund's supporters who remained, both clerics and laymen, to accept their right of sole judgment, and imposed fines on them of three or five hundreds, or ten or twenty, or even forty or thirty. Before the matter rested, Ögmund Skewer forfeited a hundred hundreds and his right to live in the district. He went to Hofsteig in the east. They declared some men felons and outlaws. Four good men, two of them priests and two laymen, were compelled to undergo

the ordeal of carrying hot iron to prove that they had not inflicted Kolbein's injury, but they were fully cleared.

Now Arnor and Sigurd took possession of the Bishop's palace and its property. But in the following spring, Bishop Gudmund sent a letter to Holar commanding that the church should be locked up, since it had been defiled both by the slaughter of men and by the burial of excommunicated men. This injunction was carried out; a tent was put up outside the churchyard, and masses were then sung there. Arnor and Sigurd could not bear the church to stand idle without services, and they came to Holar and forced priests to hold services in the church, though not the Mass itself at first; a little later, however, full services were performed, and bodies were buried. Wretched and lamentable was the state of the Christian faith there in those days. Some priests abandoned the celebration of the Mass for fear of God, but some performed it because of their fear of the chiefs, others by their own desire; the cathedral-church, the mother, stood in sorrow and grief, as did some of her daughters too, but others exulted in her tribulation, and everyone lived just as he pleased, and no one dared to remonstrate or to tell the truth, because of Sigurd and Arnor.

63. Bishop Gudmund spent the winter with Snorri at Reykjaholt; but in the spring he went north to Hrutfjörd, intending to go by sea either back to his bishopric, or all the way to the Eastern Fjords. When Arnor and his supporters heard of Gudmund's journey and suspected that he meant to return to his bishopric, they immediately assembled their forces, and stationed men by the harbours to which it seemed most likely that Gudmund might sail. Arnor planned to march his men against the Bishop as soon as he had news of him.

When Gudmund heard that Arnor's forces had been mustered, he turned back and went in the opposite direction to Steingrimsfjörd. He then learnt how the priests had performed divine service, both at Holar and elsewhere, whereupon he placed under interdict all priests who had sung Mass without his leave, or had had dealings with excommunicated men.

In the summer Gudmund travelled through the Western Fjords, and spent the winter with Bergthor, the son of Jon, at Breidabolstad in Steingrimsfjörd, and there many remarkable happenings took place. Though they are not recorded in this book, these happenings are worth relating; some of them were thought miraculous, such as his fight against the troll-woman, known as Seal's-head, as well as many other things.

The priests went their own way in holding services, whatever the Bishop said. In their difficulties they sought advice chiefly from Gunnlaug the monk, who was the greatest scholar and the most benevolent man in the north.

Gudmund had now been Bishop for eight years.

64. In the spring a meeting was arranged between Gudmund and Arnor, in order to make peace between them. The conditions offered to Gudmund were honourable, but Arnor did not wish Gudmund to have control of anything except the church and services, if he went back to his bishopric.

In the following summer, Gudmund left the west with nine companions and arrived unexpectedly in Eyjafjörd to visit Hall, the son of Kleppjarn. They had already come to terms, and Hall received him warmly. Arnor and his party had news of this and assembled their forces, and so did Hall and the Bishop on their part, and the two forces met. Such great care was taken that they parted without incident, but no settlement was reached. Hall and Gudmund turned back, for they did not wish to provoke a quarrel. Gudmund went to the north of his diocese and sang Mass in tents, instead of in the churches, so long as the cathedral remained uncleansed.

Then a missive from Archbishop Thori was received in Iceland. It summoned Gudmund's opponents to Norway and censured them severely. Arnor and his followers kept quiet after this. Bishop Gudmund went to Holar and remained there for the winter, more or less at peace; he and Arnor had no quarrels. During this winter many men came to terms with Gudmund.

65. It is told that at this time Arnor, the son of Tumi, and Sigurd, the son of Orm, invited Sighvat, the son of Sturla, to come and make his home in the northern districts. Sigurd was anxious for him to take over the authority with which he had endowed Sighvat's son Tumi, and Arnor had now announced that he was going to Norway on account of the cases between himself and Bishop Gudmund. Sigurd was then living at Möðruvellir in Hörgardal, and Sighvat and Halldora used to stay with him very often.

66. In the Lent following the Advent in which Hall, the son of Kleppjarn, was slain, Thorvald, the son of Snorri, had Hrafn, the son of Sveinbjörn, killed at Eyr in Arnarfjörd, as is told in the story of Thorvald and Hrafn. Thorvald and his men also looted many valuable treasures before they went away. Two treasures at Eyr, which Bishop Gudmund had given to Hrafn, are mentioned; these

were a sun-stone and a woman's dress of dark-blue material, with embroidered borders. When they were about to take the dress away, it looked like black, tattered rags to them, and they flung it back, but they took the sun-stone with them to the sea. Then it looked like any other pebble to them, and they threw it down, and after they had gone away, this sun-stone was found.

Gudmund had now been Bishop for eleven years.

67. It is now to be told that in the following spring Bishop Gudmund and Arnor, the son of Tumi, made preparations for their voyage to Norway. Gudmund lay ready for sea for six weeks, and twice his ship sailed and was driven back. Gudmund was carried off the ship, but two of the six men whom the Archbishop had summoned to Norway did go there, and also Thorvald, the son of Gizur, and Teit the Bishop-elect. Gudmund himself went to Norway a year later and spent his first winter east in the Vik, most of the time with Bishop Nicholas.

Three winters after the slaying of Hall, the son of Kleppjarn, Sighvat, the son of Sturla, removed to Eyjafjörd. He stayed with Sigurd, the son of Orm, at Mödruvellir in Hörgardal for the first winter, and in the next he shared the management of the farm with him. After that Sighvat bought the property at Grund. He made it his abode, and lived there for the rest of his life. At that time there were many important farmers in Eyjafjörd, and they were on rather bad terms with Sighvat; they considered that he had neither inheritance nor family rights in the district.

During the years Gudmund spent in Norway at this time, there were many notable events. In the fifth year Snorri, the son of Sturla, went to Norway.

68. In the summer that Snorri went to Norway, Bishop Gudmund returned to Iceland, and went home to his see. He established a school at Holar, and Thord Coal-fish was appointed its master.

Then a crowd of followers thronged round the Bishop, and expenses seemed likely to be heavy. Arnor, the son of Tumi, mustered his forces and came to Holar unexpectedly during the night. They seized Gudmund in his bed and dragged him out through the buildings. He thrust his hands or feet against the doorposts and board-partitions, but they only dragged him the harder, so that there was danger of his being severely injured. In the morning they brought him out of the buildings on the western side and laid him on a barrow, and drove with him to Arnor's farm at As. They expelled from the palace all who served the Bishop, and drove out the master as well as all the pupils, and

threatened to burn the school and those inside it. The master Thord went to Vellir, accompanied by Eyjolf, the son of Brand of Vellir, and he taught many boys there that winter. But Gudmund spent the winter at As, and was kept in a dungeon like a criminal. He had one attendant, and he was never free to go out, except to go to stool.

Gudmund had now been Bishop for sixteen years.

In the following summer they took Gudmund south to the Hvita on a stretcher. He suffered such hard and severe treatment on this journey that his limbs were almost broken, according to the account of most people. The horses which drew him were raced so fast that the stretcher collapsed, and Gudmund was trailed over the moor and stones, and was helped by none of them. Arnor had taken a passage for himself on a ship in the Hvita that summer, and intended that he and Gudmund should travel to Norway together, whether this was to Gudmund's liking or not. Arnor waited at the harbour during the summer, and Bishop Gudmund was kept guarded in custody.

At this time Eyjolf, the son of Kar, was living on Flatey in the Breidafjörd. He was an intimate friend of Bishop Gudmund, and when he heard that he was persecuted and imprisoned, he took it greatly to heart. He sent a youth to the south called Skuma the Little; Skuma was daring and not so young as he was small in height. He stayed at Hvitavellir for the summer, and did errands wherever he was sent; he spent most of his time in the booth of the northerners, where Gudmund was confined. At that time the booths were west of the Hvita, under Thjodolfsholt, where there are cottages now. The door was in the middle of the northerners' booth, and faced the stony bank; Gudmund was in the wing of the booth which faced the river, and his hammock was beside the gable, with its headboard facing down to Ferjubakki.

69. It is told that during the summer, after the Feast of the Virgin Mary, Eyjolf, the son of Kar, went south from Flatey to Eyr, the home of his kinswoman Gudrun, and there he got horses for himself. He had five or six companions, and they rode south across the moor and on to Myrar, until they reached Eskiholt, where a man called Gudmund was living. He kept Eyjolf safe in his sheep-shed, and told the Bishop of his arrival.

Abominable weather suddenly set in one night, a driving storm with a shower of sleet. Eyjolf and his men then rode to Hvitavellir, and sent one of their party on ahead to meet Skuma, and he told this man how matters stood. Six men kept night-watch over the booth, but they had all taken refuge inside it during the downpour. When Eyjolf got there, he found that all

in the tent had fallen asleep and were snoring heavily. The weather was tempestuous. He unfastened the edges of the covering of the booth at Bishop Gudmund's head and removed the hides which were used for the covering, both inside and out. He took the Bishop in his arms, carried him out of the booth, and dressed him in the clothes which they had brought ready for him, a cape and a white tunic, and off they rode with him out to Myrar. They said that they did not find the ground swampy across Valbjarnarvellir, but marsh-lights played on their weapons and spears, so that they gleamed brightly.

Skuma the Little lay down in Gudmund's hammock, and the men who were on guard said that the old greybeard was sleeping late in the morning; some said that he must be ill since he was neglecting his devotions. Then they went up to him to speak to him, and it was Skuma who told them that Gudmund had gone, and that Eyjolf, the son of Kar, had carried him off; he said that in his opinion they would have got at least as far as the other side of Langavatnsdal.

The news was told to Arnor, and he was greatly displeased. They did not ride after the Bishop because they did not know whether he had gone across Myrar, or turned towards Dalir. Arnor abandoned his voyage to Norway and went to Skaðafjörd, where he spent the winter.

Gudmund and his companions rode without stopping to Eyr, to the home of Gudrun, the daughter of Sveinbjörn. There they boarded a ship which took them to Flatey; they stayed on Flatey only for a little before they went to Kerlingarfjörd, where they hid in the woods until they heard that Arnor was making no search for them.

It is told that at the Latter Feast of the Virgin Mary, Gudmund sent word to Olleif, the priest at Muli on Skalmarnes, saying that he wished to perform the offices of this festival and stay there with five companions, but the priest made excuses and declared that he was unable to receive him. Then, before they parted, Gudmund asked whether he could come with only two companions, but the priest made excuses just the same, whereupon Bishop Gudmund said that a greater misfortune would befall him that year than entertaining a bishop and two others. This prophetic utterance was fulfilled in this way that in the next summer before the Latter Feast of the Virgin Mary his whole farm was burnt to ashes.

Bishop Gudmund stayed in Kerlingarfjörd for a time, and the hauntings there very much decreased; people had felt that it was impossible to live out there on account of them, but henceforward they did no man harm. Gudmund went out to Flatey, and spent

the winter there with a large band of followers. Eyjolf was put to very great expense, and supplied them nobly.

Gudmund had now been Bishop for seventeen years.

70. In the following spring Bishop Gudmund went into the northern districts, accompanied by Eyjolf, the son of Kar, and Einar, the son of Hrafn; Ketil, the son of Ingjald, and Eyjolf's brother Jon, the son of Ofeig, were also with him. They came to Holar and stayed there for a time. Afterwards they went north to Svafárdalur, for Gudmund intended to visit the northern part of his diocese, but the men of Eyjafjörð would not receive his following at their farms. Gudmund went across to Höfði and then on to Reykjadal, taking his time on the journey. He stayed in Reykjadal for much of the summer, and a throng of people flocked to join him. Bergthor, the son of Jon, was with him. Since Gudmund had nearly a hundred followers in all, the farmers thought it a heavy burden to bear, but endured it for a while.

Gudmund went to Muli, where Ivar received him with good grace. He entertained him in a fitting way, but made it plain that this was not done out of affection on his part. However, they parted on good terms, and Gudmund left Muli and settled down at Einarstadir for a time. Ögmund the priest took away his milch-cows and went to Muli, but Höskuld, the son of Gunnar, who farmed half the property, remained at Einarstadir and put everything he possessed at the Bishop's disposal.

A little while later the Bishop was staying at Grenjadarstadir. It was rumoured that he was going to Muli again, but Ivar was most unwilling to receive him. He had forty men equipped as if for battle, and drew them up in formation; at this moment the Bishop rode into the home meadow. Eyjolf and his companions asked what was the reason for such a gathering. Ivar replied that they would have to pay dearly before they laid hands on his property, and 'the owner would suffer the same fate as his cow.' When Gudmund heard this, he said: "Let us go, my sons, and have no dealings with Ivar, for there is an unclean spirit in him," and then they rode across to Kaldakinn and stayed at Stad.

71. It is now to be told that the farmers sent word to Sighvat, the son of Sturla, and Arnor, the son of Tumi, asking them to free them from these disputes. They took action at once, and Arnor rode and collected men in the dales, and Sighvat in Eyjafjörð.

72. Afterwards Bishop Gudmund went to Einarstadir, intending to go from there to Helgastadir to consecrate the church on the day after the autumn Feast of S. John, and this he did.

Eyjolf, the son of Kar, rode to Muli and proposed to Ivar that the Bishop should consecrate the church at Muli later in the day. Ivar would not consent to this, and said he would resist if the Bishop attempted to come. Then news reached Gudmund that bands of men were gathering on all sides. He completed the consecration, and then he and his men prepared to defend themselves in the churchyard, and collected great piles of stones. Then they saw bands of men riding down to Einarstadir. The Bishop's men stood in the churchyard, but the farmer Thorljot and his brother Sigurd took up a separate position with their servants.

Sigurd cried: "Look, men, where the troop of the chiefs is riding, and now the doors of the Reykjadal storehouses are locked against the Bishop's men."

After that they saw a second troop riding up by Vatnshlid. The two troops arrived almost at the same moment; this was at noon. Then the battle cry was raised, and they drew up their forces for the attack. Arnor, the son of Tumi, attacked from the south with his men, Sighvat at the churchyard gate from the home meadow, and Ivar from the north.

Bishop Gudmund was inside the church, and now a hard battle was fought with stones and missiles. Sturla, the son of Sighvat, was hit by a stone. Then Sighvat cried: "The Bishop's men spare nothing. Now they strike the boy Sturla like anyone else. Where are you, Gudmund, son of Gil? Don't you see that Eyjolf, the son of Kar, is in the churchyard, or have you forgotten the fight at Mel?" At these taunts, Sighvat's men pressed the attack hard. One of the Bishop's men then fell before the spear-thrusts; his name was Gisli. A little later one of Arnor's men was wounded in the eye by a spear. Hamund was his name, and he was the son of Thorvard. He survived the night, but died next morning.

Then the Bishop came from the church to his men. And now their spirit was roused, and they fought most valiantly, though none of them better than Jon, the son of Ofeig. At this point, Sighvat and the others withdrew for a time, saying that they would rather gain victory by adopting wise plans than by endangering men's lives. They had, moreover, no wish to fight in any way that would put the Bishop's life in danger. They posted men to see that none of the Bishop's followers got away without their consent.

The leaders went south to the pasture, and Arnor asked Sighvat: "Don't you think it has been a hard battle, kinsman?" "Hard indeed," replied Sighvat. Arnor said: "During the summer I was in bad health, but when word came to me from the men of Reykjadal that they needed help, all my ailments left me,

so that I feel perfectly well." "That must seem a miracle to you," said Sighvat. "I call it an occurrence," answered Arnor, "no miracle."

After this Gudmund's enemies surrounded the churchyard, and an attempt at settlement was made, but fruitlessly, and the night passed. Gudmund and his men were inside the church, and their enemies round it. One of the Bishop's men managed to get across the river out of the church. He was called Eyjolf Storm-maker; he was an unruly man. He was pulled about and beaten, and they dragged him back half dead and killed him later.

Early on Sunday morning they made a battle-screen, and under cover of this they dug through the wall of the churchyard, and almost as soon as a gap was made in the wall, the Bishop's men abandoned the fight and went into the church. They had put the battle-screen on the south side of the churchyard wall.

Isleif, the son of Hall, had arrived at Helgastadir, but neither he nor any of his men had fought. At this time he lived at Thvera in Laxardal, and he invited the Bishop to visit him. Gudmund went away with him, and the men who were left behind surrendered. Eyjolf, the son of Kar, was given quarter by Arnor, and Jon, the son of Ofeig, by Tumi, the son of Sighvat. Two men were killed in the hills north of the buildings; one was called Thorgeir, and the other Thord, the son of Ari.

Sighvat rode away that day, and Arnor the next. Bishop Gudmund travelled from Thvera north across Reykjaheid and the whole way to Saudanes, where he performed ordinations on the Ember Days. Then he went back to Öxarfjörd and across Reykjaheid. When he reached Reykjadal, he was told that the people of Eyjafjörd were going to rise against him. He then went to Bardárdal and through Krokadal, and then southward, and he did not stop until he reached Oddi. Sæmund welcomed the Bishop and invited him to stay there as long as he liked. Gudmund agreed to do so, and spent the winter at Oddi with some of his men, and for others Sæmund found lodgings at places nearby.

Gudmund spent the winter after the battle at Helgastadir with Sæmund at Oddi, and in the summer he went to Borgarfjörd in the west, and travelled through it late in the autumn. Thord, the son of Sturla, accompanied him north to Skagafjörd and home to his bishopric. The Bishop settled down at Holar, much against the will of the men of the district, for they wished to expel him from all his possessions.

Gudmund had now been Bishop for eighteen years.

73. Bishop Gudmund remained at Holar after Thord, the son of Sturla, returned to his home. A crowd of people flocked to

join him, and all the summer stock of provisions was used up. It was common talk among the farmers that the bishopric would be laid waste, and they felt that they had poor support, since Thorarin was young at this time, and inexperienced in district government and chieftainship.

In Eyjafjörd Tumi, the son of Sighvat, pleaded with his father to give him a farm, together with part or all of the authority which Sigurd had held. He said that he was not less capable than his brother Sturla, who had now taken over the farm at Saudafell and the control of Dalir. But Sighvat did not wish to weaken his own position in the north.

Tumi then rode west to Skagafjörd. He held a meeting with the farmers, and represented to them that the Bishop's men would give them trouble, as soon as provisions began to diminish in the Bishop's palace. He said that their leader was young and untried. Tumi's words fell on sympathetic ears, and the farmers resolved to send word to Gudmund and say that they would not have him squandering the episcopal property: They declared that unless the Bishop cleared out his followers himself, they would do so by force. When Gudmund heard this, realising that the northerners never made empty threats when they promised him ill, he decided to go into banishment rather than hand over his men to death.

74. Now there were signs that a serious quarrel was brewing in the north of Iceland between Bishop Gudmund and Sighvat. Sturla backed his father, and so did his brother Tumi, and many other chiefs besides. Their actions brought grievous sorrow to many men in the north, for they persecuted Gudmund with great injustice and violence.

Gudmund had now been Bishop for nineteen years.

Tumi and his party mustered their forces. Their quarrel with the Bishop was that they found him too stubborn, when they failed to commit all the injustice they desired against his friends, for he protected them nobly and magnificently.

When Gudmund heard of his enemies' action and their purpose, he was deeply concerned, but he wisely adopted the bold plan of sending word quickly to his friends, asking them to join him. The first man he summoned was Eyjolf, the son of Kar. Eyjolf responded readily to the message and hastened to join Gudmund. This expedition is the first recorded that Aron, the son of Hjörleif, undertook with Eyjolf. They and other friends of the Bishop came to him towards the end of the summer. They consulted together, and most of them agreed that the Bishop had insufficient support to contend with so many chiefs. This was his

own opinion too. But while they were still discussing these affairs and making plans, the enemy forces had started off.

Then Bishop Gudmund had ships collected in Skagafjörd. He thought it advisable to flee, for it was reported that the chiefs intended to take him in their power and force hard terms upon him, and to establish themselves in the Bishop's palace at Holar, which they actually did. He sailed his ships down the Skagafjörd to Malmey, and he and his men settled down on the island. Altogether they numbered seventy vigorous men. They arrived on Malmey in Advent. With Bishop Gudmund were many fine men, Einar Little-seal, Petr, the son of Bard, Eyjolf, the son of Kar, Aron, the son of Hjörleif, Ketil, the son of Ingjald, and many others.

When the forces came to the palace at Holar and found that the Bishop was there no longer and that the ships had all sailed, they decided to disperse their strongest bands. Tumi then took up residence in the Bishop's palace, and seized the sacred property as if he were heir to it, expelling all those whom the Bishop had appointed. This was the manner in which they ran the household: Tumi posted a strong watch over the palace and kept a mounted guard. He had a large number of men, though some of them were hardly able to carry arms. He lived at Holar in this way for a time.

75. Now it is to be told that Bishop Gudmund and his men encamped on Malmey and collected provisions. Eyjolf, the son of Kar, was one of the Bishop's chief advisers, and so was Aron, the son of Hjörleif, whom Eyjolf dearly loved. It was chiefly Aron who was charged with obtaining supplies, and he chose men after his own heart to help him. They had often to go to the mainland for provisions, but when Tumi got to know of this, he posted pickets to resist him, so that Aron could go nowhere without risk.

Gudmund now suffered grave anxiety and heavy trials. He had been driven from his see, and his men could not obtain provisions anywhere, and it was obvious that his enemies were plotting against his life. The leaders of the Bishop's party had it in mind to expose their lives to utmost danger in order to avenge the insults done to the Bishop and themselves.

Conditions on the island became severe. The weather was rough, and the supply of food grew poor. They put up with this for some time. The winter wore on, and when they saw that they could not go on like that, Eyjolf and Aron planned, with the consent of the Bishop, to risk their lives in order to obtain provisions where they thought they had most right to them. This was from Holar, whence they had lately been expelled. And indeed, Eyjolf

and Aron did not intend to let the chance of doing great deeds escape them, if it should be offered. Now Christmas passed, and their expedition was put off so long because they thought Holar would be impregnable, owing to the watch that was held and the great gathering of men.

There was a man called Audun, nicknamed Maimed-hand. He was a little man, almost like a gnome. They sent him to the mainland after Christmas as their spy. They gave him orders to stay at the palace at Holar for as long as he could between Christmas and Lent. Tumi was very hospitable. Audun was to discover the household arrangements, and see where the more important men were sleeping, and whether Tumi slept in the outhouse or the hall. Audun was to sleep less by night than by day, and to conduct himself as if there were certain prospect of a raid by the Bishop's men, which would more probably be made by night than by day.

When it was drawing near to Candlemas, stormy weather set in. It is told that one evening when Tumi had sat down to table, he summoned his watchmen and let them off duty for the night, and they accepted this leave. And that same evening, Gudmund said to his men, Eyjolf and Aron, that he felt a presentiment that this night would give the best opportunity for solving some of their difficulties, though they might think it hazardous because of the storm. At Gudmund's indication, they wished to precipitate matters immediately, for his words to them always seemed highly prophetic.

76. It is now to be told that they gathered their followers together, to find the force best fitted for this expedition. There were thirty-five men who did not hang back, and none who wished to raise objections. The leaders of the expedition were Eyjolf and Aron; Einar was named as the third. His nickname was Little-seal. He was related to Bishop Gudmund, and had suffered heavy trials at the hands of the Sturlungs through loss of men and loss of property. But Petr, the son of Bard, though a most valiant man, was unwilling to attack his kinsman Tumi. They started at once, and put their ships out to sea. They loaded them with stones, because they thought the storm would make it impossible to sail without ballast. The Bishop's men did not stop until they reached land. They went to the farm called Osland, where they learned that Tumi was at home, and that he slept in the outhouse with fourteen companions, most of them picked fighting men.

Then Eyjolf and his men put on their armour and pressed forward eagerly. A little before daybreak, they reached the Bishop's palace, taking everyone unawares. It was the night

before the Feast of S. Agatha. Eyjolf and Aron arrayed their forces for the attack. Those who were bravest in arms were chosen to attack the outhouse, while the others were to guard the exit of the dwelling house. They barred this door.

At the great noise, the men in the outhouse sprang up and put on their clothes, and all seized some weapon. At this moment the Bishop's men bore logs of wood down on the doors of the outhouse; they were secured by iron bolts, and these were forced loose. A strong host of valiant men was inside, and they put up a brave defence, which lasted a long time. As soon as they broke down the doors with the logs of wood, Aron and four of his men got into the outhouse. Blows were exchanged, and Tumi was severely wounded. The injury was attributed to Aron, but he neither acknowledged nor denied it.

77. Now all the lights in the outhouse went out. Aron and his companions made their way back to their men, because they thought they were making no headway. They decided to try other ways of capturing the outhouse. They brought burning faggots and set fire to the wood which they had piled up. At the same time they kept up a feigned attack, and seldom has a fiercer fight gone on so long as this, according to men's reports. The gale quickened the blaze, flames burst out, and the smoke increased. Tumi and his men realised that they were beaten.

Tumi asked the Bishop's men to let them come out and to spare them. He offered them a provisional settlement. They were given leave to come out, if they gave up their weapons, but no quarter was promised them. They were then beaten and bruised in military fashion. Five or six men came out before Tumi, and they were all seized. When Tumi came out, they laid hands on him and dragged him about outside for a long time. Some of the Bishop's men said that they meant to torture him, but others asked them to spare him. Tumi grew cold, and said it looked almost as if some of them thought he was shivering from fear. Then all of them praised his courage and begged that he should be spared. Einar Little-seal said that he had not assigned his authority in the north of Iceland in such a way that he deserved to live, and he slew him because no one else would do so. After this the rest of the men came out. Two men besides Tumi were put to death, Thorgeir, the son of Steingrim, and Bergthor, the son of Oddi. They cut off the legs of two men, one of whom was Jon, the son of Thord, and the other Halldor, the son of Klasi, but the remaining men were spared.

This verse was recited :

Grim in combat the crozier-men
wielded their weapons in winter at Holar.
Thorgeir was killed by keen men at arms.
Great though his family their foeman Tumi
they felled to the ground together with Bergthor.

It was now bright daylight, and the Bishop's men kept a pretty strong hold over those who survived. They explored the household, and made free of the episcopal property, taking provisions and clothes for the Bishop, and indeed they had need to do so. They made off with some haste when they thought their chances were best. They were now gay and lighthearted.

The servants at Holar extinguished the fire. Tumi's followers and the farmers gathered together and pursued the Bishop's men, who made their escape as quickly as they could, but the two parties caught sight of each other and came to grips, before the Bishop's men managed to reach their ships. One of them was left behind, and he was killed two nights later. His name was Jon. Another, Þórarin by name, died of cold.

By this time the Bishop's men had changed over their cargoes, stowed the precious stores on the ships and thrown out the stones. The moment they were out at sea, the storm subsided. They took to their oars, and their voyage was easier than they expected. They reached Malmey on the following night, and Eyjolf and Aron went straight home from the ship and came to the room where Gudmund slept. He was at his prayers, and after welcoming them, he asked for news. They told him what had happened, and he thought their story remarkable, but he was displeased that they had killed Tumi in the raid, instead of carrying him off. However, he said that he felt sure their dealings with Tumi had gone as God had directed.

This verse was recited :

The warriors famed their foray made ;
Holar they raided at risk to their lives.
Proud Tumi fell. The first of all
the outhouse to enter was Aron the bold.
He dyed the weapons with weltering blood.

It is now to be told that the men at Holar crowded round the dead men and attended to the corpses. Then the news was brought to Sighvat and Sturla, and they thought the blow had touched them very closely. The news later spread throughout the land. The ire of the Sturlungs was roused, and many a man suffered for it afterwards. Sighvat manned the Bishop's palace for a second time. Nothing of note occurred, and both sides kept quiet for a long time, during the remainder of the winter. But when winter was over, the Bishop's men were in need of

provisions, for there were many of them, and they could obtain nothing. Gudmund's leaders had no desire to be starved out. They were always of high spirit and resolute in purpose. They sailed away north to Grimsey, and it is only told that the voyage went smoothly and as they wished. They made their home on the island and established themselves there.

78. A man called Gnuþ was living on Grimsey at this time, and he held the highest place among the farmers. It generally happened that catches were plentiful on the island, and there was often enough to live on, though there was a shortage in other parts of Iceland. There was also another reason why the Bishop wished to go to Grimsey. He felt it his duty, as indeed it was, to inquire into the people's mode of life. So far as he could, he wished to improve the conditions of the church, where the need was greatest, in accordance with his episcopal office.

It happened at Easter that Einar Little-seal fell ill with a hemorrhage, and blood flowed from his nostrils. Einar was Bishop Gudmund's kinsman and friend, and a man of high standing, and it was felt that his death would be a grievous loss. Bishop Gudmund himself came to him to stop the bleeding, and this was successful for the time being. But the bleeding returned, and it was so violent that people say that blood spurted out from both his mouth and ears. Then Gudmund said that in his opinion this disease would be his death, so violent would be the bleeding. Yet he managed to stop it temporarily, according to reports. And when the blood did not make its way out of his nose or other organs, it spurted out between his shoulders. After that he grew weaker, and later Einar died.

79. When Sighvat, the son of Sturla, first came to live in Eyjafjörð, his residence in the district was resented, but most of the farmers liked him better, when he had lived there longer. At this time Ingibjörg, the daughter of Gudmund the Noble, was living at Hrafnagil with her sons, the children of Hall, the son of Kleppjarn. Their bailiff was a man called Hafr. He was the brother of Einar Little-seal, who had killed Tumi, the son of Sighvat. There was ill-feeling between this household and Grund. The men of Hrafnagil thought that Sighvat was usurping the honours which belonged to them, and had been held by their father, Hall. Those who were not friends of Sighvat said that he had not acted fairly in the disputes between Hall and Kalf, the son of Guttorm.

Sighvat was once walking over his home field above the buildings at Grund. He was wearing a tunic with a cape over it.

He saw three men riding southward towards the fence. They were fully armed, and among them he recognised Hafr the bailiff. They rode up to the fence, but did not salute Sighvat. Hafr said: "Why has the *godi* so few followers?" "I did not know," replied Sighvat, "that I stood in need of men." Hafr and Sighvat stared at each other for a while, before they rode away and Sighvat went home.

There was a man called Gunnar the Stocky. He was a worthy man, and spent most of his time on Grimsey. He took employment at Hrafnagil, and some men say that Hafr did not keep his bargain with him, others that he withheld his wages. Gunnar tried to get Sighvat's help in the case. He would have nothing to do with him, but told him to see Halldora, who was related to Gunnar. No one knew what they said to each other, but Gunnar stayed in the district at various places for the winter.

It happened on the last day of the month Goi, three weeks before Easter, that Jon, the son of Birna, came to Hrafnagil. Jon had no fixed home, but had been lodging at Stokkahladir. Höskuld, the son of Gunnar, was then lodging at Hrafnagil. It was the winter after he had killed Ögmund the priest and his son Gunnstein. Höskuld and Jon shared a bed on the inner side of the sleeping-dais, and just opposite them in another bed in the gable lay Hafr the bailiff. Hafr had a good watch-dog, which always used to lie in front of his bed, but on the night before, the dog disappeared, and was never found. Hafr used to go to the church every night to say his prayers. When he returned and had been indoors a little while, Höskuld and Jon heard him make a rattling sound in his throat. They went up to him and found that he was wounded in the breast. He had been struck with an axe, which was lying there. It belonged to Hafr and had hung beside his bed. They said they had heard a man rushing out through the sleeping-hall to the outer door, and southwards along the wall. Then a light was lit. Hafr was dead, and they laid out his body.

In the morning a meeting was held at Grund, and these events were made known. Gunnar the Stocky came to Grund and declared himself guilty of Hafr's murder, but Sighvat made light of it and said that it was not advisable to withhold the wages of casual labourers. Gunnar was in Halldora's care in concealment for the rest of Lent, and he perished in the spring on the expedition to Grimsey.

In the following summer Jon, the son of Birna, went south to Stafaholt to Snorri, the son of Sturla, and said that Sighvat had sent him. Jon kept a penitential fast at Stafaholt, and a rumour spread that it was he who had killed Hafr. This rumour persisted long afterwards.

80. We must now resume the story where we digressed. In the spring after Easter-Week, Sighvat sent men westward to Sturla, in Dalir, asking him to come north with a large body of men. He said that it was time Sturla sought vengeance for his brother, for he felt sorely bereft by the death of his kinsmen and friends. Many agreed that this was so. And when the message reached Sturla, he summoned men and went north to Skagafjörd with a great host. Gudmund the poet, the son of Odd, was on the expedition with him, and he recited this verse :

Our warriors clad in their coats of mail
 will meet in conflict the crozier-men.
 With showers of hail the heaths are swept.
 Our craven foe with falsehood filled
 no escape can hope. I here affirm,
 the fight will be stern when we strike our blow.

When Sturla came to Skagafjörd, Thorarin, the son of Jon, was there. Thorarin raised troops in the district of Skagafjörd, while Sighvat gathered them in Eyjafjörd, and a large body of men was soon at hand. They felt most bitter enmity against those who had taken part in the manslaughter at Holar, and they thought they had many other causes against them besides. Then they heard that Gudmund had sailed to Grimsey, and so no contact with him or his men could be made unless they went on an expedition to the island. Sighvat and Sturla seized ships wherever they could get them, large and small alike. A larger body of men was assembled then than on almost any previous occasion in the history of Iceland, except at meetings of the Assembly. It is said that they used thirty-five ships for their journey to Grimsey.

It was chiefly Sturla who took charge of the expedition, for he was almost at the height of his strength, having matured very young, as everybody who saw him agreed. Sighvat and his son Sturla preferred that Sturla should take the more prominent part when leadership was needed, though they managed their joint affairs together. Sighvat and his men set off on their journey in good weather as soon as they were ready.

The Bishop's men had strong watches out, according to the best means at their disposal, for they had no reason to doubt that they must expect open hostility. It was one morning at sunrise that the watchmen saw the ships approaching. They informed the Bishop and Eyjolf, and then everyone spread the news. They all sprang up with great vigour and put on such armour as they had, though it was very little. They were now well aware that they must meet an attack as soon as the ships came to land.

Bishop Gudmund stood up and went to the church with his clerks. He said some inspiring words to his men, though very few. There was not time for them to listen to so many words of good counsel as he would have liked to say. But every devout man may surmise with what sincerity he offered up his prayers for the benefit both of himself and his men, for he knew well that all the best of men have put their faith in prayer at times of great need.

Now Eyjolf and Aron went down to the sea with their men, and drew up their forces at the harbours towards which the ships were sailing. They realised how deficient was their strength, and it seemed probable to most of them that not every one there would be alive to tell the news when evening came. Aron was given his position at the best harbour on the island; they thought it most likely that some of the leaders would make for it. The Bishop's men were drawn up at the harbours. There were seventy men fit to bear arms with Bishop Gudmund, and thirty women and poor beggars. Eyjolf and Aron intended to put up a brave defence, and Eyjolf was to support the three detachments. He bore himself valiantly that day, as was his way. Seventeen men were with Aron at his post, and Eyjolf thought they had a fine leader in him. Some men made their confessions to Bishop Gudmund before they went to the shore. The ships were then still a very long way from land.

81. It is related that Aron thought the men under his direction badly equipped with arms. The cause of this was chiefly their lack of money. Aron asked Eyjolf whether anyone in his troop was bearing Tumi's weapons. Eyjolf said that none of his men was bearing them, and that he had left them behind: "Considering their superiority in numbers, I think Sighvat and his son will be arrogant enough even though they are not provoked in this way." But Aron replied that it seemed to him monstrous that his men should meet the strokes of the sword without corslets and weapons, and that they should not dare to bear such treasures, for they were indeed excellent weapons: "And I think I shall live just as long even though I do bear those weapons, and there is still plenty of time to fetch them." He then handed over his own weapons to the men who seemed to him most likely to make good use of them.

Aron then went back, and he met Gudmund and his band of clerks in the churchyard. He greeted the Bishop who responded cordially, because he had a special affection for Aron, as was shown by later events. Then Aron went quickly and armed himself with the sound coat-of-mail, good helmet and strong shield. The fourth

weapon was a great sabre, the size of a long sword, a most magnificent weapon. He hastened out. The Bishop met him again, and expressed approval of Aron's action. "And now, my son," he said, "it is my wish that you confess your sins to me."

"There is no time for that, my Lord," said Aron, "because our defence can hardly be called too thickly-manned, and one man's help is always something."

"Well spoken," said the Bishop, "but you must be as devout as possible, my son, and do all you can for the poor." Then he blessed Aron and added: "I have a presentiment that you will be hardly treated by the Sturlungs, yet it is my expectation that we shall meet again." This has been thought a most prophetic utterance, for both at that time and afterwards it seemed most unlikely that he and Aron would meet again.

Then Aron went on his way and came to his men, but Bishop Gudmund remained behind and bade Aron farewell. Now the ships were drawing to the shore, and Aron returned to the position he had held before. The harbour was not wide, but there was very deep water close to the shore. There was a heap of seaweed above the landing-place, and crags on either side, which it was not safe to climb, since there were some men on guard at the top, though few of them. Men generally estimate the number of men with Sighvat and Sturla at three hundred, while there were seventy men on the island.

Aron bade his men draw their weapons and defend themselves manfully, with such resources as they had. Eyjolf said the same to his men: "The man who is valiant will bear himself courageously this day, as is always the way, and will show great heroism before the battle is over." Now seven ships came towards land at the place where Aron stood, and Sturla was in command of them. He was easy to recognise, because he was standing up; he greatly surpassed other men, both in stature and strength, so that, in most things, there was no one to equal him in this country. And when the ships were nearly ashore, Sturla scanned the coast to see where the leaders were, for it was there that he most wished to make his assault.

82. Then Sturla shouted: "There stands that devil Aron; now attack him boldly, and let us quickly slay him." Brandishing the sword "Tumi's legacy," Aron answered: "Here you see, craven foe, the blade which is the legacy of your brother Tumi. So attack me the more fiercely because of it, if you please, and I shall wait undaunted."

Thormod the priest, the son of Olaf, says this :

The warrior strong stood on his ship.
 The words were hard and hatred-breathing
 that he shouted now to noble Aron.
 But justly famed a fighter was he ;
 no less fiercely he flung the reply
 he made before men to that mighty chief.

Sturla was enraged and leapt from the ship onto the heap of seaweed ; he slipped about on it, and Aron turned on him and drove Tumi's sword with all the strength at his command. The blow fell on the middle of Sturla's body, and because his shoe slid on the slippery seaweed, and the blow was a hard one, he staggered and fell.

Thormod the priest says this :

Mighty Sturla, stern in combat,
 now stepped ashore, while stalwart Aron
 the land defended, with fearless men.
 Then Aron let swing his sword and struck
 the body of Sturla. He staggered and fell,
 and Aron's exploit will ever be famed.

And further :

With stalwart arm Aron the hero
 by bloody wounds the warriors felled.
 Wide was the slaughter. Swords were broken.
 At last he dropped near the deep so cool.

Then Aron struck at Sturla with both hands. A man called Sigmund Peg had thrown a shield over Sturla with great promptness, and the blow struck the shield. Sturla quickly got to his feet, and then there was no reason to jeer at the vigour of the attack on Aron and all the others with him. Their defence was valiant too, but most of them could not maintain it for long, since they had to deal with such great superiority in numbers. Some of the men soon lost their lives, but others fell wounded.

Aron fought on somewhat longer than the other men who had been ranged with him. And this was rather remarkable, because it is said that Sturla himself thought he had overcome him, and many other men around him joined in the attack as well. For a time the spears were massed so thickly on Aron that some of the spear-heads held him up while more blows were struck with others, and his coat-of-mail was so impenetrable that no impression was made on it, and so he did not fall so quickly as he would otherwise have done. He got three wounds, severe but not mortal, in the fight. One thrust was in his cheek, and went through to his palate on the other side, and such a gagging was hardly painless ; he had

another wound in the thigh, and the third was on his instep. His defence was most memorable. But in the end he became exhausted by weariness and loss of blood, and he fell, yet much later than had seemed likely.

Now though Aron showed greater strength in this defence than was expected, men attribute it more to God's mercy and the prayers of Bishop Gudmund than to any special prowess on his own part. For another thing, those who defended Gudmund had less to account for before God than those who were attacking him.

This verse was then recited :

Sturla a hard fight	fought on Grimsey.
The good farmers	there fled away.
The warrior hewed	heads from their necks.

And also this :

Aron went forward	in the fierce conflict ;
he felt no fear	in the fight he waged.
With wrath he raged	and rent asunder
men rather than shields	with shattering blows.

83. Sturla now wished to find out about his father and hear the result of his encounter with Eyjolf. The fight had gone much as was to be expected. Eyjolf had defended himself in his usual way, and many men had fallen, some dead and others wounded. In addition, certain men had fled to the church, thinking to get some help for life or limb. Sighvat and Sturla thought it most probable that Eyjolf was among those who had gone to the church, so they made their way to the farm. The Bishop and his clerks were at their devotions in the church, but when Gudmund heard the noise he went up to the churchdoor. And when Sighvat arrived, he offered rather stern greetings to the Bishop and his men. The Bishop answered boldly, yet with restraint, for he was now much perplexed. They asked whether Eyjolf was inside the church, and secondly, whether Einar Little-seal, the slayer of Sturla's brother, was there, for they hated him bitterly. They were told that Eyjolf was not inside, and they were also informed of Einar's death and of the way it had happened, which they had not yet heard.

Sturla was not willing to trust their word alone, so he had the church ransacked, and after that he selected certain men to be dragged out of the church and cruelly tortured; of these we name only two, Knut and Snorri, both of whom were priests. He afterwards had them both castrated. Sturla's men found many insulting words to say to the Bishop, together with other expressions of their arrogance. They said it was fitting that his tongue should

be cut out, and after that he would not be able to pronounce such severe interdicts on them as, it seemed, he had before. But that wicked deed fortunately came to nothing.

They would not believe the account they were given of Einar's death. His body was dug up and placed at the edge of the grave, the winding-sheet was ripped from his face, and he was recognised, and then they believed that the story was true. Then Sigmund Peg struck a blow at the corpse with the butt of an axe, and kicked it down into the grave. So their dealings with him ended, and their conduct was thought the most wanton savagery.

84. Now the story turns to Eyjolf and his kinsman Aron. When many of his men had fallen and some had fled to the church, Eyjolf made his way to the place where Aron and Sturla had fought, and came upon Aron lying with his weapons, and around him lay dead and wounded men. It is thought that about nine men had lost their lives. Eyjolf asked his kinsman Aron whether he could possibly walk away from the place. Aron said that he could, and stood up, and they walked together along the shore for a time. They came to a hidden creek where a ship was floating off the shore; five or six men were ready at the oars, and the prow was turned out to sea. Eyjolf had given instructions for this, in case there was need to make use of it in a hurry.

Then Eyjolf said to Aron that he intended that they should board that ship. He declared he could now foresee that they could give no further help to the Bishop on this occasion: "But I still hope that better days will come."

"It seems a strange intention to me," said Aron, "for I thought we would not desert Bishop Gudmund at this time of need, and moreover I have a suspicion that there is something else behind this. I will certainly not go unless you get on board before me."

"That will not do, kinsman," said Eyjolf, "because here the shallows stretch far out, and I do not want any of the men at the oars to get out of the ship to push it off, and it is too hard for you with your dangerous wounds. You must go on board first."

"You must put your weapons in the ship," said Aron, "and then I shall believe you."

Then Aron went on board, while Eyjolf did as he had asked. Eyjolf waded out behind the ship because the shallows were extensive, and when he thought his chance was best, he seized a great axe from the stern, and pushed the ship off vigorously with all his strength. "Farewell, Aron," he cried, "and we shall meet again

when God wills." And since Aron had great injuries and was exhausted by loss of blood, there was nothing to be done. Aron felt heavy grief at the parting, for they never saw each other again. Then Eyjolf told the men in the ship that they were to row very hard, and that they must not let Aron come on the island that day, nor soon afterwards, if it was in their power.

Aron and his companions went on their way, and Eyjolf returned to the shore and went to a boat-house in which there was a large ferry-boat, owned by the farmer Gnup. At this moment he saw that the troop of men was thronging down from the farm after the wicked deeds which had been done. He went into the boat-house where Gnup's ferry-boat was kept, and took up his position there, determined to defend himself as best he could. There were two doors to the boat-house, and he made them fast with heavy stones.

85. There was a man called Brand, who was one of Sighvat's supporters and a most eminent man. He caught a glimpse of a man moving, and said to his companions that he thought he could recognise him as Eyjolf, the son of Kar, and he bade them go after him. Sturla was not present, and there were nine or ten of them altogether.

They hastened down to the boat-house where Eyjolf was, and Brand asked who it was inside, and Eyjolf gave his name. "Then surely you would like to come out," said Brand, "and go to meet Sturla." "In that case, will you promise me quarter?" said Eyjolf. "Brief respite will you get," said Brand. "Then you will have to make an attack," said Eyjolf, "and I a defence, but the odds do not seem equal to me."

Eyjolf was wearing a coat-of-mail and had the large axe, but no other weapons. When they attacked him, he defended himself well and gallantly; he struck their spears from the shafts, and they exchanged many mighty blows. The shaft of Eyjolf's axe snapped in the onslaught, and he seized an oar from the ferry-boat and defended himself with this, and then he seized another, and they both broke in his vigorous defence. Now Eyjolf got a thrust under his arm which pierced deep into his body. Some men say that he broke off the shaft of the spear, leaving the point fast in the wound. He realised that he could hold out no longer, so he leapt suddenly out among them, and that trick was successful, for the men outside were taken wholly by surprise, but they did not hesitate. A man called Ma struck a blow after him, and it fell on his leg near the ankle, so that his foot hung by a shred. He

hobbled to the edge of the coast. It was high tide, and Eyjolf started to swim, and swam twelve fathoms out to sea and onto a skerry. He fell on his knees, and then collapsed on the ground, stretched out his arms and turned himself to the east, as if in prayer. His enemies launched a ship, for they wished to find out what had happened to him, and when they came to the skerry, one man stabbed him with a spear and another followed suit, but neither wound bled.

Then they left him and went back to shore. They met Sturla and told him the true story of their encounter. Sturla agreed with them, as did other men, that this defence had indeed been memorable. Sturla was well pleased with their tidings.

Brand then recited this verse :

Eyjolf the gallant	against nine foes
long on Grimsey	his guard maintained.
His brave defence	is famed among men.
At the last he swam	with swollen wounds,
out to the skerry	escaped to die.

This verse was composed by Thormod the priest :

Victorious in valour	though vanquished was he,
justly-famed Eyjolf	earned honour from blows.
that ten men struck.	He swam from the land,
the noble hero ;	hewn-off was his foot,
and his body was pierced.	I praise his might.

Sturla went to the place where he had parted from Aron, and found that Aron had gone, which was indeed unexpected. Then they looked about, and saw a ship being rowed away from the island, already far out at sea. Sighvat said that it must have Aron on board, and ordered them to row after him and put him to death. "I left him in such a condition that I thought it would be almost ignoble to attack him with large numbers then," said Sturla. "But if it is granted him to live longer than I expect, then it may well be that we shall soon meet again." "I have a presentiment that you will repent this on one occasion, if not more," replied Sighvat. Then they parted for the time being.

These men fell with Eyjolf, the son of Kar, on Grimsey : Ari, Ketil the priest, Svein, and Martein, the son of Jon, and Skeggi, the son of Snorri, Einar, and Gunnar, and two or three more of Bishop Gudmund's men.

Men say that Sighvat and Sturla had the Bishop seized, and he left the island on the same ship as Sighvat. It is told that before they went away, when some of the ships had already put out to sea, Bishop Gudmund exclaimed : "Take vengeance on them, O Lord, for I, poor wretch, have no power to do so." He looked up

to heaven as he said this. These words are recorded because it is apparent in the events which immediately followed, that God gladly heard his prayer, that not all these evil deeds should remain unpunished. For as soon as they were all on their way, bad weather set in, and a storm blew up from the north, and it grew very cold, so that they were all in great peril. Most of them reached land after suffering cruelly, but not less than thirty-five men perished on the voyage. The bodies of some were found, but others were never seen again. It is my opinion that God answered Gudmund's prayer both then and at other times.

86. Sturla went home to Saudafell after the fight. Gudmund the poet now recited this verse :

Sturla the valiant	has avenged Tumi.
The dusky raven	ravages the corpses.
Honour and comfort	are in Christ's keeping.
The ruler of fleets	and the fortunes of men
has fully punished	the plundering raid.

In the same summer they compelled Bishop Gudmund to go to Norway, and he was cruelly treated by his enemies. He spent some years in Norway, and many remarkable things happened there, concerning both what he did and what he said.

Most of the men who reached land after they left Grimsey came to shore to the north of Eyjafjörd. Gudmund had then been Bishop twenty years.

87. It is now to be told of Aron and his companions that they suffered no great peril from the weather on their voyage. When they thought they had practically escaped the danger of attack, Arni the priest examined Aron's wounds, and there were three made by the edge of the sword, and his body was bruised and gashed in many places. They bathed the wounds with water blessed by Bishop Gudmund, and afterwards bound them up.

Nothing more is told about their journey before they reached land. They drew the ship up ashore where they thought most suitable, and then went to the nearest farm and asked the farmer for shelter for the night. The farmer consented to give them some sort of hospitality, so they went inside and sat down quickly, for they were very weary after their journey, and some of them had other reasons too. After that the farmer asked for detailed news, and they told him plainly what had happened. They stayed at the farm for several nights. Then Arni the priest took the bandages off Aron's wounds, and all the clotted blood had come away from the wounds as if some excellent ointment had been

applied. Aron said that his wounds gave him little pain, considering how severe they were; he attributed this chiefly to almighty God and to the water blessed by Bishop Gudmund. He had no other treatment for his wounds than water which Gudmund had blessed, and they healed not only well, but much more quickly than is usual.

Afterwards they made a bargain with the farmer, exchanging their ship for horses and other things they most needed. Then they left that place, and each of them went pretty well his own way in the direction that seemed most promising. They provided Aron with the horse they thought best, and with an attendant on foot. After this they parted, and Arni the priest does not come into this story again.

88. Aron travelled by the usual paths to the Eastern Fjords, until he reached Vapnafjörd, and from there he turned off to the Fljotsdal district, intending to go to the south of Iceland. It is told that one evening he stopped for the night at the farm called Valthjofsstadir. Thorarin its owner was not at home, but his wife received Aron hospitably and saw that he was in need of kind treatment. He spent some nights there very comfortably. Afterwards he was eager to be off, but the farmer's wife gave him the chance of staying if he wished. He then followed the paths across the Eastern Fjords to Hörnafjörd, and nothing is told about his journey before he reached the farm called Svinafell.

A great chief called Orm, the son of Jon, nicknamed Svinfelling, was living there at this time. Aron expected to be well received at Svinafell, but he was deceived, for news which put his life in danger had reached them from the Sturlungs. It was late in the evening, and everyone had finished supper, while the farmer Orm had gone to have a bath. The bath-room was outside, and some men were on guard there. Aron rode up to them, and his horse straightway collapsed on the ground from exhaustion. The men greeted Aron and asked him his name, and he told them his own name and his father's, not thinking that this would ruin his cause. Then one of the men went quickly into the bath-room and reported who had come. "There is the man," said Orm, "who will not be alive to tell the tale himself, if I have my way. Lead him to the hut Sörlastofa and keep watch over him." The man went out and told his companions to seize Aron. Aron was astonished, and asked why he must suffer this, but they told him the reasons, and what their instructions were. He declared that there was no need for them to lay hands on him, for he would walk a short distance with them, whithersoever they wished. He also said that in the course of time, hard threats might change for the better.

Then they all went together to a little room, and the men closed the door, leaving Aron behind alone. He hung up his weapons and thought he was by no means better off than he had expected, and yet he had to put up with it. A good many people at the farm were much opposed to this reception, especially those who knew most about his ancestors, but few said anything about it. Orm the farmer left his bath and asked what they had done with the man, and they told him what had passed between them. They said they thought that he would have shown no lack of courage if their numbers had been equal, adding, "we left him according to your instructions." Orm declared himself well satisfied.

89. There was a man called Thorarin, the son of Jon, who was Orm's brother. He was a good-hearted man, and was not so great a friend of the Sturlungs as Orm. He had come to stay at Svinafell for a feast. He learnt what Orm was intending to do, and got up out of bed and went to Orm's bed. Orm welcomed his brother warmly and asked what he wanted.

"Little enough, things being as they are," said Thorarin. "I want to find out about the reception given to Aron, and whether it was as disagreeable as people say. It seems to me somewhat shocking for him to have been welcomed in such a way, since he has come here a complete stranger, and he is only a boy, and his wounds are nowhere near healed." Orm said: "You often speak wisely, yet at times I wish to have the greater say in affairs."

Each kept to his own opinion. After that Thorarin turned away and went to the little room with his attendant. He lifted up the latch and walked in. Aron was sitting on the dais, and he was holding the sword "Tumi's legacy" in his hand. He greeted the man. Thorarin answered his greeting and then whispered to his companion, who left the room. Aron asked Thorarin his name, and he told it. Aron now knew who he was and could hardly tell what errand had brought him there. He felt rather suspicious when Thorarin's attendant went away, and wondered what the outcome would be. Then Thorarin asked for news, and Aron answered his questions. And while they were having this talk, the door opened, and the same man came right into the room, and he was carrying bed-clothes of eiderdown and spread them on the bench. Next he brought up a small table, and then a woman came inside with food. Thorarin bade Aron have his meal and then go to bed, "whatever may happen later on. I have to go away, but my attendant shall sleep here for the night." And when Aron had finished his meal, he went to bed, feeling rather more cheerful than he might have expected.

Now the night passed and morning came. Thorarin was up early, and woke his attendants, telling them to leave their beds and dress and be ready for anything that might happen. They obeyed him. A man was sent to Aron to tell him to get up and dress, and Aron got up at once. And when Orm was awake, Thorarin went to his brother and asked whether Orm had changed his mind at all during the night. He said he had not done so.

"Then I must say to you," said Thorarin, "that this will be considered a most disgraceful deed in Iceland, and one not worthy of a chief, and I would rather such a deed were left to the Sturlungs themselves." "I see you are a powerful advocate," said Orm, "but I have taken a firm resolve." Thorarin answered: "I will reveal what is in my mind and hide it no longer. There will be more news to tell to-day than Aron's death, because we will all stand together and put up some defence, if you decide to attack us. I expect several men will sorely rub their itching sides before both Aron and I are dead." "You show great stubbornness, brother," said Orm, "as you always do, and I will not fight with you, unless I am forced to it. Now take Aron in your charge and do what you like with him."

Thorarin thanked his brother, and it is not told that they had any further disagreement about this. Thorarin was much commended for his conduct, and it will long be remembered. Thormod the priest composed this verse about it:

Thorarin was he	who helped bravely
Aron at Svinafell,	that stalwart man.
He was in danger,	dire was his need.
From Orm he met	menace and peril.
Hardy Thorarin	therefore prepared
to guard from his brother	the brave warrior.

90. Thorarin now took Aron in his charge. They stayed at Svinafell for a while and left at the same time. Thorarin gave Aron a trusty companion. His name was Gudmund, the son of Olaf, and he later took part with the sons of Hrafn in the burning of Thorvald of Vatnsfjörd.

These verses were composed about Aron's imprisonment at Svinafell:

The battle day	dawned for the warrior;
a true trial	tested his courage.
Death as his due	was deemed by Orm.
His danger well	the warrior faced,
so that wide and far	famous was he.
Thorarin the trusty-	protected him best.

Aron who gained	glory in war,
with swollen wounds	wended his way,
across the fjords	to the farm Svinafell,
the noble warrior	in want of shelter.
They seized him there	and threatened death,
held him captive	in a cramped chamber.

Then Thorarin got Aron away from Svinafell. They had planned their journey carefully, but they had to travel secretly, and by night rather than by day, because their lives were in utmost danger. Nothing is told about their night-quarters before they reached the farm called South Raudamel in Borgarfjörd. At this time Sölvi the priest, the son of Jörund, and Aron's mother Sigrid, the daughter of Hafthor, were living there. The Assembly was now about halfway through.

They came to the farm at dawn, and most people were asleep. Two boys had gone out to see to the horses, and they were outside when the men rode up to the farm. One of the boys was Aron's brother Bard, and the other was called Orm. The boys greeted them and asked them who they were. They gave names, but not their true ones, and led their horses to the back of the buildings, taking the boys with them. Aron told them to go quietly inside to Sigrid's bed, and tell her that men had arrived who wished to meet her. The boys did as they were asked. Sigrid inquired what the men were like, for Aron's expeditions were greatly on her mind. They told her that the men were tall and strongly armed. Then she got up, but told the boys to go to sleep and to keep quiet about this.

Sigrid came out, and one of the two men went up to her and kissed her, and she was so overjoyed at seeing him, that at first she could not speak. She bade them leave the highroad, and went inside to Sölvi's bed and told him what had happened. He quickly sprang up and went out, and the kinsmen met. He hastily gave them advice. A little later they were taken to a cave in a lava-field, a long way from the farm; the cave was named after this incident, and called "Aron's Cave." Afterwards provisions were brought for them by their trusted friends, and also clothes, so that they should not starve. They settled down in the cave for a time.

91. After his expedition to Grimsey, Sturla, the son of Sighvat, had Aron prosecuted, and he was convicted, as were fifteen others of the Bishop's men. Aron had a heavier sentence than the others, for he was made a full outlaw, not to be given food nor means of transport, nor any shelter, as was later to be seen.

Aron was afterwards in the Western Fjords, staying with his kinsmen, the sons of Hrafn, at Eyr in Arnarfjörd, as is told in the life of Aron, until Sturla had a case brought against them for having sheltered him. Bödvar, the son of Thord, was proxy for them at the Assembly, and paid a fine of ten hundreds on their behalf.

After this, men were chary of harbouring Aron. He was in hiding in various places. For a long time he was at Eyr in Geirthjofsfjörd with a poor farmer called Thorarin, but Sturla suspected this and sent three of his men to the Western Fjörds, Rögnvald, the son of Kar, Thorvald, the son of Svein, and Danza-Berg. He also sent Ingimund, the son of Jon, to Arnarfjörd in the west to seek out Aron, and at this time Aron was at Eyr in Geirthjofsfjörd.

Aron was in the boat-house, doing repairs to Thorarin's boat. The first thing he knew was that two armed men were coming towards the boat-house, and they came in when they saw someone inside. He greeted them and asked who they were. One of them said that he was called Egil the Stout, and that he had planned to find Aron because he and his companion had been followers of Bishop Gudmund; the other was called Sigurd, the son of Eyvind. They said they were servants of Thorvald of Vatnsfjörd. Aron seized his axe, for Thorvald was no friend of his. His coat-of-mail was hanging on the stem of the boat, and Sigurd took hold of it and put it on. Aron felt undecided and wondered how long he should wait for them to do something. Sigurd asked Aron what news he had heard. "Nothing," replied Aron. "We have heard it said that some of Sturla's men were here in the fjords, and that your movements were being spied on." "That may well be," said Aron, "for last night I dreamed about Bishop Gudmund and that he laid his cloak over me."

Sigurd looked out and said: "Three men are riding down the fjord, and they certainly do not appear to be less able to fight than we are." "They would not be more able than we, if we back each other well, but I do not know what help I can expect." "It would be a brave deed not to leave you," said Sigurd, "but I do not know what Egil feels about it." "I will not abandon you," said Egil. Then Sigurd began to take off the coat-of-mail, but Aron said: "Don't take it off, if you are going to give me help."

They went out, and at that moment Rögnvald and his companions rode onto the field, and dismounted and came between them and the farm-buildings. The two parties advanced on each other. Egil was the tallest of them, and was walking in the middle, and it was he whom Rögnvald attacked. Rögnvald was wearing a coat-of-mail outside his clothes, and had a gorget joined onto his steel cap. He wounded Egil in the leg. Sigurd attacked Danza-Berg, and Aron attacked Thorvald, who gave way. When Rögnvald injured Egil, Aron turned suddenly on them and struck the base of Rögnvald's steel helmet from behind with the butt of his axe. The helmet fell down over his face, and the gorget came away from the coat-of-mail, leaving his neck bare. Aron turned his axe

round in his hand and struck Rögnvald's neck so that his head flew off. Sigurd had been wounded.

Thorvald and Danza-Berg ran to their horses and mounted. Thorvald spurred on the horse which Berg was riding, for Berg himself lay face downwards on the saddle; this was the way they escaped to the ridge of the hill. Aron ran after them, and when Thorvald saw this, he shouted: "Come on, Sturla and your men! That devil Aron is running after us." Aron stopped short at this, and they got out of reach. Then Aron turned back and stripped Rögnvald of his clothes and weapons, and afterwards took his body out to sea and sank it.

Thormod the priest composed this verse:

A dangerous fight	was fought by Aron,
he clove the weapons,	that warrior stern.
He leapt on his foe	in the fury of battle;
bitter was the death	dealt to Rögnvald.

92. Aron took Sigurd and Egil to the home of the sons of Hrafn at Eyr, where they recovered from their wounds. They went home to Vatnsfjörd, and though Thorvald was no friend of Aron's, he expressed admiration for their venture. Aron fled to Bardaströnd, and lived in a cave in Arnarbœlisdal, supported by the woman who had the farm at Tungumuli. In the autumn Aron took a ship from Jon, the son of Audun, who lived at Vadil, and went in it southward across the Breidafjörd with one companion. Then he pushed the ship out to sea, and it drifted ashore at Eyr on Thord's land. Aron lived in various places in the southern districts, and Hafthor, his mother's brother, joined him at this time.

In the autumn Sturla went out to Helgafell to visit Hall, the Abbot, and he was accompanied by Vigfus, the son of Iyar, and Björn, the son of Jon and of Thorkatla, the daughter of Thorgeir of Brunna. At this time she was with Thord at Eyr. Aron was in the woods beyond Valshamar when Sturla and his companions rode past. He wanted to attack them, for there were three of them on each side, but Hafthor restrained him. Sturla and his party did not notice them.

Sturla sent Björn from Eyr to spy out whether Aron was in that district. Later in the autumn he got news that Aron was at Valshamar, and was being supported by Vigfus, who lived there. Then Sturla rode to Strönd with fourteen companions. Aron was at Valshamar; there were only the two of them, himself and Hafthor, and they were in the sheep-shed in the pasture. Sturla and his men rode into the pasture and up to the farm. They made a great noise, but it was dark by then. They dismounted and went indoors, and lit a light in the room.

There was a mǎn called Eirik, nicknamed Birch-leg; he had only just joined Sturla and was almost a vagabond. Eirik went in and out, to spy out anything he could. Aron and Hafthor decided that Hafthor should go to the farm to find out who had arrived. He crept to the back of the buildings. The room had a side window, and he put his ear to it. Then Eirik Birch-leg came up and struck him on the cheek, and it was his death-blow. Eirik rushed inside and said that he had killed one of the villains. They seized their weapons and ran out. By now Aron had set off for the farm to find out how Hafthor had got on. He had come across the pasture nearly up to the buildings when Sturla and his companions came out, and they succeeded in surrounding him on the pasture.

Olaf the White-poet made a verse about this :

At Valshamar that day was a dangerous encounter.
 Aron and Sturla stalwart were both.
 Aron in prowess had proved his valour.
 Men made a ring round the warrior,
 before the fighter fled on his way.

Sturla leapt onto his horse, while Aron tried to get out of the enclosure to the river. At this moment it seemed to Sturla's men as if a gleam of light suddenly flashed over the crag at Valshamar, and they all turned their eyes towards it, and Aron instantly leapt at Sturla's follower Björn and struck him with the sword "Tumi's legacy." He did not draw it from its sheath, for he had no opportunity. Björn was felled by the blow, and Aron jumped over him and so got out of the enclosure, and disappeared from their sight in the darkness of night.

Thormod the priest, the son of Olaf, composed this verse :

Aron the mighty made his escape
 from the ring of men mustered round him.
 He proved his courage against keen warriors.
 From savage death he dauntless leapt.
 Laid low was Björn by the brave man's blow.

93. Aron fled south over the moor to his mother at Raudamel, and by that time he was exhausted. Sturla and his men went away. They were given the right of sole judgment in the case against Vigfus, and exacted from him islands worth twenty hundreds as fine, while Björn struck Vigfus a blow with the butt of an axe. Sturla went home, and Aron went south across the moor, as we said before. Aron remained at Raudamel until he was fit to travel again, and then he went south into the parish of Eyr and stayed at Berserkseyr with Halldor, the son of Arni. The mistress of Aron's father Hjörleif was living at this farm, and Aron and his father often used to meet there. It was here that Starkad, the son of Björn, who was nicknamed Chatterer, joined.

Aron, and they travelled southwards before Christmas, and were in one place after another in hiding.

At Christmas Aron said that he wanted them to waylay Sigmund Peg, "for he has been appointed to take my life." Sigmund was living out on Faskrudarbakki. On the ninth day of Christmas, Aron and his companion were in a stackyard, and a short distance away was another stackyard from which Sigmund and another man were carrying hay. Aron did not wish to attack him before evening when it had got dark. Then he and Starkad went up to the dwelling at Eydihus. Aron stayed outside, and stood close to the door, by the buttress built out from the house wall, while Starkad went inside and asked to be given refreshment. Sigmund was the only man in the house, and he had gone to bed in daylight, because it was a fast-day. His mistress Helga said that she would not give Starkad anything. Sigmund and Starkad then went to the outer door, and Starkad told Sigmund to go first in a loud voice. And when Sigmund got outside the door, Aron thrust him through with the sword "Tumi's legacy," and that was his death-wound. After this, they went into the room and drove everybody into it, and did what they liked in the house, staying there as long as it was dark. Then they went away south over the lava-fields to Raudamel, where they stayed for a time.

Afterwards Aron went to stay with Harald, the son of Sæmund, at Oddi in the east, and lived there for a time in a narrow passage of the church. Harald had him taken to Norway, where he visited King Hakon. Then Aron went to Jerusalem, and when he returned to Norway the King made him his retainer.

Olaf the White-poet composed this verse :

The glorious hero,	hurler of javelins,
on pilgrim's journey	to Jerusalem fared.
Fully he cleansed	his convict name
in the Jordan's waters.	His worth I extol.

94. *In the year following the expedition to Grimsey Bishop Gudmund was in Bergen, and in the second year in Throndheim. In the third year also he was in Throndheim.*

Kolbein, the son of Arnor, son of Tumi, who was afterwards nicknamed Kolbein the Young, came back to Iceland in the summer, landing in the Hvita. In the autumn he went north to Eyjafjörd and spent the winter at Grund with his kinsman Sighvat. In the following summer Sighvat went to Skagafjörd and asked his liegemen to set Kolbein up on a farm. They responded well to his request, and Kolbein was established at the farm called As on Hegranes. He showed himself a very pushing youth and looked like becoming a chief. Sighvat mostly controlled his affairs while he was young.

95. In the same summer a ship landed in Hrutafjörd with Bishop Gudmund and Letter-Björn on board, and Gudmund returned to his see. Thord and his nephew Sturla met at the ship, and their meeting went off well. They drank together, and each of them invited one of the Norwegians to his house, Bard Fence-breaker, the son of Thorstein the Cowed, going to Hvamm, and Bard Wooden-joint accompanying Sturla.

In the next summer Bishop Gudmund went from the north with thirty followers to the General Assembly, and Snorri, the son of Sturla, entertained him and his whole troop during the session. When it was over, Gudmund went west to Borgarfjörd and travelled there in the summer. Multitudes flocked to join him at this time. Nevertheless the farmers received him well and gave him many gifts. He then went over Snæfellsnes and so into Dalir, but he did not stay the night with any one there. Then he went into Hvammssveit and across Strönd and Reykjanes and as far as Steingrimsfjörd. From there he went back to Saurbœ, and he reached Stadarhol in the autumn before the beginning of winter. By now he had a hundred followers.

Sighvat had come to Dalir, and he and his son Sturla kept sixty men at Saudafell, because Thord and Sturla had not reached any agreement. Thord had now moved east to Hvamm, having spent the summer at Eyr, and he and his son Bödvar had sixty men. Thord met his brother Sighvat at Ljarskogar. Sighvat was in very cheerful mood while they talked about horses and odd topics, but when it came to discussing their case, they could not even speak to each other, and they parted without coming to terms. Sighvat sent a message to Gudmund telling him that he must not think of setting out for the northern districts. Bishop Gudmund was still at Stadarhol when he heard that he was forbidden to make his journey. Then his men sent for the oxen which had been given to the Bishop. There were nearly twenty of them, and they were eaten first. After that Gudmund's men visited those who had attacked him at Holar and seized plenty of provisions from them. But towards the end of Advent Gudmund became ill, and they could no longer lead this hand-to-mouth existence.

Then Thord went to Stadarhol, and invited Bishop Gudmund to stay with him, which he was glad to do. Thord's son Bödvar carried Gudmund on a stretcher to Hvamm, and he remained there till Lent. After his arrival, there were never less than a hundred men at Hvamm. Torfi the priest, the son of Gudmund, and Kolli, the son of Thorstein, went backwards and forwards between the kinsmen during the winter, trying to arrange a settlement, and this was reached before Lent began. Bishop Gudmund was to go

north to his see with the men who had been with him during the winter, while Thorlak, the son of Ketil, and Bödvar were to arbitrate in the case between Thord and Sturla. Sighvat went north immediately, and Gudmund a little later, and Sturla met him at Hjardarholt and they then came to terms for a second time, while Sturla and Thord met at Thorbergsstaðir and came to terms there. Things were now quiet for the rest of the winter.

96. During the winter which Bishop Gudmund spent at Hvamm, Kolbein the Young, the son of Arnor, went south to Reykjaholt to ask a woman in marriage, and his choice was Hallbera, the daughter of Snorri. Their wedding-feast took place at once, and Hallbera went with him back to the north.

Gudmund had now been Bishop for twenty-five years.

97. Bishop Gudmund was at home at Holar until the men of Skagafjörð drove him away from his see at the instigation of Kolbein the Young. He then went north in the summer, taking his time on the journey, until he came to the house of Gudmund Husviking at Husavík. He had a host of unruly followers with him. Gudmund appointed the sons of Hrafn to see that nothing was stolen by his band. So on the day when they rode from Husavik, the brothers lay in wait for the band, and let no one ride by until they had searched everybody, even the Bishop himself. Many things belonging to the farmers were found, and everything was sent back to its owner.

After that the Bishop went to Öxarfjörð. There he took whale-tithes from many, and a great stock was collected, both meat and blubber. It was taken to Skinnastaðir and hung there. Jon and Gudleif were then living at Skinnastaðir. Bishop Gudmund arrived there at Advent with his troop and stayed almost till Christmas. The stores were by now exhausted, and the farmers were afraid that they would have to bear the expense and grumbled bitterly. Gudmund and his men then left Skinnastaðir and went west over the Jökulsa. He stayed in Keldunes. His gathering of men behaved badly among themselves with dissension and uproar.

From Keldunes the Bishop went to Fjöll, and in the evening when he had gone to bed and those who wished had gone to bathe, they began to dance in the room. The priest Knut was sitting on the cross-dais, and the lamp was hung high up in the room. Jon, the son of Birna, went up to Knut. He had just come from his bath and was wearing a bathing-cloak and linen underclothes. Jon said: "I would wish that we should put an end to the enmity, dislike and menaces between us, since Bishop Gudmund would not

be repaid too highly for his good works even if there were no factions in his band." Knut the priest said: "I am not more cunning than you, though I am made of sterner stuff." At that moment his servant sprang from a corner which was in shadow and struck at Jon's shoulder. It was a severe wound, but Jon swung the sword behind him and the servant received a considerable wound. After this they were separated, and Jon lay bedridden with his injuries.

Then the Bishop went across the slopes with the more active members of his following, while the others were taken past the ness by ship. He took the journey easily, until he came to Hrisey, where Jon, the son of Birna, joined him. Lent was now nearly over. From Hrisey Gudmund went to Olafsfjörd with the greater part of his troop, but Knut the priest and those who had business in Svarfadardal went there, and then across the moor to Olafsfjörd.

Bishop Gudmund was staying at Thoroddsstadir on the night before the Feast of S. Benedict, and in the evening after supper he was indoors, but his men were outside in the home meadow. They saw that Knut the priest was riding from the moor towards the farm, and they made their plan, and it was a wicked one. They expected Knut to ride between the churchyard and the snow-drift which had piled up on the path through the home meadow. Some of them now stood in the churchyard and some in the snow-drift. It turned out as they thought. Knut and his companions were not expecting hostility. Knut always rode armed, because he was an overbearing man and held no office. A man sprang forward and struck Knut on the nape of the neck so that his steel helmet fell forward over his face, whereupon he struck him once more on the nape of the neck. Knut fell forward off his horse. He was dead, for his brains remained on the axe.

People rushed into the house and told the Bishop that Knut had been attacked upon his arrival. Gudmund was in the privy, and he sent Ketil the priest, the son of Odd, outside. Ketil leapt out and ordered the dogs to depart. They were trying to chop the fingers off Knut's corpse, though they had not yet managed it, for on his hand was a gold ring which they wished to seize. Then the body was washed, and it was buried on the following morning.

In the evening after the slaughter, the farmer told Gudmund that his bath was ready, if he wished to have it, and the Bishop replied: "My own men have got a bath ready for me this time, and have thus rewarded me for having supported them during the winter."

After leaving Thoroddsstadir they turned away from the fjord and went across the moor to Fljot and then along the coast inland. They came to Vidvik on Maundy Thursday. Kolbein the Young

was there with a large band of followers. He drove every one away from the Bishop excepting two clerks alone, Thorkel, the son of Ketil, son of Ingjald, and his own nephew Helgi. He arranged for the Bishop to go back to Holar, and there Gudmund was held in such close custody that he lived in a single room, attended by his clerks. There he slept, and there he ate, and there he sang all his offices except the Canon of the Mass. He had nothing in his charge except his two companions and could give no man charity in material possessions, but rather was he kept like a pensioner himself. This went on until Bishop Magnus came back to Iceland at Gasar, bringing with him the letters which the Archbishop had sent to the men who had tyrannized over Bishop Gudmund and deprived him of his office and sought to oppress him.

98. This happening occurred at Holar just before mid-summer. Bishop Gudmund was sitting outside, at the south of the church one fine day. Kolbein the Young, the son of Arnor, and Kleppjarn, the son of Hall, son of Kleppjarn, had come to the Bishop's palace. Jon, the son of Birna, had also arrived to see the Bishop, and he was standing in front of the church, while Kolbein was in the belfry playing with the bells, but his men and Kleppjarn were at the north side of the church. They caught sight of Jon and sprang on him with their weapons. He defended himself well and retreated to the east side of the church and then north round the choir, but there he fell over a post. He was trying to stand up again when Kleppjarn struck him between the shoulders and then went off. Jon got one step towards the church, fell and lived for only a short time afterwards. Men say that before he died, he denied that he had slain Hafr. The post was drenched with blood.

Then they departed, and the Bishop and his clerks sang the funeral service over Jon's body. Kolbein had ridden off, but messages were exchanged between him and Bishop Gudmund proposing a settlement. The end of the matter was that Kolbein and Kleppjarn submitted the case to the Bishop's jurisdiction. He removed the excommunication from them and ordered them to pay out to every one the compensation that was due, both to Jon's relatives and to the Bishop and the church. They parted with this arrangement, and Gudmund went home after the settlement between himself and Kolbein.

99. At the end of the summer Bishop Gudmund went on his visitations north over the moor and across the Eyjafjörd, intending to traverse the northern districts. He came to Laufas, and

there he heard that the people of Reykjadal were preparing to rise against him. The Bishop then turned back, and crossed the fjord, intending to follow the coast into Eyjafjörd. But when he came to Arskog he heard that the people of Eyjafjörd were unwilling to receive him. Brand, the farmer at Höfdi, got to know of this, and came to invite Gudmund to stay with him for the winter, and the Bishop accepted gladly and stayed there two winters. After that he went west to Hrutafjörd, and from there north to Steingrimsfjörd, and then back to Saurbœ, and so to Thord's house at Hvamm. By now many followers had joined him. Then Sturla sent word that he did not wish the Bishop to continue his travels any further. Thord rode to Thorbergsstadir, and he and Sturla arranged that Gudmund should return to Holar by Laxardal Moor, and that Sturla should provide sheep from Dalir at Dönustadir and in Hjardarholt, where the Bishop was to stay. Gudmund then went home to Holar.

Bishop Gudmund went to the Assembly in the summer and stayed with Snorri during it with a large band of men. Snorri rode away from the Assembly in company with Sturla. Kolbein, the son of Sighvat, and Orækja, the son of Snorri, went with them also, and they were both to join Sturla's household, and accompanied him to Saudafell.

From the Assembly Bishop Gudmund went west to Borgarfjörd. With him was a priest called Dalk, who was reputed to be a skilful physician and to know how to cure people's illnesses. And when Gudmund was staying at Borg, they discussed whether Dalk would be able to effect any cure for the illness of Hallbera, who was now extremely ill. Dalk said that he knew how to prepare a bath for her that would cure her if she could stand it. Hallbera was eager to recover and decided to take the risk. Then the priest set to and prepared the bath, and she got in. After wrappings had been brought to her, she was smitten with pain in her breast and afterwards she died.

When the news of this reached Kolbein the Young, he rode to the south and asked for Helga, the daughter of Sæmund, in marriage, and she was married to him.

100. Bishop Gudmund travelled in the south during the summer. When he reached the district of Thord, the son of Sturla, Thord assigned him his son Sturla to accompany him and arrange night-lodgings for the troop, for Gudmund had a great company with him. Gudmund was taken from Eyr to Bjarnarhöfn in the ship called Long-hulk, with his following in another large ship, and so to Helgafell. From there he was taken to Pal's house at Eyr. After he reached Eyr, Sturla, the son of Sighvat,

arrived with Kolbein and Orækja, and drove away most of the people he had with him, but let Gudmund himself go to Dalir, and so north by Haukadalskård to his diocese.

101. It is now to be told that in the following autumn letters came to Iceland from Archbishop Sigurd, who had just arrived in Norway. They expressed rather a severe criticism of Sighvat and Sturla for their expedition to Grimsey and other acts of hostility committed against Bishop Gudmund. Both father and son were summoned to Norway, but it was decided that Sturla should go for the two of them and get the case settled for them both.

102. Sturla, the son of Sighvat, left for Norway from Gasar in the summer with several companions. He was late in sailing and made Norway north of Stad and held his course to Borgund. Alf of Thornberg, a kinsman of Duke Skuli, was then in Borgund, and he welcomed Sturla warmly and invited him to wait there until the Duke returned from the north, saying that he would put him on good terms with the Duke. Alf told Sturla that the Duke would be sure to advance his position, as Sturla was a man of such outstanding gifts. He declared that the Duke had the most friendly feeling for Icelanders, and most of all for the Sturlungs. But Sturla would do nothing else but go south to Bergen to meet King Hakon. At this time there was great discord between the King and his kinsman Skuli, and they both collected such forces as they could get. They held a meeting in Bergen in the autumn and came to terms, but the Duke thought the conditions hard.

Sturla spent the first part of the winter in Bergen, but when it was well advanced he set off on a pilgrimage. He first went to Denmark and visited King Valdimar the Old, who received him graciously. He stayed there for a time, and King Valdimar gave him a good horse and other honourable gifts, and they parted with the warmest affection. Then Sturla went south to Germany, where he met Bishop Pal, and they made the journey to Rome together. Bishop Pal acted as a very kind companion to Sturla and was the greatest support in all his cases when they had audience with the Pope.

Sturla was given absolution in all his cases in Rome, and he was chastised outside most of the main churches and bore himself manfully, as might be expected. But most people pitied him, and many stood outside the churches and wondered and beat their breasts and grieved that a man of such handsome appearance was being so woefully chastised. Neither men nor women could hold back their tears. Bishop Pal and Sturla went back to Scandinavia

together and parted with the greatest affection, exchanging handsome presents. Then Sturla went to see King Hakon at Tunsberg, and he received him very warmly. He stayed there a long time in the second winter he spent in Norway.

103. It is related about Sighvat that Styrimi's spy Eirik, nicknamed the Count, came to Grund late in the evening, accompanied by another man. Sighvat was sitting in his seat, wearing a fur cloak with a strap on his shoulders, and a black lamb-skin hood on his head. Eirik and his companion were asked for news, and they told them that forces had been collected in Skagafjörd and said that Kolbein and Orækja were about to pay a hostile visit to Grund in the night-time. Sighvat sighed deeply and said such was of no matter, and he showed no eagerness to take action. Then his wife went up to him and said that the only thing to do was to send for men. Sighvat told her to send for those she pleased. She straightway sent messengers out to the Kaupang district and from there north to Sighvat's son Kolbein at Grenjadarstadir, whereupon Kolbein had men collected from the lower part of Eyjafjörd. Later Thorvard summoned men from the upper part of the district, for he had a great number of friends.

Thorgisl Holar-boy came first with forty men, and all the farmers from the inner part of Eyjafjörd had arrived before the time for Mass the next morning. Sighvat was now wearing a blue tunic, and had a steel helmet on his head and an axe decorated with silver in his hand, and he was a much more warlike-looking figure than on the evening before when the spies came. He placed mounted guards up on Skjalgdal Moor and others along the fjord. The news soon came that Kolbein and Orækja had turned back. The farmers went home, but Sighvat had many people at Grund and kept a strong watch. And when he heard that they were keeping a garrison in Skagafjörd, he also kept a garrison at Grund and he alone defrayed all the cost. The winter got far advanced with matters thus.

104. It is now to be told that at this time Bishop Gudmund was staying at Höfði with Brand the farmer. Sighvat sent men there to invite Gudmund to come to him, wishing to have him on his side in this dispute. But when his messengers reached Höfði, messengers from Kolbein and Orækja had already arrived, inviting Gudmund to go to the west. And as Orækja had been Gudmund's friend for a long time, ever since he grew up, and his father Snorri before him, Gudmund's choice fell on them, and he went west to Flugumyr to join them and stayed there during Lent.

In the spring after Easter Orækja sent men into the Western Fjords to collect supporters, and Illugi, the son of Thorvald, set off from the west with thirty men that spring. Svarthöfði, the son of Dugfus, and Odd, the son of Gudlaug of Höskuldsstadir, came with them from Laxardal. Kolbein and Orækja sent men east to the Fljotsdal district to Thorarin, the son of Jon, asking him to come to their help, and he set out with forty men. Ögmund Skewer was in Thorarin's following, and he was by now in the seventies, but men said that he was the most valiant man in Thorarin's troop.

105. When Sighvat heard that Kolbein and Orækja had assembled troops both from the west and the east, he collected his forces and went to Skagafjörd with four hundred men. His sons Kolbein and Thord Earthen-pot were with him; the younger sons were not yet able to bear arms. The sons of Hrafn, Sveinbjörn and Krak, also accompanied Sighvat. And when Sighvat rode down along Nordrardal he was told that Kolbein and Orækja were at Silfrastadir with six hundred men. Bishop Gudmund was there with them. Some of Sighvat's men had ridden thither and had been seized and plundered. Then Sighvat went to Flatatunga and stayed the night there with his forces, while Kolbein and his followers were at Silfrastadir.

It must now be told that in the morning both sides prepared for battle, and Bishop Gudmund heard the confessions of Kolbein's men, but told them that there would be no fighting that day: "And yet Sighvat will go the way of King Harald, the son of Sigurd," he added. "He made war in England and fell there in the dominions of others, as a result of his cupidity and envy." And the same fate befell Sighvat. He went into Skagafjörd, and he and his sons fell there in other men's domains, and so this prophecy of Bishop Gudmund was fulfilled, as others were.

Sighvat's party made their preparations at Flatatunga and drew up their forces besides the buildings in the home meadow.

While Kolbein and Orækja were riding from the north towards Flatatunga, Thorstein, the son of Jon, from Hvamm, rode up to Kolbein and asked him what plan he intended to follow in his dealings with Sighvat, and Kolbein said that they would fight as soon as they encountered each other. Thorstein said that men were willing to help him in obtaining an honourable settlement, but were unwilling to fight against Sighvat. Kolbein drew his sword to thrust at him and uttered curses, but Thorstein parried the thrust. Then Kolbein tried to drive him through with his

spear, but Orækja came up and restrained him, and many others took part in this, and Kolbein became calmer though he was still very angry.

After this they rode up to Flatatunga and dismounted and hastened to the farm, but when they saw Sighvat's battle-array, the troop was greater than they had expected, and they hesitated to attack. Then Sighvat said: "We have no need to fear them, since they hung back at first." After that the chief farmers of Eyjafjörd in Sighvat's troop and some men from Kolbein's troop came together and tried to bring about an agreement. Olaf of Stein was one of them. He was on his first journey to Iceland and had become a member of Halfdan's household at Keldur. He was eighteen years old and the most valiant of men. The upshot was that both sides listened to the men's persuasions and came to the agreement that Bishop Magnus should give judgment in the case.

[106.] After Sighvat had come to terms with Kolbein and Orækja at Flatatunga, Bishop Gudmund accompanied Kolbein to Flugumyr, and from there went on to Holar. From this time until the end of his life, he only left his establishment for very short absences. He spent all his time in a little room, attended by two clerks, Thorkel, the son of Ingjald, and his own nephew Helgi. His way of living was more like that of a silent and gentle hermit than that of the stubborn and meddlesome bishop his enemies made him out to be. He was at Holar for two complete years and for the part of the third year up to his death. Most of the time he was in bad health. When he left Höfdi he could not see to read, and he was blind for the last year of his life. His face was diseased, and the pain was seated in his right cheek below the eye. In his waking hours he usually repeated prayers or had the lives of the saints read to him in Latin.

In Gudmund's last winter, a little before Lent, the monk Magnus Chatterbox came from Holar to visit Thord, the son of Sturla, at Eyr. Thord asked him what his mission was, and Magnus gave him Bishop Gudmund's greetings and said: "He asked me to tell you that you might be sure that the two of you would meet this spring."

"It seems unlikely to me," said Thord, "since neither of us is now fit to undertake a long journey. But what had Gudmund to say about his opponents?"

"He said a little about this matter," answered Magnus, "for he said that few winters would have to pass before his opponents would lay hands on one another, and their offspring destroy one

another like wolves. He added that the consequences would fall most heavily on those whose arrogance had been greatest." He foretold many other things, though they are not related here.

[107.] It was a little before the Lenten fast this winter that Bishop Gudmund became ill with a grave and insidious disease. He lay in bed with this disease until after the Feast of S. Gregory, which that year fell between the Ember Days. On the Friday he asked the priest Jon the Deeply-learned to administer extreme unction to him with the assistance of his deacons and the other priests belonging to the establishment. After this rite he spoke only what was necessary. He had made all arrangements before he was anointed, except the distribution of his books among his clerks. Long before this he had stated that he wished to lie buried in the chapel at the south side of the church, between two priests, whom he had buried there. He said that every man ought to die on the bare earth. When the Sunday came, his strength ebbed away fast, and on the Monday he died, in the seventy-sixth year of his life, when he had been Bishop for thirty-five years. At the hour of his death Helgi and Thorkel lifted him up from his bed-clothes onto a board strewn with ashes, and there in their arms his soul left his body, and there, lying on the board, they kissed him. Their grief was so great at parting with their father for so long, that they were slow to cease mourning, for from their childhood they had received fatherly love and kindness from him. Moreover, there could hardly be found in our land, or even if one looked farther afield, a man who was more beloved by his followers and friends than this blessed bishop. We have witness in the letters of Archbishop Thori and Archbishop Sigurd and King Hakon, and many other distinguished men in Norway, that they loved him as a brother and asked for his help in their devotions as a father.

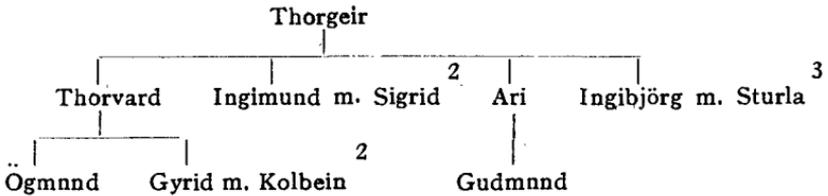
Watch was kept over the body of Bishop Gudmund in this room that night, and on the Tuesday he was carried into the church and robed. Then Eyjolf, the priest at Vellir, came to Holar and placed the gold ring on Gudmund's hand which he bore to the grave. All those who saw the body thought they had never seen the flesh of a corpse as radiant and fair as his. Jon the priest sang the requiem, and Kolbein Cold-light gave thanks for the performance of the obsequies and made a noble oration over the grave.

The church at Holar had fallen much into decay at this time, and not more than one or two of the bells could be rung at a time without danger to the church. When the body of Bishop Gudmund was carried to the grave, the church officers ordered all

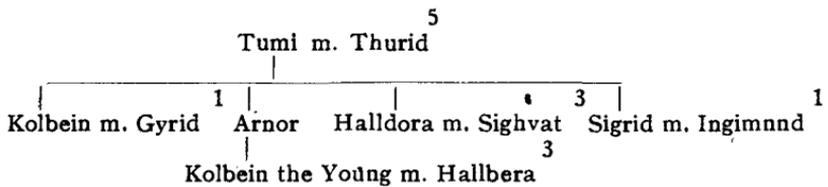
the bells to be tolled. They tolled two bells, and the church shook violently. Then the priest Jon said two more ought to be tolled, and this was done, and they found that the church was now standing firmer than before. Jon told them to ring more bells, and after this they tolled the whole number, and men who were present have said that it seemed to them just as if a prop had been placed against the church each time that more bells were rung, so that it did not shake at all. This was held to be a wondrous happening. Many other such happenings took place there on this day, though we do not relate them here, and straightway comfort came to those who were in grief, for they saw the joyous day of their father's resurrection. And we believe that Bishop Gudmund has won the kingdom of heaven with God and his saints for all eternity. AMEN.

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

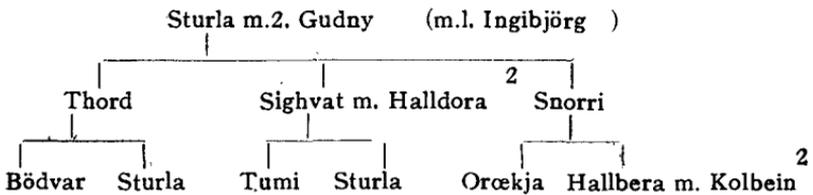
1. THE FAMILY OF GUDMUND THE GOOD.



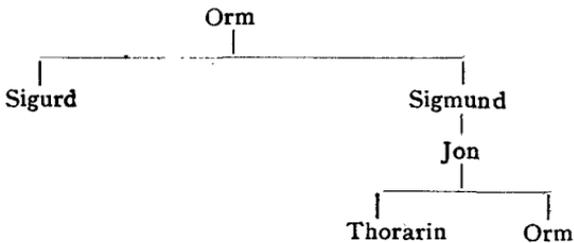
2. THE FAMILY OF KOLBEIN, THE SON OF TUMI.



3. THE STURLUNG FAMILY.



4. THE FAMILY OF SIGURD, THE SON OF ORM.



5. THE HAUKDÆLIR.

